

## Errata

**A. The General Assembly Nominating Committee Report to the 217th General Assembly (2006), Item 00-01 (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 61 ff*), had the following corrections: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added is shown as bold italic.]**

### 1. On page 62, Item B. Advisory Committee on Litigation:

“B. Advisory Committee on Litigation

“GANC Nomination – Class of 2012

“1.	Mark Scarberry	WML	46-55	Santa Barbara	SCH	AL	REN
“2.	<del>Pending</del> <b><i>Beth Law</i></b>	BFE	46-55	National Capital	MAT	AL	NEW”

### 2. On page 63, Item H. Committee on Ecumenical Relations (General Assembly):

“H. Committee on Ecumenical Relations (General Assembly)

“GANC Nomination – Class of 2010

<del>1.</del>	<del>James Foucher</del>	<del>BMC</del>	<del>46-55</del>	<del>Full Communion Partner</del>	<del>UCC</del>		<del>REN</del>
<del>2.</del> <b><i>1.</i></b>	Lemuel Garcia	HMC	36-45	Mission	SUN	AL	REN
<del>3.</del> <b><i>2.</i></b>	Kathleen Owens (Y)	WFE	25-	Cascades	PAC	AL	REN
<del>4.</del> <b><i>3.</i></b>	David Jensen	WML	36-45	Mission	SUN	AL	REN
<del>5.</del> <b><i>4.</i></b>	Krystin Granberg	WFC	46-55	New York City	NE	AL	NEW
<del>6.</del> <b><i>5.</i></b>	Damayanthi Niles	AFL	36-45	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	NEW
<del>7.</del> <b><i>6.</i></b>	Oommen K.Thomas (D)	AMC	56-65	Western Reserve	COV	AL	NEW
<del>8.</del>	<del>Pending</del>				RCA		NEW”

### 3. On page 64, Item J. Committee on Representation (General Assembly), 2. GANC Nominations—Class of 2010:

“2. GANC Nomination – Class of 2010

2.	Megan D. Acedo (Y)	H/WFL	25-	San Joaquin	PAC	S	REN
3.	Glenn Bezuyen	WME	36-45	Grand Canyon	SW	S	REN
4.	Yung Suk Park	AFE	56-65	Eastern Korean	NE	S	REN
5.	<del>Linda J. Burger (D)</del> <b><i>William Gardner</i></b>	<del>WFC</del> <b><i>WME</i></b>	65+	<del>Maumee Valley</del> <b><i>Heartland</i></b>	<del>COV</del> <b><i>MAM</i></b>	S	<del>NEW</del> <b><i>REN</i></b>
6.	<del>William Gardner</del> <b><i>Linda J. Burger (D)</i></b>	<del>WME</del> <b><i>WFC</i></b>	65+	<del>Heartland</del> <b><i>Maumee Valley</i></b>	<del>MAM</del> <b><i>COV</i></b>	S	NEW
7.	M. Coleman Gilchrist	BMC	46-55	Chicago	LIN	S	NEW
8.	Cindy Lou Ray (D)	WFL	56-65	Des Moines	LAK	S	NEW
9.	<del>Pending</del> <b><i>Alda Bighorn</i></b>	<del>NFL</del>		<del>Yellowstone</del>	ROC	S	NEW”

**4. On page 65, Item O. Permanent Judicial Commission (General Assembly), GANC Nomination – Class of 2010:**

**“O. Permanent Judicial Commission (General Assembly)**

**“2. GANC Nomination – Class of 2010**

“2.	Judy L. Woods	WFE	46-55	Whitewater Valley	LIN	S	†
3.	<i>Mary Eleanor Johns (YA)</i>	<i>WFC</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>Lake Erie</i>	<i>TRI</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>NEW</i>

**“3. GANC Nomination – Class of 2012**

<del>3.</del> 4.	Ronald Bullis	WMC	46-55	The James	MAT	S	NEW
4- 5.	Susan Cornman	WFE	56-65	Denver	ROC	S	NEW
<del>5.</del> 6.	Gregory A. Goodwiller	WMC	36-45	St. Andrews	LW	S	NEW
<del>6.</del> 7.	Patrick William Notley	WMC	46-55	Southern Kansas	MAM	S	NEW
<del>7.</del> 8.	William E. Scheu	WME	56-65	St. Augustine	SA	S	NEW”

**5. On page 66, Item S. Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee:**

**“S. Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee**

**“GANC Nomination – Class of 2010**

“1.	George T. Bates	WME	56-65	Mississippi	LW	AL	REN
2.	Roxanne Burgess	NFL	46-55	San Gabriel	SCH	AL	REN
3.	Harold Johnson	WME	65+	Grace	SUN	AL	NEW
4.	Margarette Kennerly	WFE	56-65	Salem	MAT	AL	NEW
5.	<i>Pending Janice Richardson</i>	<i>BFE</i>	<i>46-55</i>	<i>Giddings-Lovejoy</i>	<i>MAM</i>	AL	NEW

**6. On page 66, Item V. Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (Ordination Exams):**

**“V. Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (Ordination Exams)**

**“1. GANC Nomination – Class of 2008**

“1.	<i>Pending Marsha M. Wilfong</i>	<i>WFC</i>	<i>46-55</i>	<i>John Knox</i>	<i>LAK</i>	PTI	NEW
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**“2. GANC Nomination – Class of 2010**

“2.	Ernest Kimmel	WME	65+	New Brunswick	NE	AL	REN
3.	Syngman Rhee	AMC	65+	Atlantic Korean	MAT	PTI	REN
4.	Timothy Cargal	WMC	36-45	National Capital	MAT	AL	NEW
5.	Moongil Cho	AMC	46-55	Mid-Kentucky	LW	AL	NEW
6.	Kang Na	AMC	36-45	Shenango	TRI	AI/PTI	NEW
7.	<i>Pending J. Frederick Holper</i>	<i>WMC</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>Chicago</i>	<i>LIN</i>	PTI	NEW”

## 7. On page 67, Item Y. Self-Development of People:

### “Y. Self-Development of People

#### “1. GANC Nomination – Class of 2008

“1.	Cecilia Moran	HFE	56-65	Stockton	PAC	AL	REN
2.	Pending			<i>Long Island</i>	<i>NE</i>	P	NEW

#### “2. GANC Nomination – Class of 2010

“3.	Jesse L. Haynes	BME	65+	West Virginia	TRI	AL	REN
4.	Ivan C. Irizarry	HMC	46-55	Noroeste	BPR	AL	REN
5.	Michelle K. Uchiyama	WFL	36-45	East Tennessee	LW	AL	REN
6.	Ruth Uchtman	WFE	65+	Chicago	LIN	AL	REN
7.	Virginia Toliver	BFE	56-65	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	P	REN
8.	Michael Fagans	WML	36-45	Northern New York	NE	AL	NEW
9.	Susan Freed-Held (D)	NFE	56-65	Cascades	PAC	AL	NEW
10.	Richard Haight	WME	65+	Alaska	ANW	AL	NEW
11.	Dianne Kareha	WFC	46-55	Lehigh	TRI	AL	NEW
12.	Reginald Ragland	BME	36-45	Grand Canyon	SW	S	NEW
13.	Lutrelle Rainey	BMC	56-65	Charleston Atlantic	SA	AL	NEW
14.	Rennie Rhodes	WFL	56-65	Nevada	PAC	AL	NEW
15.	<del>Pending</del> <i>Kristina L. Diaz</i>	<i>HFL</i>	<i>25-</i>	<i>Non Presbyterian</i>		AL	NEW
16.	<del>Pending</del> <i>John Michael Orr</i>	<i>WME</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>Great Rivers</i>	<i>LIN</i>	P	NEW
17.	Pending			<i>Milwaukee</i>	<i>LAK</i>	P	NEW”

**B. The Report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination to the 217th General Assembly (2006), Item 08-08, Section 1.a., Nomination process (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 637*), had the following correction: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added is shown as bold italic.]**

<b>Nomination process</b>	The General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) will place in nomination 21 members from among those recommended by presbyteries, and will place in nomination 4 young adults, 3 <del>executive presbyters</del> <b><i>ordained presbytery staff</i></b> , and 2 <del>synod executives</del> <b><i>ordained synod staff</i></b> from at-large. From among these 31 members, each synod will have at least one GAC member who holds membership within their bounds. The GANC will also place in nomination 6 General Assembly commissioners from the roster of the General Assembly (2 from the current assembly and 2 each from the two immediate past assemblies), giving preference to those who have demonstrated leadership at an assembly and are willing to serve six years on the General Assembly Council.
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**MINUTES**

**218th GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**2008  
PART I  
JOURNAL**

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OFFICERS

*Two Hundred and Eighteenth General Assembly (2008)*  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

*Moderator*

THE REVEREND BRUCE REYES-CHOW

*Vice-Moderator*

THE REVEREND BYRON WADE

*Stated Clerk*

THE REVEREND CLIFTON KIRKPATRICK (1996–2008)  
THE REVEREND GRADYE PARSONS (2008– )

*Associate Stated Clerks*

ELDER LOYDA PUIG AJA  
THE REVEREND KERRY CLEMENTS  
ELDER FREDERICK J. HEUSER JR.  
THE REVEREND JILL HUDSON  
THE REVEREND MARCIA MYERS  
THE REVEREND MARK TAMMEN  
THE REVEREND ROBINA WINBUSH

*Assistant Stated Clerks*

DEBORAH DAVIES  
THE REVEREND LESLEY A. DAVIES  
ELDER C. LAURIE GRIFFITH  
EVELYN HWANG  
JOYCE LIEBERMAN  
THE REVEREND CARLOS MALAVÉ  
JEWEL MCRAE  
MARTHA MILLER  
CHRIS NICHOLAS  
KERRY RICE  
ELDER JOAN RICHARDSON  
ELDER DOSKA ROSS  
ELDER MARGERY SLY  
ELDER VALERIE SMALL  
JULIA THORNE  
THE REVEREND SHARON YOUNGS

## **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Changes made by the 218th General Assembly (2008) to overtures, commissioners' resolutions, communications, recommendations, and resolutions of General Assembly entities appear as text enclosed in brackets. Bracketed text that is underlined was added by the assembly to the original text; bracketed text that is stricken was original text deleted by the assembly.

This format serves to ensure a complete historic record of the actions of the General Assembly by noting both the original recommendation sent to the assembly and the revised text approved by the assembly.

## **SECTION ONE**

### **Proceedings of the 218th General Assembly (2008) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Including Reports of Assembly Committees**

#### **The World Wide Web**

**<http://www.pcusa.org/ga218>**

Many of the reports of the General Assembly and the minutes can be found on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site. In the Fall of 2008, the Web site will be updated with four reports as approved by the assembly, including a study guide on one of the reports as indicated by an asterisk (\*). These reports, with study guides, can be found at the following address:

<http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications.htm>

- \*Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness with Study Action Guide, Item 10-05, p. 1088
- Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform, Item 09-14, p. 977
- God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation, Item 09-08, p. 897
- Struck Down But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future, Item 09-15, p. 994



**THE JOURNAL OF THE  
218TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2008)**

Saturday, June 21, 2008, 10:00 A.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was convened by Joan Gray, Moderator, 217th General Assembly (2006), in Exhibit Halls 2 and 3 of the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, San Jose, California. Moderator Gray led the assembly in the convening prayer. Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick led the commissioners in a Call to Discipleship.

**COMMISSIONING OF COMMISSIONERS AND ADVISORY DELEGATES**

Moderator Gray, Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick, Catherine Ulrich, moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, Dennis Hughes, moderator-elect of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and Robert Wilson, Vice-Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006), led the assembly in a Service of Recognition of Commissioners and Advisory Delegates, which included a litany of enrollment and commitment to faithful fulfillment of their service as commissioners and a charge to commissioners.

**ENROLLMENT AND QUORUM**

Moderator Gray recognized Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick, who advised the Moderator that Standing Rule D.2. permits that the roll be established by registration. Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick recommended that the roll of the 218th General Assembly (2008) be established by the list of those who had registered or would register. Based on pre-registration with General Assembly Meeting Service, there would be present at this assembly:

752	commissioners from 173 presbyteries
173	youth advisory delegates
25	theological student advisory delegates
8	missionary advisory delegates
15	ecumenical advisory delegates

The assembly approved that the roll of the 218th General Assembly (2008) be established by the list of those who had registered or would register. Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick then informed the Moderator that G-13.0105 of the *Book of Order* establishes that the “quorum of the General Assembly shall be one hundred commissioners, fifty of whom shall be elders and fifty of whom shall be ministers, representing presbyteries of at least one fourth of its synods.”

Moderator Gray informed the assembly that at a later time, before taking any additional votes, a quorum of commissioners present at this assembly would be established by the use of the electronic voting system.

**THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The roll of the General Assembly can be found on page 1409.

**SEATING OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick announced that in accordance with Standing Rule B.3., corresponding members are designated and present at the General Assembly. The list of corresponding members can be found on page 1416.

Moderator Gray welcomed the corresponding members.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The report of the Committee on Local Arrangements of the Presbytery of San Jose was presented by its moderator, Bob Bowles, and vice-moderator, Lynn Viale. At the conclusion of the report, the committee presented gifts to Moderator Gray and Vice-Moderator Wilson.

**REPORTS OF THE MODERATOR AND VICE-MODERATOR**

Moderator Joan Gray called upon Vice-Moderator Robert Wilson to assume the chair. Vice-Moderator Wilson recognized the Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006), Joan Gray, who presented the report on the work of the Moderator during the last two years. At the conclusion of the report, Moderator Gray assumed the chair.

Vice-Moderator Robert Wilson presented a report of the work of the Vice-Moderator over the last two years. Vice-Moderator Wilson assumed the chair.

#### **REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY COUNCIL**

Vice-Moderator Wilson called upon Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Council (GAC), who introduced Allison Seed, chair, GAC, for a report. Included in the report was the presentation of a video.

#### **GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Vice-Moderator Wilson recognized Janet Schlenker, moderator of the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), who described the process by which the GANC places names in nomination and the procedure for making nominations from the floor.

#### **REPORT ON BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS**

Vice-Moderator Wilson called upon Joey Bailey, Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services, GAC, who described the process to be used in identifying items with budget implications and how that process can inform decisions made during the assembly.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick made several announcements, including a reminder that the deadline for business to be submitted to the assembly was 10:00 a.m., Sunday, June 22.

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Vice-Moderator Wilson called upon Emily McGinley, a theological student advisory delegate from McCormick Theological Seminary. McGinley offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

#### **RECESS**

The assembly recessed at 11:35 a.m.

Saturday, June 21, 2008, 1:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) reconvened at 1:30 p.m. with Vice-Moderator Robert Wilson presiding. He introduced the Right Reverend Sheilagh Kesting, former moderator of The Church of Scotland, who opened this meeting of the assembly with prayer.

#### **VIDEO ON AGENCIES OF THE CHURCH**

A video was shown that outlined the work and ministry of the six agencies of the church.

#### **ORIENTATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND ADVISORY DELEGATES**

The Moderator recognized Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick for an orientation of commissioners and advisory delegates. Commissioners and advisory delegates were divided into three groups—Calvin, Witherspoon, and Knox. The three groups were oriented to their service in three segments as follows:

1. *Common Mission in the Life of the Church*, led by Linda Valentine, Executive Director, General Assembly Council, and Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick. This session included sharing of hopes for the gifts that this assembly might offer for the renewal of the Presbyterian church and its mission.

2. *Common Work of the Denomination*, presented by elected leaders of the six agencies of the church, including the Office of the General Assembly, General Assembly Council, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Board of Pensions, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. This segment introduced the joint annual agency report with suggestions as to how it could be used as a teaching tool in presbyteries and congregations.

3. *Common Life*, led by Moderator Gray, Vice-Moderator Wilson, and Associate Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons. This segment included information to help those who make up the General Assembly learn about the various kinds of assistance available to them; become familiar with a few of the procedures by which the assembly would deal with the business coming before it; information regarding logistics, including health needs, safety precautions, and instructions; services provided by the General Assembly for simultaneous interpretation of the proceedings into Spanish and Korean, and the hearing impaired;

and reimbursement procedures. Information regarding the worship life of the assembly, which provides spiritual enrichment for the time shared at this assembly, was also highlighted. This segment included an introduction on how to work together to accomplish the work of the assembly and instruction on use of the electronic voting pads, the significance of different paddle colors, and other logistical information unique to plenary.

Moderator Joan Gray assumed the chair.

#### **APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

Moderator Gray recognized Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick for an explanation of the development of the committee structure for the assembly. Following his description, the assembly approved Item 00-02, committee structure. (See page 76.)

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS**

Moderator Gray recognized Bruce Hedgepeth, moderator, Assembly Committee on Business Referrals, who presented the committee's report. The assembly approved Item 01-01, the proposed docket. (See page 81.) The report was arrested.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick made an announcement that a media presentation highlighting the twenty-fifth anniversary of the reunion assembly of 1983 would be available on screens through the week.

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

The Moderator called upon Jonathan Wieschuegel, youth advisory delegate, Presbytery of East Tennessee, who offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

#### **RECESS**

The assembly recessed at 4:50 p.m.

Saturday, June 21, 2008, 7:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) reconvened at 7:30 p.m. with Moderator Gray presiding. She introduced David Cockcroft, Presbytery of New York City, who opened this meeting of the assembly with prayer.

#### **ECUMENICAL GREETINGS**

Moderator Gray recognized the Reverend Thomas Wipf, Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, who brought fraternal greetings to the assembly.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Moderator Joan Gray recognized Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick for an announcement. Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick lifted up the life and ministry of John Coffin, longtime servant of the church, who was attending his fiftieth General Assembly meeting.

Moderator Gray recognized Catherine Ulrich, moderator, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, who reported that the Moderator candidates' campaign expenses had been reviewed and found to be in order.

#### **ELECTION OF THE MODERATOR**

Moderator Joan Gray called for the election of the Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as required by *Book of Order*, G-9.0200, and Standing Rule H. The Stated Clerk described the procedure for the election. Moderator Gray announced that four candidates had declared their intention to stand for election. There were no additional nominations from the floor. The most recent past Moderator present, Rick Ufford-Chase, Moderator, 216th General Assembly (2004), met with the candidates backstage and led them in prayer.

Four candidates were placed in nomination: Bruce Reyes-Chow, Presbytery of San Francisco, who was nominated by Vivian Guthrie, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta; Carl Mazza, Presbytery of New Castle, who was nominated by Grace Bowen, Presbytery of New York City; William Teng, Presbytery of National Capital, who was nominated by Tamara Letts, Presby-

tery of Yukon; Roger Shoemaker, Presbytery of Homestead, who was nominated by William Nottage-Tacey, Presbytery of Central Nebraska.

Following nominating speeches, each candidate was afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for five minutes. The candidates then responded to questions from the floor. At the expiration of the time allotted for this process, the candidates were escorted from the hall by former Moderator Ufford-Chase. Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick explained the electronic voting procedures.

Bruce Reyes-Chow was elected Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) on the second ballot, receiving a total of 390 votes. Of the total votes cast William Teng received 255, Carl Mazza received 52, and Roger Shoemaker received 7.

Moderator Gray declared that Bruce Reyes-Chow was duly elected to the office of Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008).

After being escorted back into the hall by former Moderator Ufford-Chase, Moderator-elect Reyes-Chow was accompanied to the platform by family members and friends.

**INSTALLATION OF NEWLY ELECTED MODERATOR**

Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick and retiring Moderator Joan Gray installed Bruce Reyes-Chow to the office of Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008). Retiring Moderator Gray presented Moderator Reyes-Chow with the moderatorial stole, and with Celtic crosses that have been worn by all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Moderators since 1983. Evelyn Pugh and Sarah Reyes led the assembly in prayer for the Moderator.

Moderator Reyes-Chow addressed the assembly briefly.

**PRESENTATIONS TO RETIRING MODERATOR AND VICE-MODERATOR**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick for a special presentation. Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick presented retiring Moderator Joan Gray with a crystal cross and a replica of the Celtic crosses that have been worn by all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Moderators since 1983. Vice-Moderator Robert Wilson received a chalice and paten from the communion set used during the 217th General Assembly (2006).

**RECOGNITION OF FORMER MODERATORS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow welcomed the following former moderators to the platform:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>G.A.</b>	<b>Church</b>
Charles A. Hammond	1980	192nd	UPCUSA
Harriet A. Nelson	1984	196th	PC(USA)
Benjamin Weir	1986	198th	PC(USA)
David L. Dobler	1993	205th	PC(USA)
Marj Carpenter	1995	207th	PC(USA)
John M. Buchanan	1996	208th	PC(USA)
Freda A. Gardner	1999	211th	PC(USA)
Syngman A. Rhee	2000	212th	PC(USA)
Jack Rogers	2001	213th	PC(USA)
Susan Andrews	2003	215th	PC(USA)
Rick Ufford-Chase	2004	216th	PC(USA)
Joan Gray	2006	217th	PC(USA)

**PRESENTATION TO NEW MODERATOR**

Lynn Viale, Vice-Chair, Committee on Local Arrangements, presented gavels for use by the Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008).

**RECESS**

After prayer offered by Jeannene Wiseman, missionary advisory delegate, the assembly recessed at 10:10 p.m. to reconvene at 4:45 p.m. on Sunday, June 22.



Sunday, June 22, 2008, 10:00 A.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants gathered for worship in two locations: San Jose State Event Center and SJCC Civic Auditorium. The simultaneous service featured former Moderator Joan Gray preaching based on the following Scripture passages: Micah 6:6–8; Acts 2:1–4; and John 13:34–35, 15:9–17. The service included the observance of the sacrament of communion, the commissioning of mission personnel, and the recognition of military chaplains.

Following worship, commissioners and others participated in various afternoon events, including a time of celebration and greeting Bruce Reyes-Chow, Moderator, 218th General Assembly (2008).

Sunday, June 22, 2008, 4:45 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow, in Exhibit Halls 2 and 3 of the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, San Jose, California. Moderator Reyes-Chow introduced Tabitha Karanja, youth advisory delegate, Presbytery of Northern New England, who opened the meeting with prayer.

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Bruce Hedgepeth, moderator, Assembly Committee on Business Referrals, to resume the report of the committee. The assembly approved Item 01-02 as amended (referrals in progress and final responses to referrals), approved Item 01-04 as amended (suspend Standing Rule A.2.a. to receive late business), and approved Item 01-03 as amended (referrals of business to assembly committees). This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Business Referrals. A summary of the report is as follows:

#### **ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS**

**Item 01-01. General Assembly Docket—Approved. (See page 81.)**

**Item 01-02. Referrals in Progress and Final Responses to Referrals—Approved as Amended. (See page 84.)**

**Item 01-03. Referrals of Business to Assembly Committees—Approved as Amended. (See page 124.)**

**Item 01-04. Suspend Standing Rule A.2.a. to Receive Late Business—Approved as Amended. (See page 134.)**

#### **ORIENTATION**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick for a time of orientation to the PC-biz system. Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick and Kerry Clements, Associate Stated Clerk, described the continued development and implementation of the PC-biz system.

#### **REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

Moderator Reyes-Chow introduced Steve Grace, chair, Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. Grace outlined the work of the committee and called on Joan Fong, a member of the committee, who outlined the process followed by the committee in making their decision.

Steve Grace reported that the committee recommendation (Item 00-03) was to place the name of Gradye Parsons in nomination for Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Anna Case Winters, a member of the committee, formally placed the name of Gradye Parsons in nomination on behalf of the committee. (See pp. 41, 77.)

#### **OTHER NOMINEES FOR STATED CLERK**

Steve Grace reported that three additional candidates had declared their intention to the committee to stand for Stated Clerk: Winfield Jones, Edward Koster, and William Tarbell.

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Douglas Brouwer, commissioner, Presbytery of Detroit, who placed the name of Edward Koster in nomination; Robert Scotland, commissioner, Presbytery of Trinity, who placed the name of William Tarbell in nomination; and Deborah Cenko, commissioner, Presbytery of New Covenant, who placed the name of Winfield Jones in nomination.

Moderator Reyes-Chow announced that the election of the Stated Clerk would take place during the business session on Friday morning. Commissioners had an opportunity to meet the candidates Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m. in the Vista Point area, outside Exhibit Hall I.

#### **DISABILITY AWARENESS VIDEO**

Moderator Reyes-Chow called upon Sue Montgomery and John Hunter, members of Presbyterians for Disability Concerns, to introduce the disability awareness video.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECESS**

Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick announced that the offering from the opening worship service totaled \$34,288. This amount has been designated for church growth among new immigrant groups. He then described the group dinner as an opportunity for commissioners and advisory delegates to commune with more than one hundred ecumenical representatives from around the world.

After prayer offered by Emily Miller, theological student advisory delegate, Louisville Seminary, the assembly recessed at 6:10 p.m. to reconvene at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 25.

Sunday, June 22, 2008, 7:30 P.M.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 7:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Monday, June 23, 2008, 9:30 A.M.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 9:30 a.m. until noon; from 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.; and from 8:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Monday, June 23, 2008, 6:45 P.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants assembled for worship in the Civic Auditorium of the San Jose McEnery Convention Center at 6:45 p.m. The Reverend Thomas Daniel, organizing pastor, Atlantic Station New Church Development, Atlanta, Georgia, preached the sermon. The Scripture readings were from Micah 6:6–8 and Genesis 5:15–24.

Tuesday, June 24, 8:30 A.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants assembled for worship in the Civic Auditorium of the San Jose McEnery Convention Center at 8:30 a.m. The Reverend Jin S. Kim, pastor, Church of All Nations, Minneapolis, Minnesota, preached the sermon. The Scripture reading was Micah 6:8.

Tuesday, June 24, 9:30 A.M.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 9:30 a.m. until noon and from 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 25, 8:30 A.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants assembled for the Ecumenical Service of Worship in the Civic Auditorium of the San Jose McEnery Convention Center at 8:30 a.m. Father Elias Chacour, Archbishop of the Melkite Catholic Church, preached the sermon. The Scripture readings were from Psalm 117, and Ephesians 4:1–6.

The offering received at the Ecumenical Service of Worship was designated for the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel of the World Council of Churches.

Wednesday, June 25, 2008, 2:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 2:30 p.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Chris Williams, theological student advisory delegate from Dubuque Theological Seminary, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

**ECUMENICAL GREETING**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Janice Sloan of the AME Zion Church, who brought greetings to the assembly.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

Moderator Reyes-Chow reminded the assembly that headsets for Korean and Spanish translation of business or for hearing amplification were available at the Special Assistance Booth on the concourse across from Exhibit Hall 1.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Bruce Hedgepeth, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee.

Hedgepeth reported that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures examined the *Minutes* of the General Assembly from the time of its convening on Saturday morning June 21, through the end of business on Sunday June 22, and found them in order. The assembly approved Item 02-01. (See page 135.) Item 02-03 (revised docket) was approved. (See page 135.) This concluded the reports of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. Summaries of the reports are as follows:

**Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, Report One**

**[There are no items for the consent agenda and there are no items with financial implications in this report.]**

**I. Minutes****Item 02-01**

**The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures has examined the *Minutes* of the 218th General Assembly for Saturday, June 21, 2008, and Sunday, June 22, 2008, and found that all had been done in compliance with Standing Rules. A copy of these minutes has been posted on the website and two printed copies have been posted on bulletin boards outside the meeting hall. Approved. (See page 135.)**

**II. For Information**

## Referrals of Commissioners' Resolutions

01. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Sharing Costs of Legal Defense in Our Connectional System of Government.* Referred to Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03)

02. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Youth Participation at the General Assembly.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Youth (17)

03. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Expanding the Role of the Commissioned Lay Pastor.* Declined: Standing Rule A.8.d.

04. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Mobilizing Presbyterians for a Significant Response to the Global Food Crisis.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11).

05. *Commissioners Resolution. On Amending Standing Rule B.5.d. Granting Presbytery Executives and Clerks Advisory Vote.* Referred to Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03).

06. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Publishing in the Minutes the Full Audits of Each Assembly Entity Completed Since the Previous General Assembly Meeting.* Referred to Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03).

07. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Encouraging Presbyteries to Approve Requests from Congregations to Honor as "Lay Pastor Emeritus/a" Commissioned Lay Pastors When They Retire.* Declined: Standing Rule A.8.f. (217th General Assembly (2006), Item 05-09)

08. *WITHDRAWN*

09. *Commissioners' Resolution. Concerning Human Rights Violations in the Philippines.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11).

10. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Phasing Out the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, and the Cultural Proficiency Committees.* Declined: Standing Rule A.8.e. (218th General Assembly (2008), Item 08-16)

11. *Commissioners' Resolution. Affirming the Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner Treatment, Torture and Cruelty.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Social Justice (09).

12. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Emergency Food Aid to North Korea.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11).

13. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Amending the Standing Rules Related to Communication Strategies, the Media, and the Unity of the Church.* Referred to Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03).

14. *Commissioners Resolution. On Peace with Iran.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11).

15. *WITHDRAWN*

16. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Urging a Gracious, Pastoral Response to Churches Requesting Dismissal from the PC(USA).* Referred to Assembly Committee on Church Polity (04).

17. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Local Enforcement of National Immigration Laws that Adversely Affect Local Congregations.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Social Justice (09).

#### ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES, REPORT TWO

[There are no items for the consent agenda and there are no items with financial implications in this report.]

#### I. Docket

#### Item 02-03

**The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures has considered the flow of business for the remainder of the assembly and recommends approval of the docket. Approved. (See page 135.)**

#### Wednesday, June 25

2:30pm

Opening Prayer

#### **Business Meeting 5**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Stated Clerk's Orientation II
- General Assembly Nominating Committee
- Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing (15)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education (12)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

6:00pm

Dinner Break

7:30pm

Opening Prayer

#### **Business Meeting 6**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting

- Report of the Assembly Committee Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (7)
  - Report of the Assembly Committee on Youth (17)
- Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Thursday, June 26**

8:30am

Opening Prayer

**Business Meeting 7**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3) (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (8) (Financial Implications)
- General Assembly Nominating Committee
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (8)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions (13)
- Memorial Minutes for Former Moderator Ben Rose

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

12:00pm

Group Lunch

1:30pm

Worship (In Plenary)

2:30pm

**Business Meeting 8**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revision (6)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Worship and Spiritual Renewal (16)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

6:00pm

Dinner on own

7:30pm

Opening Prayer

**Business Meeting 9**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees (14)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (4)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues (10)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

**Friday, June 27**

8:30am

Opening Prayer

**Business Meeting 10**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3) (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (8) (Financial Implications)
- Stated Clerk's Election

- Report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (9)
- Announcements
- Closing Prayer
- Recess
- 12:00pm Lunch on own
- 1:30pm Worship (in Plenary)
- 2:30pm **Business Meeting 11**
  - Speakout
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
  - Ecumenical Greeting
  - Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry (5)
  - Report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues – Continued (9)
- Announcements
- Closing Prayer
- Recess
- 6:00pm Group Dinner
- 7:30pm **Business Meeting 12**
  - Speakout
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
  - Ecumenical Greeting
  - Report of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11)
- Announcements
- Closing Prayer
- Recess

**Saturday, June 28**

- 8:30am Morning Worship (in Plenary)
- Business Meeting 13**
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
  - Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
  - Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
  - Introduction of Presbytery of Twin Cities Area Committee on Local Arrangements
- Closing Prayer
- Noon ADJOURN

**CONFIRMATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE VICE-MODERATOR**

Moderator Reyes-Chow introduced Byron Wade, minister commissioner, Presbytery of New Hope, whom he appointed Vice-Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008). Wade addressed the assembly. The assembly confirmed Byron Wade as Vice-Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) and Moderator Reyes-Chow and Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick led a service to install him into the position.

**REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Janet Schlenker, moderator of the General Assembly Nominating Committee for information about the nominations process.

**STATED CLERK'S ORIENTATION**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick, who presented a brief orientation to commissioners. This session of the orientation included procedures for conducting business in plenary, use of microphones and the speaker recognition system, making a motion, participation in dialogue, use of parliamentary procedures (using the most recent version of *Robert's Rules of Order*), the filing of protests and dissents, use of consent agendas, handling of minority reports, distribution of reports, electronic voting procedures, and the use of PC-biz.

**REPORT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CAMP AND CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Elise Bates Russell of the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association for a presentation.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE  
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized George Kimm, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications to the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Kimm announced that the total financial implications of actions recommended by assembly committees amounts to: \$53,330 for 2008; \$2,341,385 for 2009; and \$118,595 for 2010. In terms of the per capita apportionment rate, this would present an increase of approximately one dollar and eight cents in 2009 and six cents in 2010. Since per capita cannot be increased for the mid year 2008, the amount of \$53,330 may have to be absorbed in the current year's budget. On Saturday morning, the committee will present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the per capita budget for 2009 and 2010.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE  
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Kears Pollock, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Pollock reported the total financial implications of actions under consideration by the assembly for the mission budgets were: \$8,758 for 2008; \$500,020 for 2009; and \$316,804 for 2010.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON  
BOARD OF PENSIONS, PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION, AND PRESBYTERIAN PUBLISHING**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Jesse Hite, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing, for a report from the committee.

At Hite's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Peter C.S. Sime, vice president of assistance, CREDO and funds development, Board of Pensions, for a description of the Presbyterian CREDO program. The assembly approved Item 15-01, approved Item 15-02 as amended, approved Item 15-03, approved Item 15-04, and approved Item 15-05 with comment. The assembly approved Item 15-06. At Hite's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Robert Leech, president and chief executive officer, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, to address the assembly following the confirmation of his election.

The assembly approved Item 15-07. At Hite's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Marc Lewis, president and publisher, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, to address the assembly following the confirmation of his election. Hite reported that the committee had taken final action on Item 15A-E. This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing. A summary of the report is as follows:

**Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing**

[There are no items for the consent agenda and there are no items with financial implications in this report.]

**Item 15-01. On Urging the Board of Pensions to Expand the Definition of Medical Necessity to Include Habilitative Services for Children with Congenital Developmental Disabilities.—Approved. (See page 1359.)**

**Item 15-02. Directing the Board of Pensions to Provide a Relief of Conscience Plan Report Annually —Approved as amended. (See page 1362.)**

**Item 15-03. Continue Churchwide Grants/Promoting Appropriate Investments in New Covenant Funds —Approved. (See page 1368.)**

**Item 15-04. Amended Bylaws of the Foundation—Approved. (See page 1369.)**

**Item 15-05. Confirm the Reelection of Robert E. Leech—Approved with comment. (See page 1379.) *Comment:* To commend Robert Leech and his staff for their leadership in the fiduciary stewardship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.**

**Item 15-06. Confirm Director of New Covenant Trust Company—Approved. (See page 1380.)**

**Item 15-07. Confirm the Election of Marc Lewis—Approved. (See page 1380.)**

**15-A. Minutes, Board of Pensions—Approved with comment. *Comment:* The 218th General Assembly (2008) commends and expresses appreciation to the Board of Pensions for offering the CREDO program to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In weeklong conferences, CREDO offers resources and support for the well-being of Presbyterian clergy in the areas of spirituality, vocation, finance, and health. After two years, its value to participants and their congregations is already evident. The General Assembly recommends the CREDO experience to eligible ministers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and urges all who are invited to take advantage of this exceptional opportunity.**

**15-B. Minutes, Presbyterian Foundation—Approved.**

**15-C. Minutes, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation—Approved.**

**15-D. Report of Certain Amendments to Bylaws—Approved. (See page 1380.)**

**15-E. Amendments to the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA)—Approved. (See page 1389.)**

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH GROWTH AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Steve Locke, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education, for a report from the committee. The consent agenda was approved: Items 12-03 (approved), and 12-05 (approved).

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator E. Thomas Mathew. At Mathew's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Lonnie Oliver to introduce Item 12-01. The assembly approved Item 12-01. At Mather's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Tom Taylor, deputy executive director for mission, General Assembly Council, to introduce Item 12-02. In response to Item 12-02, the assembly approved an alternate resolution.

The report of the committee was continued by Moderator Steve Locke. The assembly approved Item 12-04. At Locke's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized James L. Hudson, president, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, to address the assembly following the confirmation of his election. The assembly approved Item 12-06 as amended. The assembly disapproved Item 12-07. The assembly approved Item 12-08 with comment. Locke reported that the committee had taken final action on Item 12A-C.

This concluded the reports of the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education. A summary of the report is as follows:

#### **Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education**

**[Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]**

**Item 12-01. Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations—Approved. (See page 1235.)**

**Item 12-02. Grow God's Church Deep and Wide—Alternate resolution approved. (See page 1237.)**

#### **Alternate Resolution Approved**

**In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:**

**The 218th General Assembly (2008) strives to help Christ's Church Grow Deep and Wide under the guidance of the Holy Spirit by:**

**1. Declaring a churchwide commitment to participate in God's activity through Jesus Christ in transforming the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) during the 2009–2010 biennium in keeping with Jesus words, "... Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me" (John 15:4) and the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18–20, "... All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**



2. Encouraging synods, presbyteries, sessions, and all agencies, entities, and networks of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to commit to foster the growth of Christ's Church Deep and Wide in the following areas:

a. **Grow in Evangelism:** Share the good news of Jesus Christ. Invite persons to join in the church's worship and fellowship. Baptize children and adults.

b. **Grow in Discipleship:** Rediscover Scripture, including daily reading and study. Nurture relationships with Jesus Christ in the context of our Reformed heritage.

c. **Grow in Servanthood:** Stand alongside the wider community to promote the well-being and love of neighbor. Embrace stewardship in all of life.

d. **Grow in Diversity:** Welcome everyone. Learn from others. Reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of God's peoples in the world.

3. Encouraging the General Assembly Council to support the whole church's commitment to foster the growth of Christ's Church Deep and Wide in its ministries and mission.

4. Inviting the whole church to commit their prayers, gifts, resources, and time during 2009–2010, to discern God's call to foster the growth of Christ's Church.

\*Item 12-03. PILP Board of Directors—Approved. (See page 1239.)

Item 12-04. Confirm the Election of the President of PILP—Approved. (See page 1240.)

\*Item 12-05. Revisions to the 1995 Deliverance of the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program—Approved. (See page 1241.)

Item 12-06. List of Colleges and Universities—Approved as amended. (See page 1243.)

Item 12-07. On Encouraging the Observation of Children's Day on the Second Sunday in June—Disapproved. (See page 1244.)

\$Item 12-08. On Directing the GAC to Produce Adolescent Human Development Resources—Approved with comment. *Comment:* We choose to plant the seed of peace. We set aside our individual desires to “win” and to further our own agendas and put our faith in God, and send this overture on without trying to advocate one position or another, trusting not only God, but our fellow Presbyterians to do what is right not only for our children but for our denomination. We send this overture on in the hope that the next step of the process will cultivate the seed we have planted, faithfully stepping out in mutual trust—Approved with comment. (See page 1245.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$108,495; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]

Item 12-A. Minutes, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.—Approved with comment. *Comment:* Both general and stylistic exceptions were noted. Corrections to 2006 and 2007 minutes were addressed by the committee and will be corrected by PILP.

Item 12-B. Sam and Helen Walton Awards for 2007 and 2008—Approved. (See page 1247.)

Item 12-C. Women of Faith Awards—Approved. (See page 1248.)

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Bruce Hedgepeth, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a motion regarding the docket. The assembly voted to amend the docket to hear the report of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Margaret O. Thomas, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, for a report from the committee. At Thomas's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Michael Kinnamon, general secretary, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., to bring greetings. The consent agenda was approved: Items 07-06 (approved), 07-09 (approved), and 07-14 (approved).

At Thomas's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Edward Chan, chair of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations, to speak to Item 07-05. The assembly approved Item 07-05 as amended and approved Item 07-07. The report was arrested. (For remainder of report, see below.)

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Associate Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons announced that the offering from the day's Ecumenical Worship Service was \$7,941.04. These funds were designated to support the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel of the World Council of Churches.

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized the Right Reverend Cheng Huat Tan of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 5:35 p.m. to reconvene at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 25, 2008, 7:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 7:30 p.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized the Reverend Herbert Anim Opong, Presbyterian Church of Ghana, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

#### **SPEAK-OUT**

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and corresponding members were given an opportunity to speak out on issues outside of the deliberative mode of the assembly for fifteen minutes, with one-minute limits on individual speeches. Associate Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons instructed the assembly on the procedure to be followed during the time allotted for the speak-out. Moderator Reyes-Chow then recognized persons, who spoke on various concerns.

#### **ECUMENICAL GREETING**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Archbishop Avak Asadourian from the Armenian Apostolic Church of Iraq, who brought greetings to the assembly.

#### **ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Bruce Hedgepeth, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee.

Hedgepeth moved that the docket for the evening session be amended to include the completion of the report of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, the report of the Assembly Committee on Youth, and the report of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions. The assembly approved the docket as revised.

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS**

The report of the committee resumed. The first part of the report can be found on pp. 13–14. The assembly approved Item 07-01 as amended by a floor motion to strike “our belief in one God, the God of Abraham, whom Jews and Muslims also worship; and” and to also strike “; and acknowledge Abraham as an expression of our common commitment to one God” in Recommendation 2.

The assembly approved Items 07-02 and 07-12. The assembly referred Item 07-03 to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations. The assembly approved Items 07-13 (Recommendations 1. and 2.), 07-08, and 07-10.

The assembly approved Item 07-04 with comment from the floor. The assembly approved Item 07-11 with comment.

The assembly approved Item 07-1NB and a short video presentation honoring the ecumenical work of Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick was shown.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. A summary of the report is as follows:

**Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations**

[Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]

**\$Item 07-01. On Calling for Tolerance and Peaceful Relations Between the Christian and Muslim Communities—Approved as amended. (See page 507.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$190; (2009): \$6,390; (2010): \$6,376 (Mission)]**

**Item 07-02. On Response to an Invitation to Interfaith Dialogue.—Approved. (See page 510.)**

**Item 07-03. On Investigating the Actions and Conduct of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.—Referred to General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations. (See page 512.)**

**Item 07-04. Covenant Relationship with the Korean PC in America—Approved with comment. *Comment:* The value of the covenant within these two denominations will depend in great measure on agreement about implementation, which will take place across all governing bodies of both denominations. Therefore, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations, the Office of the General Assembly, and the General Assembly Council are urged to consult with presbyteries and synods that have direct experience of working with the Korean Presbyterian Church in America. (See page 513.)**

**Item 07-05. Ecumenical Policy Statement—Approved as amended. (See page 516.)**

**\*Item 07-06. Invite Ecumenical Advisory Delegates to the 219th GA—Approved. (See page 526.)**

**\$Item 07-07. On Peaceful Relations Between the Christian and Muslim Communities—Approved. (See page 526.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$190; (2009): \$6,390; (2010): \$6,376 (Mission)]**

**Item 07-08. Mutual Recognition of Baptism with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops—Approved. (See page 527.)**

**\*Item 07-09. PCUSA Delegation to National Council of Churches of Christ—Approved. (See page 531.)**

**Item 07-10. Covenant Agreement with Moravian Church—Approved. (See page 531.)**

**Item 07-11. Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement —Approved with comment. *Comment:* In recognizing the spirit of cooperation already present in the agreement, the 218th General Assembly (2008) suggests that further dialogue between the PC(USA) and the Episcopal Church give special attention to mutuality in language regarding both church governance and worship practice. (See page 538.)**

**Item 07-12. WARC Gender, Leadership and Power Consultation—Approved. (See page 541.)**

**Item 07-13. Transfer of Ministers/Congregations to a “Transitional Presbytery”—Recommendations 1. and 2. Approved. (See pages 544, 546.)**

**\*Item 07-14. Elect Delegates to the WARC meeting June, 2010—Approved. (See page \_\_.). (See page 548.)**

**Item 07-1NB. That the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), meeting in San Jose, California, gives thanks to God for Clifton Kirkpatrick, celebrates his years of ministry in this church and the worldwide church of Christ, and asks God's blessing on him in the days to come for the good of the wider ecumenical family and to the glory of God. —Approved. (See page 548.)**

**Dissents**

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 07-01 of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations: Emily McColl, Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 07-02 of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations: Steven Matthies, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley.

Vice-Moderator Byron Wade assumed the chair.

### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON YOUTH

Vice-Moderator Wade recognized Sue Marshall Rush, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Youth, for a report from the committee, which included a portion of a video that the committee viewed during its meeting.

The assembly approved Items 17-1NB, 17-2NB, 17-3NB, and 17-4NB. The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Celeste Lasich. The assembly approved Item 17-5NB and disapproved Item 17-01.

This concluded the reports of the Assembly Committee on Youth. A summary of the report is as follows:

#### Assembly Committee on Youth

[There are no items for the consent agenda and there are no items with financial implications in this report.]

**17-01 Commissioners' Resolution. On Youth Participation at the General Assembly—Disapproved.** (See page 1403.)

**17-1NB Direct Office of Ministry with Youth to Provide DVD—Approved.** (See page 1404.)

**17-2NB On Mentors—Approved.** (See page 1404.)

**17-3NB On Creating a Youth Ministry Task Force—Approved.** (See page 1405.)

**17-4NB On Referring Matters to the Task Force—Approved.** (See page 1405.)

**17-5NB On Considering a Name Change for YADs—Approved.** (See page 1406.)

Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow assumed the chair.

### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND INSTITUTIONS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Douglas Brouwer, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved Item 13-02, which was part of the consent agenda. At Brouwer's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Lee Hinston-Hasty, coordinator for Theological Institutions and Seminary Relations, General Assembly Council, to introduce seminary presidents present. At Brouwer's request, Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Brian Blount, president of Union Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, to briefly address the assembly. The report was arrested. (Report continues on p. 18.)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-Moderator Wade recognized Christina Fullerton, youth advisory delegate, Presbytery of Tampa Bay, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 10:15 p.m. to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 26.

Thursday, June 26, 2008, 8:30 A.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 8:30 a.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Sue Ellen Hall, missionary advisory delegate, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

### INTERFAITH GREETINGS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Rabbi Melanie Aron from Congregation Shir Hadash of Los Gatos, California, and the Reverend Ronald Kobata, executive assistant to the Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, who brought greetings to the assembly.

### ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Adebisi Shofu, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee.

The assembly amended the Standing Rules to limit the length of speeches to two minutes.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE  
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized George Kimm, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications.

Kimm reported that no actions were taken by the assembly on Wednesday that would impact the per capita budget. The total financial implications of actions recommended by assembly committees, but not yet considered by the assembly, amounts to: \$53,330 for 2008; \$2,341,385 for 2009; and \$118,595 for 2010. In terms of the per capita apportionment rate, this would present an increase of approximately one dollar and eight cents in 2009 and six cents in 2010.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE  
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Kears Pollock, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, for a report on financial implications.

Pollock reported the total financial implications of actions approved on Wednesday were \$380 for 2008; \$121,275 for 2009; and \$12,752 for 2010. Those items recommended by assembly committees, but not yet considered by the assembly, amounts to: \$8,378 for 2008; \$378,745 for 2009; and \$304,052 for 2010.

**REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Janet Schlenker, moderator of the General Assembly Nominating Committee, for a report from the committee. Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick reviewed the Standing Rules for nomination from the floor and outlined the procedure for considering the nominations.

Schlenker withheld Items 00-01X, 00-01Y, and 00-01Z, until after the report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets. Schlenker announced that challenges were presented to 00-01A.1, 00-01O.1, 00-01O.5, 00-01O.7, 00-01P.1, 00-01P.2, and 00-01P.3. The assembly elected all nominees that were uncontested. See page 67. (Report continues on page 26.)

Challenged nominations were considered as follows:

*00-01A.1 [Advisory Committee on the Constitution]:* Schlenker placed the name of Stewart Pollock in nomination for election to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, class of 2010. Commissioner Conway Lanford nominated Daryl Fisher-Ogden from the floor to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. Laura VanDale spoke to the nomination of Pollock. The assembly elected Pollock.

*00-01O.1 [Permanent Judicial Commission]:* Schlenker placed the name of A. Bates Butler III in nomination for election to the Permanent Judicial Commission, class of 2010. Commissioner Rebecca Lee nominated Edward R. Glady Jr. from the floor to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. James M. Madson spoke to the nomination of Butler. The assembly elected Butler.

*00-01O.5 [Permanent Judicial Commission]:* Schlenker placed the name of Bradley C. Copeland in nomination for election to the Permanent Judicial Commission, class of 2014. Commissioner Daniel Moore nominated Kenneth Working from the floor to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. Jerry Tankersley spoke to the nomination of Copeland. The assembly elected Copeland.

*00-01O.7 [Permanent Judicial Commission]:* Schlenker placed the name of H. Clifford Looney in nomination for election to the Permanent Judicial Commission, class of 2014. Commissioner Tim Hunt nominated Ted C. Fairfield from the floor to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. Cynthia Schweitzer-Vives spoke to the nomination of Looney. The assembly elected Looney.

*00-01P.1 [Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation]:* Schlenker placed the name of Lois Clarke in nomination for election to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, class of 2012. Commissioner Raymond Thomas nominated James Mead from the floor to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. Schlenker spoke to the nomination of Clarke. The assembly elected Clarke.

00-01P.2 [*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation*]: Schlenker placed the name of Karen Garrett in nomination for election to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, class of 2012. Commissioner Raymond Thomas nominated J. Oscar McCloud from the floor to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. James M. Madson spoke to the nomination of Garrett. The assembly elected Garrett.

00-01P3 [*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation*]: Schlenker placed the name of Doug McArthur in nomination for election to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, class of 2012. Commissioner George Spransy nominated Gay D. Mothershed from the floor to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. Schlenker spoke to the nomination of McArthur. The assembly elected McArthur.

The report was arrested. (See page 26 for continuation of report.)

**MODERATOR’S NOMINATIONS TO THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The assembly approved all uncontested nominees in Item 00-04. (See page 79.)

00-04 [*General Assembly Nominating Committee*]: On behalf of Joan Gray, Moderator of 217th General Assembly (2006), Robert Wilson, Vice-Moderator of 217th General Assembly (2006), placed the name of William E. King in nomination for election to the General Assembly Nominating Committee, class of 2012. Commissioner Timothy J. Havlicek nominated Catherine Purves from the floor to replace the Moderator’s nominee and spoke to the nomination. VanDale spoke to the nomination of King. The assembly elected Purves.

00-04 [*General Assembly Nominating Committee*]: Wilson placed the name of Joan Carpenter in nomination for election to the General Assembly Nominating Committee, class of 2014. Commissioner Jeanne Cox nominated Phyllis Spielmann from the floor to replace the Moderator’s nominee and spoke to the nomination. Margy Wentz spoke to the nomination of Carpenter. The assembly elected Carpenter.

00-04 [*General Assembly Nominating Committee*]: Wilson placed the name of Roger Howell in nomination for election to the General Assembly Nominating Committee, class of 2014. Commissioner Paul Terry nominated Charles F. Youther from the floor to replace the Moderator’s nominee and spoke to the nomination. Marie Cross spoke to the nomination of Howell. The assembly elected Howell.

This concluded the report of the Moderator’s nominations to the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the report is as follows:

**MODERATOR’S NOMINATIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Class of 2012

[ <i>Catherine Purves</i>	<i>WFC</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>Trinity</i> ]
[ <del><i>William E. King</i></del>	<del><i>(D)WMC</i></del>	<del><i>46-55</i></del>	<del><i>Trinity</i></del> ]

Class of 2014

Joan Carpenter	<i>WFE</i>	<i>65+</i>	<i>Southern California and Hawaii</i>
Warner R. Durnell	<i>BMC</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>Living Waters</i>
Roger Howell	<i>WME</i>	<i>65+</i>	<i>Covenant</i>
Elsa Mojica-Simpson	<i>HFE</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>Sun</i>
Jose L. Torres Hernandez	<i>(YA)HME</i>	<i>25-</i>	<i>Puerto Rico</i>

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick described the process of preparing motions for display on the screens and requested that commissioners be as clear as possible in drafting motions to amend.

Vice-Moderator Byron Wade assumed the chair.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND INSTITUTIONS**

Vice-Moderator Wade recognized Douglas Brouwer, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions, for a continuation of the arrested report from the committee. The Assembly approved the consent agenda: Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-11, 13-12. On behalf of the committee, Brouwer moved the approval of a response to Item 13-06.

Steve Aeschbacher from the Presbytery of South Louisiana, presented a minority report concerning Item 13-06. Brouwer spoke briefly to the main motion. Aeschbacher spoke briefly to the minority report. The floor was opened for amendments to the minority report. The assembly declared the minority report perfected. The floor was opened for amendments to the majority report. The assembly declared the main motion perfected. The merits of the main motion and the minority report were debated. Following prayer, Vice-Moderator Wade placed before the assembly the question, “Shall the minority report be substituted for the main motion?” The motion failed. The assembly then voted to approve Item 13-06. The assembly voted to answer Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-10 with the action taken on Item 13-06. The assembly approved Item 13-07 as amended. The assembly approved Item 13-13 with a comment from the committee. Brouwer reported that the committee had taken final action on Item 13-A.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions and a copy of their report is as follows:

### **Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions**

[Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]

**\*Item 13-01. Theological Institutions Trustees.—Approved. (See page 1253.)**

**\*Item 13-02. Brian Blount as Union President.—Approved. (See page 1254.)**

**\*Item 13-03. Lord’s Supper at Theological Institutions.—Approved. (See page 1254.)**

**Item 13-04. On Restoring the Heidelberg Catechism to Its Historic Form—From the Presbytery of Northern Kansas.—Answered by action taken on Item 13-06. (See page 1255.)**

**Item 13-05. On Restoring the Heidelberg Catechism to its Historic Form—From the Presbytery of Boston.— Answered by action taken on Item 13-06. (See page 1258.)**

**\$Item 13-06. On Correcting Translation Problems of the Heidelberg Catechism—From the Presbytery of Newark.—Approved. [The process to amend *The Book of Confessions* can be found in the *Book of Order*, G-18.0200.] (See page 1260.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$28,050; (2010): \$3,050 (Per Capita-OGA)]**

**\$Item 13-07. Study Belhar Confession.—Approved. (See page 1262.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$28,050; (2010): \$3,050 (Per Capita-OGA)]**

**Item 13-08 became 12-07. There is no Item 13-08.**

**Item 13-09 became 12-08. There is no Item 13-09.**

**Item 13-10. Request 08-15. Changes to Translated Documents in the Book of Confessions.—Answered by action taken on Item 13-06. (See page 1270.)**

**\*Item 13-11. 500th Anniversary of the Birth of John Calvin.—Approved. (See page 1271.)**

**\*Item 13-12. Approve Mountain Retreat Association Board of Directors Nominees.—Approved. (See page 1272.)**

**Item 13-13. Commend for Study in Congregations a Study Guide for “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing.”—Approved with comment. *Comment:* It is the desire of the assembly committee that future resources on theological issues include leaders and teachers that fully represent the diversity of the church (G-4.0403). (See page 1272.)**

**Item 13-A. Minutes, Committee on Theological Education.—Approved.**

### **MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR BENJAMIN LACY ROSE**

Moderator Reyes-Chow assumed the chair. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Vernon Broyles for a Memorial Minute for Ben Lacy Rose, Moderator of the 111th General Assembly (1971) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Broyles read the text of the memorial minute written by George M. Conn Jr.

Benjamin Lacy Rose 1914–2007  
Moderator, 111th General Assembly (1971), PCUS

Born Fayetteville, North Carolina, Davidson College, BA 1935, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, BD 1938, ThM 1955, ThD 1955. Wife, Anne; Children, Anne, Irene, Lucy, Benjamin Jr. Ordained October 12, 1938. Pastor Chinquapin and Bethel Churches, Chinquapin and Beulaville, North Carolina, 1938–41; chaplain, U.S. Army 1941–46; pastor, Central Church, Bristol, Virginia, 1946–55; pastor, First Church, Wilmington, North Carolina, 1955–56; professor of homiletics and pastoral care, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1956–78; Honorably Retired 1978.

Those are the somewhat soulless statistics. Between 1914 and 2007, the span of his life, there is a “dash”(-). It is within that “dash” that one finds the richness of Benjamin Lacy Rose’s life.

I remember Ben Rose the preacher. It was under his ministry that as a young man on a spiritual pilgrimage I first heard the Gospel preached in a way that was evangelically warm, intellectually respectable, and always understandable.

I remember Ben Rose the pastor. A man who had time for all who came seeking his advice, support or understanding. I remember him coming to his office after 11:00 on a Saturday night to sit with and listen to a frightened and tearful young man who was trying to make sense out of what he was afraid was a call to the ministry. I remember notes and phone calls of encouragement over the next fifty years.

I remember Ben Rose the patriot. Quoted more than once in books like *D-Day*, *The 6th Of June*, and *A Bridge Too Far*, he was a man of fierce pride in his country and deep compassion for the soldiers he served. After the end of WWII, he remained in the Reserves and continued to serve as a the frequent retreat leader for army chaplains stationed all over the world, in war and peace.

I remember Ben Rose the prophet. I was privileged to hear him preach the sermon in the mid 1950s staking out his unwavering support for an open church that welcomed all people and stood for racial justice. The General Assembly of the PCUS ordered that sermon printed and sent to every church within that denomination.

I remember Ben Rose the professor. Not content simply to teach young seminarians the fundamentals of preaching, how to officiate at a wedding, conduct a funeral, and how to make a hospital call, he insisted on testing himself against the changing realities within the church by serving as the Stated Supply of the Lake Waccamaw, North Carolina, and as the “in-parish-resident-professor” at the Little Chapel on the Boardwalk Church, Wrightsville, North Carolina, 1973–78.

I remember Ben Rose, preacher, pastor, prophet, professor, and, over the years, mentor, friend, and always, my “Father in the faith.”

Broyles concluded with prayer.

**RECESS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Sharon Core, commissioner from the Presbytery of National Capital, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 12:48 p.m. to reconvene at 2:30 p.m., after worship at 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 26, 2008, 2:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 2:30 p.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Adam Weber, youth advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

**SPEAK-OUT**

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and corresponding members were given an opportunity to speak out on issues of importance to them that were not related to business before the assembly for fifteen minutes, with one-minute limits on individual speeches.

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Adebisi Shofu, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee. Shofu presented revisions to the afternoon and evening docket. The assembly approved the revised docket.



## ECUMENICAL GREETINGS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Mulumba Mukundi of the Presbyterian Church of Congo, who brought greetings to the assembly.

### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON FORM OF GOVERNMENT REVISION

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized James Petersen, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revision, for a report from the committee.

In regards to Item 06-01, a substitute motion was introduced. The substitute motion was perfected. The main motion was perfected. Moderator Reyes-Chow put the question to the assembly, "Shall the substitute become the main motion?" The substitute motion was defeated. The assembly approved Item 06-01. Items 06-02, 06-03, 06-04, 06-05, 06-06, 06-07, 06-08, 06-09, 06-10, 06-11, 06-12, 06-13, 06-15, 06-16 were answered by action taken on Item 06-01. The assembly disapproved Item 06-14.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revision and a copy of their report is as follows:

#### Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revision

[There are no items for the consent agenda. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]

**\$Item 06-01. Revision of the Form of Government—Referred to the Office of the General Assembly with comment. (See page 391.)**

*Comment:*

The referral to the Office of the General Assembly is for a period of consultation and study with churches and presbyteries through a system or systems designed and implemented by the Form of Government Task Force and members of the 218th General Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions. The participation of every presbytery in the period of consultation and study will be strongly urged. New members of this expanded task force are to be chosen from the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions by the Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008), in consultation with the moderator and vice moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions.

The new task force will revise the Form of Government Task Force Report, taking into account the concerns and suggestions gleaned from the consultation and study process. The guidance of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, the overtures, and the testimony received by the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions and the committee's comments are referred to the task force for serious and studied consideration.

The revised report of the Form of Government task force is to be submitted to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than October 15, 2009, for distribution to the church at large no later than January 15, 2010, for consideration by the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions submits the following unedited comments, from subcommittees of the committee, for consideration in the continuing study and revision of the Form of Government (See Appendix A.)

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$8,275; (2009): \$64,530; (2010): \$25,350 (Per Capita-OGA)]

**Item 06-02. On Entrusting the Proposed FOG Revision to the Church for at Least Two Years—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 451.)**

**Item 06-03. On Entrusting the Proposed FOG Revision to the Church for at Least Two Years, and Dismissing the Task Force with Gratitude—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 455.)**

**Item 06-04. On Commending the FOG Task Force and Submitting the Work of the Task Force to the Church for Study—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 456.)**

**Item 06-05. On Postponing Final Consideration of a Substitute FOG Until Such Time as a Revision May Be Submitted by a Presbytery to a Subsequent Assembly—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 457.)**

**Item 06-06. On Instructing the FOG Task Force to Solicit Feedback and Bring a Revised Version of the Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$6,825; (2009): \$16,530; (2010): \$20,850 (Per Capita-OGA)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)] (See page 459.)**

**Item 06-07. On Instructing the FOG Task Force to Develop a Plan for the Development and Approval of Its Work No Later Than January 1, 2009—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$8,565; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)] (See page 461.)**

**Item 06-08. On Referring the Report of the Form of Government Task Force to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 462.)**

**Item 06-09. On Receiving the Report of the FOG Task Force, Providing a Two-Year Study with Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010); and Commending the Task Force for Its Work—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 463.)**

**Item 06-10. On Instructing Officers and Governing Bodies to Study the FOG Report, Sending Findings to the Stated Clerk by January 1, 2010. Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 464.)**

**Item 06-11. On Amending the Procedure by Which the Recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force Report Be Adopted—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$6,825; (2009): \$16,530; (2010): \$20,850 (Per Capita-OGA)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)] (See page 465.)**

**Item 06-12. On Amending the Procedure by Which the Recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force Report Be Adopted—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$6,825; (2009): \$16,530; (2010): \$20,850 (Per Capita-OGA)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)] (See page 467.)**

**Item 06-13. On Amending the Revised Form of Government Proposed by the FOG Task Force—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 470.)**

**Item 06-14. On Allowing Provisional Amendments to the *Book of Order*—Disapproved. (See page 494.)**

**Item 06-15. On Revising the FOG Report's G-2.0303b Regarding Temporary Pastoral Relationships—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 497.)**

**Item 06-16. On Amending the FOG Report by Retaining All References to the Committee on Representation—Answered by the action taken on Item 06-01. (See page 497.)**

#### ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized George Kimm, moderator of the General Assembly Procedures Committee. The assembly approved Item 03-12. The report was arrested. [Remainder of report is on pages 34–35.]

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Kears Pollock, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, for a report from the committee. The assembly approved Items 08-20, 08-05, 08-07, 08-08, and 08-18. The assembly approved Item 08-09 as amended. Pollock introduced Melissa Sevier, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, to present a portion of the report. The assembly approved Items 08-04 and 08-02. Item 08-03 was approved as amended. The assembly approved Item 08-12 as amended. The assembly approved Item 08-13 as amended. The assembly did not approve the committee's recommendation to approve Item 08-01 and subsequently disapproved Item 08-01. Items 08-14 and 08-10 were approved. Item 08-11 was answered by the action taken on Item 08-10. Item 08-17 was approved; Item 08-15 was approved as amended. A motion to reconsider 08-15 was approved. The report was arrested. (Remainder of report is on pages 23–26.)

#### JOINING HEARTS AND HANDS CAMPAIGN

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Thomas Gillespie, chairperson of the Joining Hearts and Hands Campaign. Gillespie gave a progress report on the campaign.

**RECESS**

Vice-Moderator Wade recognized Mauricio Argueta of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Costa Rica, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 6:10 p.m. to reconvene at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 26, 2008, 7:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 7:30 p.m. with Vice-Moderator Byron Wade presiding. Vice-Moderator Wade recognized the Reverend Lowell Almen of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

**SPEAK-OUT**

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and corresponding members were given an opportunity to speak out on issues of importance to them that were not related to business before the assembly for fifteen minutes, with one-minute limits on individual speeches.

**ECUMENICAL GREETINGS**

Vice-Moderator Wade recognized the Reverend Young Tae Kim of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, who brought greetings to the assembly.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS**

Vice-Moderator Wade recognized Melissa Sevier, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets for a continuation of the committee's report (The first part of the report can be found on page 22). The assembly declined to amend Item 08-15 and approved the item. The assembly approved Item 08-24 and disapproved with comment Item 08-25.

The report of the committee was continued by Moderator Kears Pollock. The assembly approved Item 08-22 with amendment, approved Item 08-23, and approved Item 08-16 as amended.

As proposed by Bruce Hedgepeth, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, the assembly acted to adopt a one-minute limit on speeches for the remainder of the business session.

Following confirmation from Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, and Robert Leech, president of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, that they concurred with the proposed solution, and confirmation from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the alternate resolution conforms to the Constitution, the assembly approved an alternate resolution to Item 08-21. Pollock reported that the committee had taken final action on Items 08A–D.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets and the committee report is as follows:

**Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets**

[There are no items for the consent agenda. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]

**Item 08-01. On Reinstating the Annual Mission Season Offering—Disapproved. (See page 583.) [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$266,508; (2010): \$260,566 (Mission)]**

**Item 08-02. Institutional Standards for Participating in Christmas Joy Offering—Approved. (See page 583.)**

**\$Item 08-03. Special Offering Task Force Report—Approved as amended. (See page 586.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$220; (2009): \$21,715; (2010): \$6,715; (2011): \$48,110; (2012): \$13,110 (Per Capita-GAC)]**

**Item 08-04. On Adding to the General Assembly Council a Representative from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc—Approved. (See page 616.)**

**Item 08-05. Name change for GAC with *Book of Order, Manual, and Organization for Mission Amendments*—Approved. (See page 617.)**

Item 08-06. WITHDRAWN

Item 08-07. Revisions to *General Assembly Council Manual of Operations*—Approved. (See page 618.)

Item 08-08. Revisions to *Organization for Mission*—Approved. (See page 622.)

Item 08-09—Approved as amended. (See page 644.)

Item 08-10. On Reinstating the Office of Environmental Justice as an Integral Part of the Mission of the Church—Approved. (See page 655.)

Item 08-11. On Reinstating the Office For Environmental Justice as a Priority as Resources Allow—Answered by action taken on Item 08-10. (See page 660.)

Item 08-12. Approve “Funding Christ’s Mission Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”—Approved as amended. (See page 664.)

Item 08-13. Set Aside a Season of Interpretation—Approved as amended. (See page 704.)

Item 08-14. Approve Mission Work Plan for 2009–2012—Approved. (See page 705.)

Item 08-15. Ratify Church Extension Funds Revision—Approved. (See page 709.)

Item 08-16. Review Committee for GAC’s Advocacy and Advisory Committees—Approved as amended. (See page 709.) [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$220; (2009): \$13,980; (2010): \$8,715 (Per Capita-GAC)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$290; (2009): \$18,430; (2010): \$10,960 (Per Capita-GAC)]

Item 08-17. On Responsible Purchasing—Approved. (See page 712.)

Item 08-18. Amendment to *Organization for Mission*—Approved. (See page 714.)

Item 08-19. [Item 08-19 became Item 03-20].

Item 08-20. Stated Clerk/Moderator Invite Areas to Adopt “An Invitation to Expanding Partnership in God’s Mission”—Approved. (See page 715.)

Item 08-21. Request 08-19. GAC/Foundation—Recommendation answered with an alternate resolution. (See page 720.)

**Alternate Resolution Approved**

*“Introduction*

“The purpose of the General Assembly Council (the “GAC”), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) A Corporation, and the Presbyterian Foundation (the “Foundation”) is to serve our Lord by strengthening the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“The GAC and the Foundation have presented to this General Assembly their disagreement on issues concerning the appropriate expenditure of restricted funds for the mission of the church. The GAC and the Foundation have come to the General Assembly seeking direction and the hope for reconciliation.

“The Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, with the concurrence of the General Assembly Council and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, recommends that General Assembly answer Item 08-21 by providing a mechanism to resolve disputes and enhance collaboration between the two agencies as follows:

*“A. The Foundation and the GAC*

“1. The Foundation and the GAC covenant to work together in good faith to continue to resolve disputes with respect to the restricted nature of particular funds or other disputes pertaining to intended or planned use and expenditures of restricted funds in compliance with the procedures set forth in Section 39.019 of the 1996

**Joint Report.** The final sentence of Section C of 39.019 shall not apply. If the process set forth in Section 39.019 does not result in resolution, then the issue shall be promptly referred by the Foundation president or the Executive Director of the GAC to the Restricted Funds Resolution Committee (RFRC) as defined below. Both agencies will be afforded the opportunity to present information in support of their respective positions to the Restricted Funds Resolution Committee for its consideration. The RFRC will analyze the issue raised and will have the ability to seek the input of outside resources. The Foundation and the GAC shall each bear their own expenses associated with the RFRC process and shall equally share the expenses of the committee's work.

**“2.** It is essential for the agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to model Christ-like behavior for the church. Requiring the General Assembly to make broad policy decisions to manage discrete and particular issues is not healthy or appropriate. We instruct both boards to thoroughly explore ways to improve collegiality and require that the staff of both agencies honor the jointly agreed business processes.

**“B. *The Restricted Funds Resolution Committee (RFRC)***

**“1.** The Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) shall appoint a Restricted Funds Resolution Committee (RFRC) comprised of:

- two representatives designated by the Foundation Board;
- two representatives designated by the General Assembly Council; and,
- three persons appointed by the Moderator who are not involved in either agency, and have an understanding of the applicable principles in both Reformed theology and civil law.

**“2. Guiding Principles:** In conducting its review, the Restricted Fund Resolution Committee will be guided by the following principles. Pursuant to the 1986 Deliverances, the missional responsibility and the fiduciary responsibility under civil law rests with the General Assembly. Thus, all the agencies of the General Assembly (GA) are bound to follow the directives and priorities of the GA. The GA vests the responsibility for implementation of program-related mission with the GAC, and the Foundation pledges to respect that role. The GA vests the responsibility for fiduciary review in the Foundation, and the GAC pledges to respect that role. Both the Foundation and the GAC must comply with applicable laws.

**“3.** The Foundation and the GAC recognize and celebrate that the substantial majority of funds which they together disburse to beneficiaries for the mission of the church are handled cooperatively, collegially, and efficiently and without disagreement.

**“4.** The RFRC shall create a process to be used should an issue not be resolved in accordance with the 1996 agreement. The RFRC shall specifically recognize and address the fiduciary responsibilities by which the Foundation and the GAC are required to operate under civil law, and where issues remain disputed, the Foundation and the GAC shall file a cy pres or other equivalent action in the appropriate court.

**“C.** The need for the RFRC to continue, the resolution of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Foundation and the GAC, as well as the manner in which they are carried out shall be included as items of business for the Six Agency Review Committee (see Item 08-22) to handle.

**“D.** The Foundation and GAC, with the RFRC, shall jointly report their progress in reconciling these issues to the 219th General Assembly (2010).”

**Item 08-22. Recommendation for Six-Agency Review—Approved as amended. (See page 727.)**

**Item 08-23. On Evaluating the “Standards of Review” and the Manual before the Next Cycle of Review Commences—Approved. (See page 728.)**

**Item 08-24. Mission Budget—Approved. (See page 729.)**

**Item 08-25. On Investigating Opportunities for Group Wind and Hail Insurance Policies for Presbyteries Located on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana—Disapproved with comment. (See page 750.) *Comment:* Although the committee wished to respond with compassion to the needs expressed in the overture from the Presbytery of South Louisiana, the overture advocate asked us to defeat their overture because the presbyteries mentioned have agreed to work together and take the lead in discovering solutions for these problems and bringing these proposed resolutions to the next General Assembly. We appreciate their willingness to do this, and we continue to pray for all those affected by natural disasters and the resulting human and financial costs. [Original Fi-**

**Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$15,000; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-GAC)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-GAC)]**

**Item 08-A. Minutes, GAC.—Approved with the following exceptions. (See page 22.)**

1. **The February 7–11, 2006, meeting for the GAC was not convened with prayer.**
2. **The May 23, 2006, Executive Committee meeting was not opened or closed with prayer.**
3. **A quorum was not reported for the Executive Committee meeting on February 7, 2006.**
4. **A quorum was not reported for the Executive Committee meeting on December 18, 2006.**
5. **A quorum was not reported for the Executive Committee meeting on June 12, 2007.**

**Item 08-B. Minutes, PC(USA), A Corporation.—Approved with comment. (See page 22.) *Comment:* Receive the report of Crowe Chizek and Company LLC, that “In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above presently fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, as of December 31, 2007, the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended, in conformity with all accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.”**

**Item 08-C. Audit—Approved. (See pages 22, 820.)**

**Item 08-D. Committee on Review of the General Assembly Council Report—Approved. (See pages 22, 751.)**

#### **REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Janet Schlenker, moderator of the General Assembly Nominating Committee, for a continuation of the report from the committee (see pages 17–18 for first part of report). Schlenker withdrew Items 00-01X and 00-01Y, as the committees to which they pertained will not be formed. Schlenker placed in nomination those listed in Item 00-01Z. The assembly elected the persons nominated in Item 00-01Z. See p. 67

This concluded the report of the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the committee report is as follows:

Key for General Assembly Nominating Committee Report

Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri (YA) HFE 26-35 De San Juan BPR AL NEW

*Means* Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri (Young Adult), Hispanic/Latina, 26-35 years old, De San Juan Presbytery, Synod of Puerto Rico, At-large position, New Nomination

#### DIVERSITY INFORMATION:

(1<sup>st</sup> letter designation) A-Asian American; B-African American; H-Hispanic/Latina/Latino; M-Middle Eastern; N-Native American; O-Other; W-Caucasian. Note: More than one letter separated by a “/” indicates the racial identification of persons requesting to be identified as biracial or multiracial, i.e. H/B-Hispanic /Latina/Latino and African American.

(2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> letter designations) FC-Female Clergy; FE-Female Elder; FL-Female Layperson; MC-Male Clergy; ME-Male Elder; ML-Male Layperson

#### SYNOD:

ANW-Synod of Alaska-Northwest; BPR- Sinodo Borinquen en Puerto Rico (Synod of Puerto Rico); COV-Synod of the Covenant; LAK-Synod of Lakes and Prairies; LIN-Synod of Lincoln Trails; LW-Synod of Living Waters; MAM-Synod of Mid-America; MAT-Synod of Mid-Atlantic; NE-Synod of the Northeast; PAC-Synod of the Pacific; ROC-Synod of the Rocky Mountains; SA-Synod of the South Atlantic; SCH-Synod of Southern California and Hawaii; SUN-Synod of the Sun; SW-Synod of the Southwest; TRI-Synod of the Trinity

#### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY AND OTHER ABBREVIATIONS:

A-Asian American; AA-Asian-American At-Large slot; AC-Asian Caucus; ACWC-Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns; AH-Hispanic/Latina/Latino At-Large slot; AL-At-Large; B-African-American; BA-African-American At-Large slot; BC-Black Caucus; CW-Clergywoman; D-Known (Reported) Disability; EXT—Extension of term due to structural change to entity; FDN-Foundation; GAC-General Assembly Council; GANC-General Assembly Nominating Committee; H-Hispanic/Latina/Latino; HC-Hispanic/Latino Caucus; M-Middle Eastern; MA-Middle Eastern At-Large slot; N-Native American; NA-Native American At-Large slot; N/A-Not Applicable; NC-Native American Caucus; NP--Non-Presbyterian; O-Other; P-Presbytery; PTI-Presbyterian Theological Institution; PW-Presbyterian Women; RE-Racial Ethnic; S-Synod; W-Caucasian; WCL-Woman Church Lay Employee; YA-Young Adult (35 years or younger when nominated);

†- Appointed by General Assembly Moderator (upon recommendation of GANC) to fill vacancy between General Assemblies

**A. Advisory Committee on the Constitution****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Stewart Pollock	WMC	46-55	Pittsburgh	TRI	AL	NEW†
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

2.	Susan Evans	BFE	56-65	Philadelphia	TRI	AL	NEW
3.	Keith Geckeler	WMC	56-65	Los Ranchos	SCH	AL	NEW
4.	Heahwan Rim	AMC	56-65	Midwest Hanmi	LIN	AL	NEW

**B. Advisory Committee on Litigation****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	William Reid Dalton	WMC	46-55	Salem	MAT	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

2.	Franklin Rodriguez	HME	36-45	Del Suroeste	BPR	AL	REN
3.	Robin W. Hadfield	WFE	56-65	Homestead	LAK	AL	NEW

**C. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	John Knapp	WME	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW†
2.	John Michael Castronis	WMC	56-65	Charleston-Atlantic	SA	GAC	NEW

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

3.	Dianne L. Briscoe	BFE	46-55	Denver	ROC	AL	REN
4.	Marsha Fowler	WFC	56-65	San Gabriel	SCH	AL	REN †
5.	Lewis S. Mudge	WMC	65+	San Francisco	PAC	AL	REN
6.	William Saint	WMO	56-65	National Capital	MAT	AL	REN
8.	Christine Darden	BFE	56-65	Eastern Virginia	MAT	AL	NEW
9.	Jean Demmler	WFE	56-65	Denver	ROC	GAC	NEW

**D. Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Buddy Monahan	NMC	36-45	Santa Fe	SW	NC	NEW
2.	Patricia Morse	BFO	46-55	National Capital	MAT	BA	NEW
3.	Noushin Framke	MFE	36-45	Newark	NE	AL	NEW†

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

4.	Cecilia Casal	HFE	46-55	Tres Rios	SUN	AH	NEW
5.	Aida Faris	MFE	65+	Mission	SUN	MC	NEW
6.	Stephen C. Hsieh	AMC	65+	San Jose	PAC	AC	NEW
7.	Carroll Jenkins	BMC	65+	Baltimore	MAT	BC	NEW
8.	Tammy RedOwl	NFC	36-45	Yukon	ANW	NA	NEW
9.	Cynthia Holder Rich	WFC	46-55	Lake Michigan	COV	AL	NEW

**E. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty	WFC	36-45	Mid-Kentucky	LW	AL	NEW
2.	Gay Byron	BFC	46-55	Genesee Valley	NE	AL	NEW†
3.	Belinda Rice	BFE	46-55	Charlotte	MAT	WCL	NEW†

**F. Audit Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Jesse C. Swanigan	BME	65+	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	REN
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**G. Board of Pensions****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Kathleen Crighton	WFC	46-55	South Louisiana	SUN	AL	REN
2.	Anne Drennan	WFE	46-55	Monmouth	NE	AL	REN
3.	Blythe Kieffer	WFC	46-55	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	REN
4.	Christopher Mason	WME	46-55	New York City	NE	AL	REN
5.	Thomas Paisley, Jr.	WME	56-65	Lehigh	TRI	AL	REN
6.	Susan Reimann	WFL	36-45	New Brunswick	NE	AL	REN
7.	Nancy Rhodes	WFO	46-55	New Hope	MAT	AL	REN
8.	Laird J. Stuart	WMC	56-65	San Francisco	PAC	AL	REN
9.	Bob Gorsky	WME	46-55	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
10.	Judith Harris	WFO	46-55	Lehigh	TRI	AL	NEW
11.	Richard Hodde	WME	46-55	Charlotte	MAT	AL	NEW
12.	John Hougen	WMC	46-55	East Iowa	LAK	AL	NEW
13.	Linda Jacobsen	WFE	46-55	Philadelphia	TRI	AL	NEW
14.	Frank James (D)	BME	56-65	Sheppards and Lapsley	LAK	AL	NEW
15.	Bettina Kilburn	WFC	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW
16.	Joseph M. Kinard	BML	56-65	San Diego	SCH	AL	NEW
17.	Alan D. Ford	WME	46-55	Elizabeth	NE	GAC	NEW

**H. Committee on Ecumenical Relations (General Assembly)****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Scott Anderson	WME	46-55	The John Knox	LAK	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Vincent Das	AME	65+	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	REN
3.	Sarah Segal McCaslin (YA)	WFO	26-35	New York City	NE	AL	REN
4.	Joseph Pallikkathayil	OMC	56-65	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN
5.	George B. Telford	WMC	65+	The James	MAT	AL	REN
6.	Aimee Moiso (YA)	WFC	26-35	San Jose	PAC	AL	NEW
7.	Rodney Petersen	WMC	46-55	Boston	NE	AL	NEW

**I. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Chris Rhodes	WME	46-55	Redwoods	PAC	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Barbara L. Corwin	WFE	56-65	Kendall	PAC	AL	REN
3.	Kent Grimes	WME	65+	Mid-South	LW	AL	REN
4.	Leah Johnson	WFE	56-65	Donegal	TRI	AL	NEW
5.	Eileen W. Lindner	WFC	46-55	Palisades	NE	AL	NEW
6.	Virginia Rainey	WFE	56-65	Huntingdon	TRI	AL	NEW
7.	Vincent A. Thomas	BME	46-55	Twin Cities Area	LAK	AL	NEW
8.	Robert Wilson	BME	65+	North Alabama	LW	AL	NEW



**J. Committee on Representation (General Assembly)****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Deborah Fair	BFE	56-65	Detroit	COV	S	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Stanley Bhasker	AMC	36-45	Huntingdon	TRI	S	REN
3.	John A.T. Gulden (YA)	WMC	26-35	Mid-Kentucky	LW	S	REN
4.	Alma-jean Marion	BFE	56-65	Seattle	ANW	S	REN
5.	Randel Bohanon	NME	56-65	Eastern Oklahoma	SUN	S	NEW
6.	J. Stafford Fredericks	WME	56-65	Pacific	SCH	S	NEW
7.	Alice Ridgill (YA)	BFC	26-35	Trinity	SA	S	NEW
8.	Eliud Serrano Arroyo (YA)	HME	26-35	Del Noroeste	BPR	S	NEW
9.	Pending				MAT	S	NEW

**K. Committee on Theological Education****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Chandler Stokes	WMC	46-55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Terry Holland	MFE	65+	San Joaquin	PAC	AL	REN
3.	Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri (YA)	HFE	26-35	De San Juan	BPR	AL	NEW
4.	K C Ptomey	WMC	56-65	Middle Tennessee	LW	AL	NEW
5.	Max Sherman	WME	65+	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
6.	Landon Whitsitt (YA)	WMC	26-35	Heartland	MAM	AL	NEW
7.	Kathryn Wolf (YA)	WFO	18-25	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW

**L. General Assembly Council****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Dietmar Fritsch	WME	65+	Denver	ROC	Commissioner	2004GA	NEW
2.	Sung Sam Kim	AME	56-65	Atlantic Korean American	MAT	Commissioner	2004GA	NEW
3.	Won-jong Rhee	AME		Eastern Korean	NE	Presbytery		NEW
4.	Philip L. Hougen	WMC	56-65			Ecumenical	Advisory	NEW
5.	Michael Kinnamon	WMC	46-55			Ecumenical	Advisory	NEW

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

6	Alan D. Ford	WME	46-55	Elizabeth	NE	Commissioner	2006GA	REN
7.	Ethan R. Powell (YA)	WME	18-25	Geneva	NE	Young Adult		REN
8.	Jean Demmler	WFE	56-65	Denver	ROC	Presbytery		REN
9.	Thomas W. Gillespie	WMC	65+	New Brunswick	NE	Presbytery		REN
10..	LaVert Jones	BME	56-65	Flint River	SA	Presbytery		REN
11.	Jacquelin J. Lyman	WFE	65+	Riverside	SCH	Presbytery		REN
12.	Susan J. Ezell	WFC	56-65	Lackawanna	TRI	Presbytery		EXT
13.	Michael W. Kruse	WME	36-45	Heartland	MAM	Presbytery		EXT
14.	Carolyn McLarnan	WFE	46-55	Mississippi	LW	Presbytery		EXT
15.	Aleida Jernigan	HFC	65+	The Cascades	PAC	Presbytery Staff		NEW
16.	Teresa A. Bryce	BFE	46-55	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	Commissioner	2006GA	NEW
17.	Bruce Reyes-Chow	AMC	36-45	San Francisco	PAC	Moderator	2008GA	NEW

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

18.	Melissa DeRosia (YA)	WFC	26-35	Lake Huron	COV	Young Adult		NEW
19.	Matthew Schramm (YA)	WMC	26-35	Newton	NE	Young Adult		NEW
20.	Clarence Antioquia	NML	65+	North Puget Sound	ANW	Presbytery		NEW
21.	Arthur Canada	BMC	56-65	Charlotte	MAT	Presbytery		NEW
22.	Roger J. Gench	WMC	46-55	National Capital	MAT	Presbytery		NEW
23.	Jack D. Hodges	WMC	65+	The Cascades	PAC	Presbytery		NEW
24.	Jan Martin	WFE	65+	Milwaukee	LAK	Presbytery		NEW
25.	Cruz Alberto Negron	HMC	36-45	De San Juan	BPR	Presbytery		NEW
26.	Cathryn C. Piekarski	WFE	56-65	Muskingum Valley	COV	Presbytery		NEW
27.	Clark D. Cowden	WMC	36-45	San Diego	SCH	Presbytery Staff		NEW
28.	Reginald V. Parsons	WMC	65+	St. Augustine	SA	Synod Staff		NEW
29.	Steve Aeschbacher	WME	46-55	Seattle	ANW	Commissioner	2008GA	NEW
30.	Joyce A. Smith	BFE	65+	Scioto Valley	COV	Commissioner	2008GA	NEW

**M. Mission Development Resources Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Anne D. Brown	WFE	65+	Southern Kansas	MAM	S	REN
2.	Edwin Lupberger	WME	65+	South Louisiana	SUN	AL	REN
3.	Harold H. Shin	AMC	56-65	Midwest Hanmi	LIN	AL	REN
4.	Joan Fong	AFE	46-55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	NEW
5.	Trey Hammond	WMC	46-55	Santa Fe	SW	S	NEW
6.	Steven Shussett	WMC	36-45	Lehigh	TRI	S	NEW

The General Assembly Council will be acting on a recommendation to create a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation slot on the Mission Development Resources Committee. If this recommendation is approved the following nomination will be forwarded to the 218th General Assembly.

7.	Karen Garrett	WFL	36-45	Heartland	MAM	FND	NEW
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**N. Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Joanne Rodriguez	HFE	36-45	New Brunswick	NE	AL	NEW
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**O. Permanent Judicial Commission (General Assembly)****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1	A. Bates Butler, III	WME	56-65	deCristo	SW	S	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Yun Jin Kim	AMC		Atlantic Korean American	MAT	S	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

3.	Tony Cook	WME	56-65	Olympia	ANW	S	REN
4.	Angel Casaus	HME	56-65	Del Suroeste	BPR	S	NEW
5.	Bradley C. Copeland	WMC	56-65	Riverside	SCH	S	NEW
6.	Meta Shoup Cramer	WFC	56-65	Eastminster	COV	S	NEW
7.	H. Clifford Looney	WME	56-65	Boise	PAC	S	NEW
8.	Michael B. Lukens	WMC	65+	Winnebago	LAK	S	NEW

**P. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Lois A. Clarke	WFE	56-65	Abingdon	MAT	AL	REN
2.	Karen Garrett	WFL	36-45	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN
3.	Doug McArthur	WML	36-45	Denver	ROC	AL	REN
4.	David A. Davis	WMC	36-45	New Brunswick	NE	AL	NEW
5.	Enid Flores	HFO	36-45	De San Juan	BPR	AL	NEW
6.	Victor L. Hymes	BME	46-55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	NEW
7.	Paul E. Lee	AME	36-45	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
8.	D. Scott Weimer	WMC	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW
9.	Margaret West	WFO	56-65	Charlotte	MAT	AL	NEW
10.	Louise Westfall	WFC	46-55	Western Reserve	COV	AL	NEW

**Q. Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Cornelius Blanding	BML	36-45			NP	NEW †
2.	Iris Colon-Lucio	HFC		Milwaukee	LAK	P	NEW †

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

3.	Karen Finney	BFE	56-65	Santa Fe	SW	S	REN
4.	Julius A. Montero, Jr.	AMC	36-45	Blackhawk	LIN	AL	REN
5.	Josephine Njoroge	BFE	56-65	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN
6.	Andrew P. Gutierrez	HME	65+	San Gabriel	SCH	S	NEW
7.	Eddie Jusino	HMC	46-55	Long Island	NE	P	NEW
8.	Levi Martinez	HME	65+	Utah	ROC	P	NEW
9.	Bernadette Hightower-Hughes	BFO	46-55			NP	NEW
10.	T. Ewen Holmes	WMC	46-55	Grand Canyon	SW	AL	NEW
11.	Selma Jackson	BFE	56-65	New York City	NE	AL	NEW
12.	Emanuel Nasir	AMC	56-65	West Jersey	NE	AL	NEW
13.	Joe Nelson	NFE	65+	Palo Duro	SUN	AL	NEW
14.	Kevin L. Nollette	WMC	46-55	North Puget Sound	ANW	AL	NEW
15.	Wilma Quinonez-Cubero (YA)	HFE	18-25	De San Juan	BPR	AL	NEW
16.	Tricia Dillon Thomas (YA)	WFL	26-35	Peace River	SA	AL	NEW
17.	Lori Winblood	NFE	46-55	Western Colorado	ROC	AL	NEW
18.	Oscar L. Heyward	BME	56-65	New York City	NE	P	NEW

**R. Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Albert A. Hockaday	BMC	65+	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Richard A. Cooper	WMC	56-65	Western Kentucky	LW	AL	REN
3.	Dwayne G. Lee	WME	56-65	New Hope	MAT	AL	REN
4.	Karen Stocks	WFC	46-55	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
5.	Donna C. Weddle	WFC	56-65	National Capital	MAT	AL	NEW

**S. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Mary Jane Potter	WFE	46-55	New York City	NE	AL	REN
2.	Donna Wenger	WFE	56-65	Carlisle	TRI	AL	REN
3.	Jeff Holland	WMC	36-45	Santa Barbara	SCH	AL	NEW
4.	Brooks Smith	WMC	56-65	Elizabeth	NE	AL	NEW

**T. Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Luis G. Collazo	HMC	56-65	Del Noroeste	BPR	AL	REN
2.	Helen G. Engeseth	WFE	65+	Nevada	PAC	AL	REN
3.	R. Michael Winters	WMC	56-65	Chicago	LIN	AL	REN
4.	Lynn McClintock	WFC	46-55	Shenandoah	MAT	AL	NEW

**U. Presbyterian Men****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	David Caves, Jr.	WMC	56-65	Kiskiminetas	TRI	AL	NEW
2.	George Goodman	BMC	65+	The Peaks	MAT	AL	NEW

**V. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Board of Directors****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Deborah Block	WFC	46-55	Milwaukee	LAK	AL	REN
2.	Adlai Amor	AME	46-55	National Capital	MAT	AL	NEW
3.	Elizabeth Caldwell	WFC	56-65	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
4.	John Temple	WMO	65+	Hudson River	NE	AL	NEW

**W. Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examination of Candidates****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Michelle Bartel	WFC	36-45	Ohio Valley	LIN	AL	REN
2.	Jeffrey Siemon	WMC	36-45	San Gabriel	SCH	AL	REN
3.	Marsha M. Wilfong	WFC	46-55	The John Knox	LAK	PTI	REN
4.	Janis Alling Adams	WFE	46-55	Cincinnati	COV	AL	NEW
5.	Angel L. De La Cruz	BMC	36-45	Shenango	TRI	AL	NEW
6.	Eriberto Soto	HMC	56-65	Charleston-Atlantic	SA	AL	NEW

**X. ~~Review Committee on the Presbyterian Loan and Investment Corporation~~****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Pending	-	-	-	-	Comm	NEW
2.	Pending	-	-	-	-	Comm	NEW
3.	Chuck Sparks	WME	56-65	Denver	ROC	Comm	NEW
4.	Wayland Wong	AMC	65+	Los Ranchos	SCH	Comm	NEW
5.	Franklin D. Colelough (Chair)	BMC	56-65	New Harmony	SA	At Large	NEW
6.	Gregory C. Gibson	WMC	56-65	Miami	COV	At Large	NEW
7.	Margaret Jorgensen	WFC	56-65	Mid South	LW	At Large	NEW
8.	Efrain Rivera Vega	HFE	56-65	De San Juan	BPR	At Large	NEW
9.	Martha P. Farmer	WFE	65+	Transylvania	LW	Agency	NEW
10.	Isaiah Jones	BMC	65+	San Jose	PAC	Agency	NEW
11.	Judy D. Lussie (D)	AFE	56-65	San Francisco	PAC	Agency	NEW
12.	Cathy Ulrich	WFC	46-55	Arkansas	SUN	Agency	NEW

**Y. ~~Review Committee on the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation~~****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Mary Gene Boteler, Chair	WFC	46-55	Giddings Lovejoy	MAM	Comm	NEW
2.	Ernest E. Ettlich	OME	65+	The Cascades	PAC	Comm	NEW
3.	Carolyn K. Heyward	BFC	55-65	Charleston-Atlantic	SA	Comm	NEW
4.	Pending	-	-	-	-	Comm	NEW
5.	Jose Luis Casal	HMC	56-65	Tres Rios	SUN	At Large	NEW

6.	David H. Hintz	WME	52-65	Heartland	MAM	At Large	NEW
7.	Rodger Y. Nishioka	AME	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	At Large	NEW
8.	Marvin L. Roloff	WMC	65+	Ecumenical	-	At Large	NEW
9.	Karen E. Dimon	WFC	46-55	Cayuga-Syracuse	NE	Agency	NEW
10.	Pending	-	-	-	-	Agency	NEW
11.	Pending	-	-	-	-	Agency	NEW
12.	Pending	-	-	-	-	Agency	NEW

## Z. Review Committee on the Service of the Whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

### GANC Nomination—Class of 2010

1.	Leslie Day- Ebert	WFE	56-65	Los Ranchos	SCH	Comm	NEW
2.	John G. McFayden, Chair	WMC	46-55	Chicago	LIN	Comm	NEW
3.	Kevin L. Porter	BMC	46-55	Philadelphia	TRI	Comm	NEW
4.	Irvin S. Moxley	BMC	65+	Scioto Valley	COV	Comm	NEW
5.	Clemente H. Anzaldua	HME	56-65	Mission	SUN	At-Large	NEW
6.	Yubang (Joshua) Lee	AME	65+	Eastern Korean	NE	At-Large	NEW
7.	Thomas C. Sheffield	WMC	56-65	Denver	ROC	At-Large	NEW
8.	Judith Wellington	NFC	46-55	Santa Fe	SW	At-Large	NEW
9.	Sandra L. Peirce	WFC	56-65	Sacramento	PAC	Agency	NEW
10.	Earldean Robbins	BFE	65+	San Francisco	PAC	Agency	NEW
11.	Jose R. Irizarry	HMC	36-45	San Juan	BPR	Agency	NEW
12.	Alvin H. Puryear	BME	65+	Eastern Virginia	MAT	Agency	NEW
13.	Allison K. Seed	WFC	46-55	Heartland	MAM	Agency	NEW
14.	Pending					Agency	NEW

## AA. Stewardship Committee

### GANC Nomination—Class of 2010

1.	Jack D. Shelver	WME	65+	San Diego	SCH	AL	NEW
2.	Steve Tonissen	WME	56-65	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW

## REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Kathy Lancaster, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Worship and Spiritual Renewal, for a report from the committee. Lancaster oriented the assembly to the group discernment process used by the committee. The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Walter Chuquimia.

The assembly approved Item 16-01 as amended, and approved Item 16-02 with comment. The report of the committee was completed by Lancaster.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Worship and Spiritual Renewal and the committee report is as follows:

### Assembly Committee on Worship and Spiritual Renewal

**[There are no items for the consent agenda and there are no items with financial implications in this report.]**

**Item 16-01. On Reaffirming Our Common Faith in Jesus Christ—Approved as amended. (See page 1401)**

**Item 16-02. A Call to Seek God for Spiritual Renewal of the Church—Approved with comment. (See page 1401)**

**Comment:** Realizing that worship is our response to God's love for us and that we pray for God to "put a new and right spirit within [us]" (Ps. 51:10), we invite each congregation and presbytery of the PC(USA) to gather in times each sets aside for spiritual renewal through intentional gatherings such as spiritual assemblies, which may include personal and community worship, meditation, confession, forgiveness, fasting, and prayer.

**Recognizing the biblical value of solemn assemblies for spiritual renewal, we request the Office of Theology and Worship to make available materials to include rich varieties of worship, Bible study, prayer, Christian meditation, and other spiritual disciplines.**

**COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Joel Weible, chair of the Committee on Theological Education for a presentation. Weible introduced Sara Covin Juengst.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized George Kimm, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, to continue the report from the committee (see page 22).

The assembly approved Items 03-01, 03-02, 03-04, 03-13, 03-15, 03-17, and 03-19 on the committee's consent agenda. The assembly approved Item 03-14, and approved Item 03-07 as amended. The assembly approved Item 03-18. The assembly disapproved Items 03-05 and 03-06.

A brief video was shown on the work of the Cameron House Healing Task Force. The assembly answered Item 03-20 with an alternate resolution and stood in prayer for one minute in solidarity with those who have been abused.

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Dan Krebill. The assembly approved Item 03-21 with floor amendment to insert a new section: “[3. That the Office of the General Assembly establish and promote an Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO) account that will be the source of this support and welcomes contributions from the whole church.]”.

The assembly disapproved Items 03-09, 03-08, 03-10, and 03-11. The assembly approved Item 03-16, Recommendation 1, Recommendations 2–6, and Recommendation 7.

The report of the committee was continued by Kimm. The assembly approved Item 03-03 as amended. The assembly disapproved Items 03-22, 03-23, and 03-24. Kimm reported that the committee had taken final action on Items 03-A–C.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures and the committee report is as follows:

**Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures**

**[Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]**

**\*Item 03-01. Amend Section IV.C.6. of the *Organization for Mission* Regarding the Membership of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Historical Society—Approved. (See page 139.)**

**\*Item 03-02. Confirm the Election of Persons to the Board of the Presbyterian Historical Society—Approved. (See page 139.)**

**Item 03-03. On Amending Standing Rules L.2. and 3., Amending and Suspending the Standing Rules—Approved as amended. (See page 139.)**

**\*Item 03-04. An Invitation to Hold the 221st GA (2014) in Detroit, Michigan—Approved. (See page 140.)**

**Item 03-05. On Amending the *Book of Order* to Provide Flexibility in Presbytery and Synod Membership—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler—Disapproved. (See page 140.)**

**Item 03-06. On Examining Our Current Synod Structure—From the Presbytery of Central Washington—Disapproved. (See page 145.)**

**Item 03-07. Amending G-11.0102 and G-12.0102k Regarding Non-Geographic Presbyteries—Approved as amended. (See page 146.)**

**Item 03-08. On Transferring Funding of Items from the Per Capita Budget to the Mission Budget—From the Presbytery of Indian Nations—Disapproved. (See page 150.)**

**Item 03-09. On Eliminating the General Assembly Per Capita as Part of the Mission Funding System by 2010—From the Presbytery of Grace—Disapproved. (See page 154.)**

**Item 03-10. On Transferring Funding of Items From the Per Capita Budget to the General Mission Budget—From the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca—Disapproved. (See page 156.)**

**Item 03-11. On Amending G-9.0404d to Delineate the Use of Per Capita Funds—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara—Disapproved. (See page 158.)**

**Item 03-12. On Honoring the Life and Work of the Reverend Clifton Kirkpatrick—From the Presbytery of Western Reserve—Approved. (See pages 22, 160.)**

**\*Item 03-13. On Amending the Open Meeting Policy—Approved. (See page 162.)**

**Item 03-14. On Electing Jill Hudson and Marcia Myers as Associate Stated Clerks—Approved. (See page 163.)**

**\*Item 03-15. Interpretation of G-18.0301 and G-13.0112c, Deadlines for Overtures that Support/Oppose Other Overtures to Amend/Interpret the *Book of Order*—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly—Approved. (See page 163.)**

**Item 03-16. Per Capita Budget Items, Recommendation 1.—Approved. (See page 164.)**

**Item 03-16. Per Capita Budget Items, Recommendations 2.–6.—Approved. (See page 167.)**

**Item 03-16. Per Capita Budget Items, Recommendation 7.—Approved. (See page 168.)**

**\*Item 03-17. Changes to Session Annual Statistics Report—Approved. (See page 175.)**

**Item 03-18. On the Continuation of the Presbytery of Hanmi—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii—Approved. (See page 175.)**

**\*Item 03-19. On Amending Standing Rule F.6.c.(2)—Approved. (See page 177.)**

**\$Item 03-20. On Creating a Presbyterian Office for the Prevention and Healing of Minister of Word and Sacrament Misconduct and Abuse—From the Presbytery of San Francisco—Approved with alternate resolution. (See page 177.) [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$141,406; (2010): \$122,130 (Per Capita-OGA)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$22,500; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)]**

**\$Item 03-21. Commissioners' Resolution. On Sharing Costs of Legal Defense in Our Connectional System of Government—Approved with amendment. (See page 181.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$2,000,000; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)]**

**Item 03-22. Commissioners Resolution. On Amending Standing Rule B.5.d.—Disapproved. (See page 183.)**

**Item 03-23. Commissioners' Resolution. On Publishing in the Minutes the Full Audits of Each Assembly Entity Completed Since the Previous General Assembly Meeting—Disapproved. (See page 184.)**

**Item 03-24. Commissioners' Resolution. On Amending the Standing Rules Related to Communication Strategies, the Media, and the Unity of the Church—Disapproved. (See page 184.)**

**Item 03-A. Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society—Approved.**

**Item 03-B. Report of the Committee on Review of the Office of the General Assembly—Approved. (See page 187.)**

**Item 03-C. Minutes, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly—Approved.**

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT COMMITTEES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Susan C. Gieser, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved Item 14-01, Recommendation 1, with amendment. The assembly approved Item 14-01, Recommendation 2.

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Matilda Chase. The assembly approved Item 14-Report 1 (1 through 4). The assembly approved Item 14-Report 2 (1 through 5).

The report of the committee was continued by Gieser. The assembly approved Item 14-Report 3 (1 and 2).

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Review of GA Permanent Committees and the committee report is as follows:

**Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees**

**Item 14-01, Recommendation 1. Approve descriptions of ordination exams—Approved with amendment. (See page 1279.)**

**Item 14-01, Recommendation 2. Amend the first paragraph of G-14.0431—Approved. (See page 1280.)**

**Item 14-Report 1. Report on the Review of the Advisory Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns—Approved. (See page 1297.)**

**The Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees:**

- 1. Commends the ACREC for its work, accomplishments, and insights gained in providing a self-study.**
- 2. Supports the continued funding of ACREC and its mission.**
- 3. Encourages both the General Assembly and ACREC to explore more descriptive language to identify and to better lift up the breadth of its ministry to our multicultural world.**
- 4. That the following report on Review of the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns is approved.**

**Report on Review of the Advisory  
Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns**

**Introduction:**

The review of General Assembly permanent committees was conducted according to the provisions in the Standing Rules and the standards in the *Manual of the General Assembly*.

**Mission:**

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), along with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), was created by the 205th General Assembly (1993) to ensure representation and an active voice for advocacy at the General Assembly level for people of color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The goal of this committee is to ensure the full access and participation of people of color within the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the maintenance of a strong prophetic witness of the church on issues of racial justice in our nation and the world.

**Membership:**

The ACREC has twelve voting members nominated and elected through the General Assembly Nominating process, with the exception of one, who is elected by the General Assembly Council (GAC). Members are elected to four-year terms and may serve a total of eight years. The composition of the committee is outlined in the (GAC) *Manual of Operations*, as follows:

- 2 African Americans
- 2 Asian Americans
- 2 Hispanic/Latino Americans
- 2 Middle Eastern Americans
- 2 Native Americans



1 Member-at-Large elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic communities, geographic diversity, and ethnic balance.

1 General Assembly Council Executive Committee member

**Process:**

The ACREC provided a self-study based on their work for the past six years (2001–2006). The General Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees reviewed the self-study, examined the survey results, and interviewed the executive committee and the related staff of ACREC.

**Findings:**

***Fidelity to Mission and Partnership***

1. Does the ACREC as it was created by the church serve and support the church's mission in a particular area? Does the ACREC exhibit a constant faithfulness to and fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?

*The ACREC continues to do its work with passion and dedication. The committee has fulfilled its duties. It has been faithful to its mandate.*

2. Does the basic process of the ACREC demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly? Does the ACREC exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in with the ACREC acts?

*The ACREC has provided leadership and guidance for the General Assembly and its programmatic entities in their work in order to provide advocacy for racial ethnic concerns. The ACREC is held accountable through annual and regular reports to GAC, which also reviews its minutes. Further, ACREC submits a biannual agency summary to the General Assembly.*

3. Does the ACREC exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?

*The chair of ACREC sits as a corresponding member of both General Assembly and GAC. The ACREC consults regularly with the Washington Office, Project Equality, ACWC (Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns), ACSWP (Advisory Committee for Social Witness Policy), MRTI (Mission Responsibility Through Investment), and the five racial ethnic caucuses, as well as other denominational groups.*

4. Does the ACREC provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

*The ACREC reports to each GA and the chair sits as a corresponding member of General Assembly and GAC.*

***Effectiveness of Services***

1. Does the ACREC have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?

*Yes. The ACREC has a clearly understood process by which the committee is able to respond to the variety of issues before it with flexibility.*

2. Does the ACREC have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?

*Yes. The ACREC normally reviews the Strategic Vision Plan in the Summer and Fall meetings following an assembly. It assesses on-going work, new work assigned by the assembly, and new areas of concern it wants to address based on input from committee members, liaisons, and staff.*

3. Does the ACREC employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?

*Yes. As an advocacy committee of the General Assembly, the ACREC communicates effectively with the church at large indirectly through its advocacy work with programmatic entities and the General Assembly, as well as through a print newsletter (The Torch) and through the PC(USA) Website.*

4. Does the ACREC utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?

*Yes. In 2004, the committee launched a Website with support from the GAC staff. The Website is linked to the Office for Racial Justice & Advocacy, Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries, ACWC, ACSWP, Peacemaking, and the Washington Office. The Website is designed to give the committee more visibility on an on-going basis. In the six-month period preceding the assembly, it focuses on communicating with commissioners and others interested in assembly business.*

5. Has the committee or commission developed a vision and plans for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and context of the PC(USA)?

*Yes. The ACREC initiated a strategic vision plan, which identifies areas of concern, to assist it in setting goals and prioritizing its work. The committee normally reviews this plan annually.*

**Item 14-Report 2. Report on the Review of the Advisory General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission—Approved. (See page 1338.)**

1. Commends the GAPJC for its work and insights gained in providing a self-study.
2. The GAPJC is cognizant of the importance of using new technology to communicate its work; however, case history is not currently recorded in electronic-digest form. Given that the GAPJC has identified in its self-study the importance of precedence in the adjudication of future cases, the Assembly Committee on the Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees recommends that the GAPJC and the Office of the Stated Clerk compile an electronic digest of all cases adjudicated from 1983 to the present.
3. The GAPJC should be encouraged to move forward to provide adequate information and technology support for the commission to do its work.
4. The self-study recognized the limits of judicial process and expressed concern for potential future increase in caseload; the commission therefore encouraged greater use of Alternative Forms of Resolution (AFR) beginning at the presbytery level. In keeping with Matthew 5:25, the review committee recommends that the Office of the General Assembly, in cooperation with the Office of the Stated Clerk, develop a process for using AFR starting at the presbytery level and present its recommendation to the 219 General Assembly (2010) for action.
5. That the following report on Review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission be approved.

**Report on Review of the General Assembly  
Permanent Judicial Commission**

**Introduction**

The review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) was conducted according to the provisions in the Standing Rules and the standards in the *Manual of the General Assembly* as far as this committee is aware.

**Mission**

The GAPJC is a commission of the General Assembly and is a reactive body as opposed to a committee that generates its own work.

As quoted in their self study: “The Rules of Discipline describe the judicial processes of the Church, of which the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) is a part. The GAPJC has both original and appellate jurisdiction as prescribed in the Rules of Discipline. Primarily an appellate court, the Commission hears and decides both remedial and disciplinary cases; however, GAPJC may conduct trials in cases of original jurisdiction.”

The mission of the GA PJC is stated as follows in the self-study:

“Judicial process is the means by which church discipline is implemented within the context of pastoral care and oversight. It is the exercise of authority by governing bodies of the church for

“a. the prevention and correction of irregularities and delinquencies by governing bodies, the General Assembly Council, or an entity of the General Assembly (Remedial Cases, D-6.0000);

“b. the prevention and correction of offenses by persons (Disciplinary Cases, D-10.0000).” (D-2.0101).”

**Membership**

As stated in the self-study:

The membership of the GAPJC is composed of ministers and elders (as nearly equal as possible) from each of the synods (D-5.0100). Thus there are sixteen commissioners from the sixteen synods; currently, however, there are two vacancies. Members are elected by the General Assembly and ordinarily serve for six years (D-5.0103). The change to biennial assemblies necessitated the adjustment of the terms of some of the current commissioners.

The commission elects its moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, and assistant clerk, who constitute the executive committee. Officers serve terms of two years and may be reelected. The responsibilities of the executive committee are delineated in the Manual of the GAPJC, which is appended to the self-study.

**Process**

The Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees received a self-study based on the work of the GAPJC for the last six years. The committee would like to commend the GAPJC for an excellent self-study, which was informative and thorough. The committee was disappointed that an external survey form, which the committee had prepared, had not been distributed and completed. The committee requests that a survey be included in the next GAPJC self-study.

**Findings:*****Fidelity to Mission and Partnership***

1. Does the GAPJC, as it was created by the church, serve and support the church's mission in a particular area? Does the GAPJC exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?

*In the presentation of the self-study, the committee was impressed by the commission's commitment to the task given to them by the GA and the quality of their faithfulness to the task. The GA PJC goes above and beyond its constitutional mandates to ensure this faithfulness (e.g., not only opening meetings with prayer but opening with daily corporate worship).*

2. Do the basic processes of the GAPJC demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly? Does the GAPJC exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which the GAPJC acts?

*The GAPJC demonstrates fidelity to its mission and accountability to establishing deliverance by self-limiting its review of cases presented to it. It perceives itself as deliberately not legislating through judicial review.*

3. Does the GAPJC exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?

*The GA PJC exhibits cooperation with those agencies with which it is mandated to work with and report (e.g., the Office of the Stated Clerk).*

4. Does the GAPJC provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

*Given the caseload, the GAPJC is timely in their responses to the General Assembly. It averages eleven cases per year and average 7.4 months from receiving a case to final adjudication. (2–3 cases per meeting ... 4 meetings).*

***Effectiveness of Services***

1. Does the GAPJC have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?

*Yes*

2. Does the GAPJC have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?

*Yes. At the conclusion of each meeting the commissioners complete an evaluation form.*

3. Does the GAPJC employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?

*Yes, through the office of the Office of the Stated Clerk. Since 2002 the commission has written Headnotes which summarize salient points of their decisions.*

4. Does the GAPJC utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?

*Yes, to the best of its ability given the budget constraints (see recommendations).*

5. Does the GAPJC have a developed vision and plan for its work in light its historic mandate and the emerging issues before the PC(USA)?

*Yes; however, because the GAPJC is a reactive body and the vision and scope of its work is proscribed by the Book of Order, the vision pertains only to its process and work.*

**Item 14-Report 3. Report on the Review of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examination of Candidates—Approved. (See page 1353.)**

**Report 3: Report on Review of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations of Candidates**

**1. This committee would like to commend the PCCEC for a thorough self-study. The committee wants to affirm the PCCEC commitment to the Theological Standard of The Reformed Faith while at the same time seeking to address the interpretative barriers of racial ethnic candidates. We recommend in the future that the communication links between the PCCEC and CPMs be continued and significantly strengthened. As the demographics of the denomination continue to change, we encourage the committee to engage in continual reassessment. We further recommend that the General Assembly continue to support the work of the PCCEC.**

**2. That the following report on Review of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations of Candidates be approved.**

Report on Review of the Presbyteries' Cooperative  
Committee on Examinations of Candidates

**Introduction:**

The review of the General Assembly committees was conducted according to the provisions in the Standing Rules and the standards in the *Manual of the General Assembly*.

**Mission**

The Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) has responsibility for the written exams that are among the requirements for ordination to the office of minister of Word and Sacrament.

**Membership:**

The committee has twenty-four members, half of whom are elected by the General Assembly, and half of whom are elected by six regional reading groups that meet annually to grade the exams. The committee recruits two additional, nonvoting members whose primary responsibility is preparation of the Bible Content Examination.

**Process**

The PCCEC provided a self-study based on their work and the General Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees reviewed the self-study, examined the survey results, and heard a presentation from the PCCEC.

**Findings:**

**A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership**

1. Does the PCCEC exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?

*Yes*

2. Does the basic process of the PCCEC demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly? Does the PCCEC exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which the PCCEC acts?

*Yes*

3. Does the PCCEC exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?

*Yes, The PCCEC communicated its desire to cooperate with other agencies dealing with ordination such as seminaries and CPMs.*

4. Does the PCCEC provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

*Yes. The committee was realistic about their timeline. It expressed a willingness to expedite the process when possible.*

**B. Effectiveness of Services**

1. Does the PCCEC have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?

*Yes. The self-study reflects a thorough analysis of its work to date and a well-thought out pilot program to strengthen the program in four areas: (1) Examination content and format; (2) Grading procedures; (3) Timing of when candidates take examinations; (4) Racial ethnic representation in the composing and grading of examinations.*

2. Does the PCCEC have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?

*Yes. The committee keeps track of their own internal statistics and evaluates the results.*

3. Does the PCCEC employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?

*Based on the self-study, it is unclear to us if and how the committee communicates with the church-at-large, including the CPMs, and especially racial ethnic sessions.*

4. Does the PCCEC utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?

*Yes.*

5. Does the PCCEC have a developed vision and a plan for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and within the context of the PC(USA)?

Yes.

### RECESS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Brenton Thompson, theological student advisory delegate from McCormick Theological, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 10:59 p.m. to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, June 27.

Friday, June 27, 2008, 8:30 A.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 8:30 a.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized the Reverend Stephen Kendall of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Bruce Hedgepeth, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved revisions to the docket (Item 02-04, see page 137). The assembly acted to approve a one-minute limit on speeches for Friday business sessions and to cancel any scheduled speakout sessions.

Hedgepeth reported that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures examined the minutes of the General Assembly of Wednesday, June 25, 2008, and found them in order. The assembly approved Item 02-02. (See page 135.)

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized George Kimm, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications to the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Kimm reported that the total financial implications of actions approved by the assembly to date were \$8,495 for 2008; \$164,845 for 2009; and \$38,165 for 2010. Items recommended by assembly committees, but yet to be considered by the assembly, amount to: \$44,835 for 2008; \$176,540 for 2009; and \$80,430 for 2010. Kimm asked the assembly to be mindful of the per capita budget implications of proposed actions.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Kears Pollock, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Pollock announced that the total financial implications of actions approved by the assembly to date were \$380 for 2008; \$121,275 for 2009; and \$12,752 for 2010. Items recommended by assembly committees, but yet to be considered by the assembly amount to: \$8,378 for 2008; \$112,237 for 2009; and \$43,486 for 2010.

### ELECTION OF THE STATED CLERK

Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow called for the election of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, as required by Standing Rule H. In accordance with the same Standing Rule, Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick yielded the clerk's chair to Alyson Janke, stated clerk of the Presbytery of John Knox. Janke described the procedure for the election.

Having been nominated during a previous meeting of the assembly (see pages 5, 77), the nominee of the committee, Gradye Parsons, and the three other candidates for stated clerk, Edward Koster, William Tarbell, and Winfield Jones, were afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for five minutes each. The candidates then responded to questions from the floor for a period of one hour. The candidates were then escorted from the hall by Platform Manager Conrad Rocha. Acting Stated Clerk Alyson Janke explained the electronic voting procedures and Moderator Reyes-Chow led the assembly in prayer.

Gradye Parsons was elected Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on the first ballot, receiving a total of 405 votes. Of the total votes cast Winfield Jones received 176, Edward Koster received 110, and William Tarbell received 21.

Moderator Reyes-Chow declared that Gradye Parsons was duly elected to the office of Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Stated Clerk-elect Gradye Parsons was accompanied to the platform by family members and friends. Moderator Reyes-Chow led a service of installation for Stated Clerk-elect Parsons. Dennis Hughes, Donnie Woods, and Catherine Ulrich participated in leading the service. Kathy Parsons led the assembly in prayer.

Parsons addressed the assembly, promising to always offer the assembly his very best.

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Dan Holloway, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved Item 05-03 as amended and answered Item 05-18 with the action taken on Item 05-03.

The assembly approved Item 05-12 as amended and answered Items 05-01, 05-02, 05-04, 05-05, 05-07, and 05-10 with the action taken on Item 05-12.

Holloway moved the committee recommendation on Item 05-09. A minority report was introduced. The minority report was perfected. The main motion was perfected. Moderator Reyes-Chow put the question to the assembly, "Shall the minority report become the main motion?" The minority report was defeated. The assembly approved Item 05-09 with comment.

The assembly answered Items 05-06, 05-08, 05-11, and 05-13 with the action taken on Item 05-09.

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Barbara Farley.

The assembly approved Items 05-14 and 05-15. The assembly approved Items 05-16 and 05-17.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry and the committee report is as follows:

#### **Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry**

**[There are no items for the consent agenda and there are no items with financial implications in this report.]**

**Item 05-01. On Rescinding the Action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on Recommendation Five of the Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-12. (See page 345.)**

**Item 05-02. On Requesting that All Actions of the 217th General Assembly Related to the Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity be Fully Rescinded—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-12. (See page 352.)**

**Item 05-03. On Directing the Stated Clerk to Collect and/or Develop Models of Examination Procedures—Approved as amended. (See page 353.)**

**Item 05-04. On Rescinding Recommendation 5 of the Theological Task Force Report, and Adopting a New Authoritative Interpretation Regarding Ordination Standards—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-12. (See page 358.)**

**Item 05-05. On Approving an Authoritative Interpretation to G-6.0108, "Freedom of Conscience - Interpretation of Scriptures"—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-12. (See page 361.)**

**Item 05-06. On Deleting G-6.0106b, and on Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-09. (See page 364.)**

**Item 05-07. On Amending G-6.0106b and G-6.0108b to Clarify the Requirement that Mandatory Provisions of the *Book of Order* Be Enforced by Ordaining Bodies—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-12. (See page 368.)**

**Item 05-08. On Deleting G-6.0106b and Approving an Authoritative Interpretation—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-09. (See page 370.)**

**Item 05-09. On Deleting G-6.0106b and Substituting a new Paragraph in its place; on Amending G14.0240 and G-14.0450; and on Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—Approved with comment. (See page 371.)**

**Item 05-10. On Amending G-6.0108b, “Freedom of Conscience within Certain Bounds,” to Include a Freedom of Ordaining Bodies within Certain Bounds—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-12. (See page 374.)**

**Item 05-11. On Amending G-6.0106b and Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-09. (See page 377.)**

**Item 05-12. On Adopting an Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 to Ensure Proper Application of Ordination Standards—Approved as amended. (See page 379.)**

**Item 05-13. On Replacing G-6.0106b With a New Paragraph, and Providing A New Authoritative Interpretation—Answered by the action taken on Item 05-09. (See page 383.)**

**Item 05-14. G-14.0482, Ordaining to Non-Called Positions—Approved. (See page 385.)**

**Item 05-15. G-14.0550, Non-Ministers are Temporary Supplies—Approved. (See page 386.)**

**Item 05-16. Interpretation of PUP—Approved. (See page 387.)**

**Item 05-17. Omission of Reference to Directory of Worship from G-6.0108a—Approved. (See page 388.)**

**Item 05-18. On Directing the Stated Clerk to Collect and/or Develop Models of Examination Procedures— Answered by the action taken on Item 05-03. (See page 389.)**

#### **Dissents**

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-01 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-02 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-03 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise; and David Speering, Presbytery of Charlotte.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-05 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Erma Jones, Presbytery of Cherokee; Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise; and David Speering, Presbytery of Charlotte.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-06 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Walt Dellow, Presbytery of John Calvin; and Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-07 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-08 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Toby Gurley, Presbytery of South Alabama; and Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-09 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Steve Aeschbacher, Presbytery of Seattle; Clay Allard, Presbytery of Grace; Lisa Baker, Presbytery of Southern New England; Valerie Bell, Presbytery of Peace River; Christine Bohn, Presbytery of Detroit; George Bones, Presbytery of New Covenant; Rick Boogaard, Presbytery of Seattle; Brad Buff, Presbytery of Inland Northwest; Deena Candler, Presbytery of Missouri River Valley; Jim Caprell, Presbytery of Foothills; Maurice Caskey, Presbytery of San Diego; Cricket Cohen, Presbytery of West Jersey; Clinton Cottrell, Presbytery of Peace River; Gerald Coutant, Presbytery of Northeast Georgia; Jeanne Cox, Presbytery of Upper Ohio Valley; Bob Davis, Presbytery of San Diego; Leslie Day-Ebert, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Peter deVries, Presbytery of Beaver-Butler; Sylvia Dooling, Presbytery of Plains and Peaks; Lisa Lani East-erling, Presbytery of South Louisiana; Mark Evans, Presbytery of Beaver-Butler; Robert Farrow, Presbytery of Santa Bar-

bara; Douglas Fletcher, Presbytery of Mission; Jack Foley, Presbytery of Cherokee; David Freehling, Presbytery of Pueblo; George Gardner, Presbytery of Beaver-Butler; David Grove, Presbytery of Cherokee; Michael Haggin, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; John Hamilton, Presbytery of Blackhawk; Timothy Havlicek, Presbytery of Coastal Carolina; Bruce Hedgepeth, Presbytery of Central Florida; Hank Heidler, Presbytery of West Jersey; Mark Hunt, Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic; Tim Hunt, Presbytery of San Francisco; Erma Jones, Presbytery of Cherokee; Sally Kirby, Presbytery of Peace River; Conway Lanford, Presbytery of New Hope; Freda Lawther, Presbytery of Lake Huron; Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise; Tamara Letts, Presbytery of Yukon; Jeffrey Leininger, Presbytery of Palisades; Charlie Little, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Laura Long, Presbytery of Western North Carolina; Jesse Mabanglo, Presbytery of Seattle; Lee Martin, Presbytery of Peace River; Gary Mathews, Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; Linda Matkins, Presbytery of South Dakota; Steven Matthies, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley; Duncan McColl, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Emily McColl, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Curt McFarland, Presbytery of Central Washington; Catherine McGowen, Presbytery of South Louisiana; Rick Mechtly, Presbytery of Northeast Georgia; Henry Meeuwse, Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic; Richard Mills, Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Maurice Mitchell, Presbytery of Cincinnati; James Moelk, Presbytery of Lake Erie; Todd Mulford, Presbytery of South Louisiana; Tom Murray, Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; Ron Oldenkamp, Presbytery of Sacramento; Louis Paradise, Presbytery of San Joaquin; Mark Patterson, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Scott Paul-Bonham, Presbytery of Ohio Valley; Gary Pichon, Presbytery of Cherokee; Marjorie Poggas, Presbytery of Yukon; Gene Price, Presbytery of New Covenant; Karen Rogers, Presbytery of Cimarron; Frederick Seay, Presbytery of South Louisiana; John Sheldon, Presbytery of West Jersey; Archie Smith, Presbytery of San Joaquin; David Speering, Presbytery of Charlotte; William Stepp, Presbytery of Tropical Florida; Donna Steven, Presbytery of North Central Iowa; Betsy Straeter, Presbytery of San Gabriel; Thomas Straeter, Presbytery of San Diego; William Teng, Presbytery of National Capital; Paul Terry, Presbytery of Southern New England; David Ullom, Presbytery of North Central Iowa; Burfoot Ward, Presbytery of Lake Erie; Bob Welsh, Presbytery of Central Washington; and Charles Winkelman, Presbytery of Northumberland.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-10 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-12 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Steve Aeschbacher, Presbytery of Seattle; Clay Allard, Presbytery of Grace; Lisa Baker, Presbytery of Southern New England; Laureen Bodnar, Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Christine Bohn, Presbytery of Detroit; George Bones, Presbytery of New Covenant; Rick Boogaard, Presbytery of Seattle; Deena Candler, Presbytery of Missouri River Valley; Maurice Caskey, Presbytery of San Diego; Cricket Cohen, Presbytery of West Jersey; Nancy Cormack-Hughes, Presbytery of Utah; Jeanne Cox, Presbytery of Upper Ohio Valley; Bob Davis, Presbytery of San Diego; Leslie Day-Ebert, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Peter deVries, Presbytery of Beaver-Butler; Sylvia Dooling, Presbytery of Plains and Peaks; Dale Dykstra, Presbytery of Blackhawk; Mark Evans, Presbytery of Beaver-Butler; Jon Faraone, Presbytery of Western Kentucky; Robert Farrow, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Douglas Fletcher, Presbytery of Mission; Jack Foley, Presbytery of Cherokee; Doug Garrard, Presbytery of Riverside; David Grove, Presbytery of Cherokee; John Hamilton, Presbytery of Blackhawk; Chip Hatcher, Presbytery of St. Andrew; Bruce Hedgepeth, Presbytery of Central Florida; Hank Heidler, Presbytery of West Jersey; Douglas Hileman, Presbytery of Donegal; Bill Hoffman, Presbytery of Shenango; Tim Hunt, Presbytery of San Francisco; Mike Lambert, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise; Jeffrey Leininger, Presbytery of Palisades; Charlie Little, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Jesse Mabanglo, Presbytery of Seattle; Gary Mathews, Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; Linda Matkins, Presbytery of South Dakota; Steven Matthies, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley; Duncan McColl, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Emily McColl, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Curt McFarland, Presbytery of Central Washington; Catherine McGowen, Presbytery of South Louisiana; Rick Mechtly, Presbytery of Northeast Georgia; Richard Mills, Presbytery of Pittsburgh; James Moelk, Presbytery of Lake Erie; Tom Murray, Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; Ron Oldenkamp, Presbytery of Sacramento; Louis Paradise, Presbytery of San Joaquin; Doris Pate, Presbytery of San Diego; Mark Patterson, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Gary Pichon, Presbytery of Cherokee; Gene Price, Presbytery of New Covenant; Lawrence Ruby, Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Frederick Seay, Presbytery of South Louisiana; John Sheldon, Presbytery of West Jersey; Terry Simm, Presbytery of Prospect Hill; Archie Smith, Presbytery of San Joaquin; William Stepp, Presbytery of Tropical Florida; Betsy Straeter, Presbytery of San Gabriel; Thomas Straeter, Presbytery of San Diego; Paul Terry, Presbytery of Southern New England; William Teng, Presbytery of National Capital; Paul Terry, Presbytery of Southern New England; Ron Urzua, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Burfoot Ward, Presbytery of Lake Erie; Bob Welsh, Presbytery of Central Washington; and Charles Winkelman, Presbytery of Northumberland.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-13 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Rebecca Lee, Presbytery of Boise; and David Speering, Presbytery of Charlotte.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-15 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Todd Mulford, Presbytery of South Louisiana.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 05-16 of the Assembly Committee on Church Order and Ministry: Linda Matkins, Presbytery of South Dakota.



**RECESS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Michelle Muñiz-Vega, youth advisory delegate from the Presbytery of San Juan, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 12:01 p.m. to reconvene at 2:30 p.m., following worship at 1:30 p.m.

Friday, June 27, 2008, 2:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 2:30 p.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Bishop Eliezer M. Pascua of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

**ECUMENICAL GREETING**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized the Reverend Elisa Muñoz de Bulnes of the Presbyterian Church of Venezuela, who brought greetings to the assembly.

Vice-Moderator Byron Wade assumed the chair.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PEACEMAKING AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

Vice-Moderator Wade recognized Nancy Kahaian, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved Items 11-12 (as amended), 11-13, 11-14 (as amended), 11-16, 11-19, 11-30 (as amended), and 11-31 on the committee's consent agenda.

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Beverly James.

Following the viewing of a portion of a video presentation on the topic, the assembly approved Item 11-32.

The report of the committee was continued by Kahaian.

William Poole, moderator of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa, led the assembly in prayer for Christians in Zimbabwe. The assembly approved Item 11-15 as amended and with comments.

Helis Hernan Barraza Diaz, moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, led the assembly in prayer for Christians in Colombia. The assembly approved Item 11-18 as amended and answered Item 11-21 with the action taken on Item 11-18.

The assembly approved Item 11-22 and answered Item 11-01 with an alternate resolution. The assembly answered Items 11-03 and 11-04 with the action taken on Item 11-01.

The assembly approved Item 11-06 and answered Item 11-25 with the action taken on 11-06. The assembly approved Item 11-28 as amended.

Kahaian introduced the committee recommendation on Item 11-26. A minority report was introduced. The main motion was perfected as amended. The minority report was perfected. Vice-Moderator Wade put the question to the assembly, "Shall the minority report become the main motion?" The minority report was approved. The assembly answered Item 11-26 with the action taken on 11-01.

The assembly disapproved Items 11-02 and 11-07 and approved Item 11-09. The assembly approved Item 11-11 as amended and approved Item 11-17 as amended.

Kahaian introduced the committee recommendation on Item 11-10. A minority report was introduced. The main motion was perfected as amended. The minority report was perfected. Vice-Moderator Wade put the question to the assembly, "Shall the minority report become the main motion?" The minority report was defeated. The assembly approved Item 11-10 as amended and with the following floor amendments: (1) strike "sorrow and confession" and insert "humility" in the first sentence of the first paragraph, and (2) insert paragraphs 12 through 15 to read:

["12. Commend to the church the call of the 216th General Assembly (2004) for the church to express its pastoral concern for and offer pastoral care to members of the United States armed forces serving their country in the war in Iraq

and their families as well as for veterans of the war who have returned home (Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future, Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 864ff).

[13. Direct the General Assembly Council to continue to expand the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s commitment to relief efforts in Iraq in cooperation with our ecumenical partners, to ministries that address human needs in Iraq caused by the war, and to long-term development efforts to assist in the rebuilding of the country.

[14. Call upon all presbyteries, congregations, and members within the PC (USA) to intentionally, personally, and concretely work to bring healing, peace, justice, and care to all affected by the war in Iraq, not only through our prayers but through the giving of our resources, time, money, and very selves to improve the lives and future of all involved, especially the hurting, the poor, the oppressed, and those whose lives have been damaged by the war.

[15. Pray for, call for, and work for a just and peaceful future for the nation and people of Iraq, which includes the establishing of a just, stable, and democratic government and the timely departure of U.S. military forces and their contractors as soon as it is possible to leave the nation in an appropriately stable, just, and self-sustaining form.]

The assembly answered Items 11-08, 11-20, and 11-24 with the action taken on Item 11-10. The assembly approved Item 11-27 and answered Item 11-29 with the action taken on Item 11-27. The assembly disapproved Item 11-23 and approved Item 11-33 as amended and with the following floor amendment: to insert the following text at the beginning of the item: "The 218th General Assembly (2008) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following resolution to the president of the United States of America and the United States Congress:"

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues and the committee report is as follows:

#### **Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues**

[Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]

**Item 11-01. On Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel—Answered with alternate resolution. (See page 1137.)**

**Item 11-02. On Pursuing a Culture of a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine—Disapproved. (See page 1139.)**

**Item 11-03. On Endorsing the "Amman Call" Regarding Arab-Israeli Peace—Answer by action taken on Item 11-01. (See page 1145.)**

**Item 11-04. On Travel to Israel and Palestine—Answer by action taken on Item 11-01. (See page 1148.)**

**Item 11-05 was WITHDRAWN. There is no Item 11-05.**

**Item 11-06. On the 218th General Assembly Being a Voice for the Victims of Violence in Israel and Palestine—Approved. (See page 1150.)**

**Item 11-07. On Supporting Israel's Right to Exist But Calling for Temporary Suspension of Military Aid to the State of Israel—Disapproved. (See page 1151.)**

**Item 11-08. On the Withdrawal of U.S. Troops from Iraq—Answered by action taken on Item 11-10. (See page 1155.)**

**Item 11-09. Regarding Assistance for Iraqi Refugees—Approved. (See page 1156.)**

**Item 11-10. On Building Peace in Iraq—Approved as amended. (See page 1159.)**

**Item 11-11. On Addressing the Violence and Suffering Inflicted on Iraqi Women During the Current Prolonged War—Approved as amended. (See page 1162.)**

**\*Item 11-12. On Preventing the Trafficking of Women, Internationally and Nationally—Approved as amended. (See page 1164.)**

**\*Item 11-13. Resolution to Expand Ministry: Human Trafficking—Approved. (See page 1167.)**

**\*Item 11-14. On Endorsing the "Publish What You Pay" Campaign—Approved as amended. (See page 1170.)**

**Item 11-15. On Support for the Presbyterian Church in Zimbabwe—Approved as amended and with comment.** (See page 1174.) *Comment:* Commend the South African dockworkers for having the courage to refuse to unload a shipment of arms from China for Zimbabwe. Commend the various religious and secular organizations working to restore peace and order in many countries in Africa and around the world.

**\*Item 11-16. On Peacemaking and the Pursuit of Justice and Fairness of Shalom—Approved.** (See page 1176.)

**Item 11-17. Overture on War, Mercenaries, and Profiteering—Approved as amended.** (See page 1177.)

**Item 11-18. Human Rights in Colombia—Approved as amended.** (See page 1180.)

**\*Item 11-19. Commitment to Peacemaking—Approved.** (See page 1185.)

**Item 11-20. On Ending the War in Iraq—Answered by action taken on Item 11-10.** (See page 1186.)

**Item 11-21. On Peacemaking in Colombia—Answered by action taken on Item 11-18.** (See page 1188.)

**\$Item 11-22. On Supporting Those Who Feel Called to Seek Status as Conscientious Objectors—Approved.** (See page 1191.) [Financial Implication: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$3,000; (2010): \$0 [Mission]]

**Item 11-23. On Divestment from Caterpillar, Inc. and Motorola, Inc. for Profiting from the Israeli Military Occupation of Palestine Territories—Disapproved.** (See page 1193.)

**Item 11-24. Costly Lessons of the Iraq War—Answered by action taken on Item 11-10.** (See page 1198.)

**Item 11-25. On Becoming Non-Partisan Advocates for Peace—Answered by action taken on Item 11-06.** (See page 1219.)

**Item 11-26. On Middle East Peacemaking—Answered by action taken on Item 11-01.** (See page 1220.)

**Item 11-27. Report from MRTI of Corporate Engagements in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank—Approved.** (See page 1223.)

**\$Item 11-28. Prepare Study on Israel/Palestine within the Context of the Middle East—Approved as amended.** (See page 1226.) [Original Financial Implications- (2008): \$7,340; (2009): \$29,960; (2010): \$5,240 [Per Capita-GAC] Committee Action Financial Implications- (2008): \$8,455; (2009): \$27,925; (2010): \$5,380 [Per Capita-OGA]]

**Item 11-29. Alternate Resolution to 2006 Referral: Item 11-01. *On Rescinding and Modifying Certain Actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Recommendations 2.a.–d. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Ensure That Its Strategies for Engaging Corporations with Regard to Israeli and Palestinian Territories—Answered by action taken on Item 11-27.*** (See page 1226.)

**\*Item 11-30. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Mobilizing Presbyterians for a Significant Response to the Global Food Crisis—Approved as amended.*** (See page 1226.)

**\*Item 11-31. *Commissioners' Resolution. Concerning Human Rights Violations in the Philippines—Approved.*** (See page 1229.)

**Item 11-32. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Emergency Food Aid to North Korea—Approved.*** (See page 1232.)

**Item 11-33. *Commissioners Resolution. On Peace with Iran—Approved as amended.*** (See page 1233.)

#### Dissents

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 11-01 of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues: Maurice Caskey, Presbytery of San Diego; Bob Davis, Presbytery of San Diego; Michael Haggin, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Mike Lambert, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Steven Matthies, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley; Mark Moore, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley; and Thomas Straeter, Presbytery of San Diego.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 11-10 of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues: Walt Dellow, Presbytery of John Calvin; Dale Dykstra, Presbytery of Blackhawk; William

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Johnson, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley; Tamara Letts, Presbytery of Yukon; and Gene Price, Presbytery of New Covenant.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 11-18 of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues: Paul Terry, Presbytery of Southern New England.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 11-26 of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues: Mark Moore, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 11-27 of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues: Mark Moore, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 11-29 of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues: Mark Moore, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley.

Moderator Reyes-Chow assumed the chair.

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Chandlee Gill, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved Items 04-09, 04-10, 04-11, 04-14, 04-15, 04-18 (alternate resolution), 04-19, 04-20, 04-21, 04-22, 04-23, 04-24, 04-25, 04-26 (with comment), and 04-27 on the committee's consent agenda.

The assembly approved Item 04-01 as amended and approved Item 04-02 with an alternate resolution.

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Raymond Thomas.

The assembly disapproved Item 04-03 with comment and disapproved Item 04-04. The assembly disapproved the committee's recommendation to approve Item 04-06 with amendment; the floor then disapproved the item. Item 04-07 was answered with an alternate resolution.

The report of the committee was continued by Gill.

Gill moved the committee recommendation on Item 04-08. A substitute motion was introduced.

The assembly voted to recess for dinner and the report of the committee was arrested. Moderator Reyes-Chow offered prayer. The assembly recessed at 5:52 p.m. to reconvene at 7:30 p.m. (Report continued below.)

Friday, June 27, 2008, 7:30 P.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 7:30 p.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Derrick McQueen, theological student advisory delegate from Auburn Theological Seminary, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Chandlee Gill, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity, to continue the report from above. The assembly resumed consideration of Item 04-08. The main motion was declared perfected. The substitute motion was perfected. Moderator Reyes-Chow put the question to the assembly, "Shall the substitute become the main motion?" The substitute motion was defeated. The assembly disapproved Item 04-08.

The assembly approved Item 04-13 with the following floor amendments: (1) insert "and theological balance" following the words "broad diversity" in paragraph 2, and (2) to insert the following text as a new paragraph 4: ["4. This overture seeks to renew and strengthen the commitment of the PCUSA to equal protection under the law, encourage steps to reinforce this commitment and to affirm the importance of pastoral care and outreach to non-traditional families, including those same-gender commitment partners. This overtures advocates for equal rights and does not seek to redefine the nature of Christian marriage."].

The assembly answered Item 04-12 with the action taken on Item 04-13.

The assembly approved Item 04-16, approved Item 04-17 with comment, and approved Item 04-28 as amended. Gill reported that the committee had taken final action on Items 04-A–P.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and the committee report is as follows:

### Assembly Committee on Church Polity

[Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk.]

**Item 04-01. On Amending G-6.0401 by Replacing the Word “Sympathy” with the Word “Empathy”—From the Presbytery of Albany—Approved as amended. (See page 239.)**

**Item 04-02. On Amending G-5.0200 to Add the Vows of Membership to the *Book of Order*—From the Presbytery of Mission—Alternate resolution approved. (See page 241.)**

**Item 04-03. On Amending G-10.0101, G-10.0401, and D-10.0401b Regarding Accounting Practices of the Church—From the Presbytery of the Pacific—Disapproved with comment. (See page 243.) *Comment:* It is expected that the accounting practices of a church shall minimally conform to the standards of not-for-profit organizations for their state.**

**Item 04-04. On Amending G-7.0301, “Meetings of the Congregation”—From the Presbytery of Denver —Disapproved. (See page 245.)**

**Item 04-05 was WITHDRAWN. There is no Item 04-05.**

**Item 04-06. On Amending D-7.0402c and D-8.0404c. Regarding Permanent Judicial Commission Written Decisions—From the Presbytery of Stockton—Disapproved. (See page 248.)**

**Item 04-07. On Adding a New Section D-1.0104 to Limit the Abuse in Disciplinary Process by the Filing of Multiple Complaints and/or Allegations—From the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.—Approved an Alternate Resolution. (See page 249.) Alternate Resolution: That the Stated Clerk be instructed to prepare an advisory opinion outlining existing remedies to address abuses of judicial process, and the Office of the General Assembly be instructed to prepare any necessary constitutional amendments for presentation to the 219th General Assembly (2010) in order to provide for responses following due process, for permanent judicial commissions and sessions to censure persons found guilty of abusing judicial process through frivolous and/or harassing complaints and/or allegations.**

**Item 04-08. On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding the Definition of Marriage—From the Presbytery of Baltimore—Disapproved. (See page 251.)**

**\*Item 04-09. On Establishing the Star Valley United Church in Thayne, Wyoming, as a Union Church—From the Presbytery of Wyoming—Approved. (See page 254.)**

**\*Item 04-10. On Establishing Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh, N.Y., as a Union Church—From the Presbytery of Albany—Approved. (See page 255.)**

**\*Item 04-11. On Establishing Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church as an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Union Church—From the Presbytery of Nevada—Approved. (See page 256.)**

**Item 04-12. On Equal Rights for Families of Same-Gender Partners—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick.—Answered with Action on Item 04-13. (See page 257.)**

**Item 04-13. On Equal Rights for Families of Same-Gender Partners—From the Presbytery of Denver—Approved with Floor Amendment (See page 258.)**

**\*Item 04-14. Moderator Discretion in Determining Suitability for Membership and Ordination—Approved. (See page 260.)**

**\*Item 04-15. Request for Interpretation of D-2.0103, D-10.0202, Alternate Forms of Resolution (AFR)—Approved. (See page 262.)**

**Item 04-16. Interpretation of the Rules of Discipline: Status of Negotiated Settlements—Approved.** (See page 264.)

**Item 04-17. Possible Conflict Between 14.0730b and G-11.0407, Certification of Christian Educator—Approved with comment** (See page 265.) *Comment:* That the inclusion of Associate Christian Educators be examined by the appropriate General Assembly committee or entity.

**\*Item 04-18. G-13.0107, Synod Participation on Permanent Committees and GANC—Approved an Alternate Resolution.** Alternate resolution approved. (See page 266.)

In response to Item 04-18, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved the following resolution:

While the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has offered some relief to these concerns by proposing new language that would allow the General Assembly to determine which of its permanent committees shall have permanent representation from each of the synods or have rotating representation from among the synods, the General Assembly Nominating Committee believes that the former advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution provided to the 217th General Assembly (2006) is a more effective response. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution formerly advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) that

4. Proposed amendments to G-13.0107: The proposed revision of this section should be assessed to determine whether all permanent committees of the General Assembly require representation from each synod. The term “permanent committees” is not specifically defined by the provision, but presumably would include all committees whose membership is not otherwise defined by *Book of Order*. The assembly should consider whether the size of permanent committees should be defined by the mission of the committee rather than a formalistic approach. (Section G-9.0402a: “Mission determines the form of structure and administration. All structures should enable the church to give effective witness to the Lordship of Christ in the contemporary world.”) [Underline added for emphasis.]

If the 217th General Assembly (2006) agrees with the restructuring of membership being proposed and wishes to address these concerns, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution suggests the following alternative resolution be presented to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

- a. Shall G-13.0107 be stricken.
- b. Shall G-13.0108 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“The General Assembly shall establish a permanent Committee on Representation as required by G-9.0105, which shall advise the General Assembly Nominating Committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation shall report to each meeting of the General Assembly (other than special or adjourned meetings) regarding progress toward fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403. *The committee shall consist of members equal in number to the synods of the church, each member resident in a different synod, and members distributed so that there are one third ministers (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen.*”

- c. Add to the proposed revision to G-13.0202 as proposed by this Item the following text:

“The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the manual of operations of the General Assembly Council. *The Council shall include members from each of the synods of the church.*” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 644)

The General Assembly Nominating Committee supports the 2006 advice of the ACC and suggests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) consider approving it.

Therefore, the 218th General Assembly (2008) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall G-13.0107 be stricken.
2. Shall G-13.0108 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“The General Assembly shall establish a permanent Committee on Representation as required by G-9.0105, which shall advise the General Assembly Nominating Committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation shall report to each meeting of the General Assembly (other than special or adjourned meetings) regarding progress toward fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403. *The committee shall consist of members equal in number to the synods of the church, each member resident in a different synod, and members distributed so that there are one third ministers (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen.*”

3. Shall G-13.0202a be amended as follows:

“The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council. *The Council shall include members from each of the synods of the church.*”

**\*Item 04-19. W-4.4003, “Minister” or “Moderator”—Approved. (See page 272.)**

**\*Item 04-20. G-7.0304, Presbytery and Quorum for Congregational Meeting—Approved. (See page 272.)**

**\*Item 04-21. Member/Church Officer Renounces Jurisdiction—Approved. (See page 274.)**

**\*Item 04-22. D-10.0202h(3), Settlement Agreement—Approved. (See page 276.)**

**\*Item 04-23. Clarification regarding Certification of Christian Educators—Approved. (See page 277.)**

**\*Item 04-24. Discretionary Powers of Presbytery Regarding Formula of Agreement and Orderly Exchange—Approved. (See page 279.)**

**\*Item 04-25. On Transferring Shalom Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of Riverside—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii—Approved. (See page 281.)**

**\*Item 04-26. On Transferring Faith Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of the Pacific—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii—Approved with Comment. (See page 281.) *Comment:* It is understood the effective date is 1-1 2009.**

**\*Item 04-27. Response to Study of Inappropriate Use of Judicial Process—Approved. (See page 282.)**

**Item 04-28. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Urging a Gracious, Pastoral Response to Churches Requesting Dismissal from the PC(USA)—Approved as Amended. (See page 284.)**

## **II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 04-A. Minutes, Synod of Alaska-Northwest—Approved as follows:

1. The minutes from 2006 are approved with no exceptions.
2. The minutes from 2007 are approved with exceptions and with comments:
  - a. Exceptions
    - (1) There is no report of the committee on representation.
    - (2) The minutes were not signed.
  - b. Comments
    - (1) The title page does not show attestation that the minutes of the most recent previous session or sessions have been reviewed by General Assembly and shall give page references to action or exceptions, if there be such.
    - (2) The minutes were presented for review before they were approved.

Item 04-B. Minutes, Synod of the Covenant—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exceptions.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 04-C. Minutes, Synod of Lakes and Prairies—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exceptions.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 04-D. Minutes, Synod of Lincoln Trails—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exceptions.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 04-E. Minutes, Synod of Living Waters—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exceptions.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 04-F. Minutes, Synod of Mid-America—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with the following exceptions:
  - a. There is no indication that either set of minutes has been approved.
  - b. The record of nominations from the floor or that the nominations were voted on was not clear.
  - c. In Volume II, The Journal, page 63 is missing.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with the following exception and comment:
  - a. Exception—That the corresponding member indicated does not show the presbytery membership.
  - b. Comment—Even though there was a certification of both sets of minutes, both sets of minutes still needed to be signed.

Item 04-G. Minutes, Synod of Mid-Atlantic—Approved as follows (no synod meeting in 2006):

The 2007 minutes are approved with the following exception and comments:

- a. Exception—The minutes do not contain an index.
- b. Comments
  - (1) The stated clerk shall report the outcomes of remedial cases, not the moderator.
  - (2) The committee on representation report was too limited in scope.

Item 04-H. Minutes, Synod of the Northeast—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with the following exception and comments:
  - a. Exception—The treasurer’s full annual review and a report of the results of the audit are not included.
  - b. Comment—Each appendix shall be separately identified.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with the following exception and comment as follows:
  - a. Exception—The treasurer’s full annual review and a report of the results of the audit are not included.
  - b. Comment—At times the minutes were detailed but unclear.

Item 04-I. Minutes, Synod of the Pacific—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exception.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exception.

Item 04-J. Minutes, Sinodo Boriquen En Puerto (Synod of Puerto Rico)—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with the following exception and comment:
  - a. Exception—There is no report of the committee on representation.
  - b. Comment—The minutes do not contain an index.
2. The 2007 the minutes are approved with the following exceptions:
  - a. The minutes do not contain an index.
  - b. The minutes do not indicate if it is a “stated,” “adjourned,” or “special” governing body meeting.

Item 04-K. Minutes, Synod of the Rocky Mountains—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exceptions.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exceptions.



Item 04-L. Minutes, Synod of South Atlantic—Approved as follows (no synod meeting in 2006):

The 2007 minutes are approved with the following exceptions and comment:

- a. Exceptions—
  - (1) The reviews of the records of presbyteries, including any exceptions taken were not complete,
  - (2) The minutes do not contain an index.
- b. Comment—A statement that a quorum was present, including an indication of the number specified as a quorum in the synod bylaws or standing rules were not identified.

Item 04-M. Minutes, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exceptions.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 04-N. Minutes, Synod of the Southwest—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with the following comment:  
The actions taken on some reports and recommendations were not consistently recorded in the minutes.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with the following comment:  
The financial report is unclear.

Item 04-O. Minutes, Synod of the Sun— Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with the following comment:
  - a. There is no specific report showing that insurance was reviewed for this year.
  - b. There needs to be more thorough/complete information about insurance coverage for this year.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with the following exception:  
The rosters of the committee on representation and the nominating committee are missing.

Item 04-P. Minutes, Synod of the Trinity—Approved as follows:

1. The 2006 minutes are approved with no exceptions.
2. The 2007 minutes are approved with no exceptions.

### **Dissent**

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 04-08 of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity: William James Hardy, Presbytery of Western New York; and Eric Ledermann, Presbytery of Western New York.

A motion to reconsider Item 05-09 was defeated.

### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Kim Warner, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved Items 09-01, 09-02, 09-03 and 09-19 on the committee's consent agenda.

The assembly approved Item 09-06 with amendment. In response to Item 09-07, the assembly approved an alternate resolution, which included the following floor amendment: insert paragraph 6 to read: [“6. Request that all PC(USA) members forgo one meal per week (if one is able) as an act of worship and humility. The value of that meal is to be pledged (in a manner of the donor's choice) to feeding those in need.”].

In response to Item 09-04, the assembly approved an alternate resolution, which included the following floor amendment: insert the words “working not only with PDA but also in partnership with local congregations” following the words “recovery efforts” in paragraph 1.

The assembly answered Item 09-17 with the action taken on 09-04. The assembly approved Item 09-15.

The assembly approved Item 09-05 as amended and with the following floor amendment: strike the word “clips” and insert the word “magazines” in paragraph 1.f.(2) and to strike the existing language in paragraph 1.f.(5).

The assembly approved Item 09-14 as amended.

Warner introduced the committee recommendation on Item 09-09. A minority report was introduced. The main motion was perfected. The minority report was perfected. Moderator Reyes-Chow put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was defeated. The assembly approved Item 09-09 as amended.

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator Betsy Straeter. Vice-Moderator Byron Wade assumed the chair.

The assembly approved Items 09-11 as amended, approved Item 09-21 as amended, approved Item 09-20 as amended and with comment, and approved Item 09-10 as amended.

The report of the committee was continued by Moderator Warner.

The assembly approved Item 09-08 with the following floor amendment: insert the words “Presbyterian Colleges, Universities and Schools (as listed in Item 12-06)” following the words “That seminaries” in paragraph 2(k).

The assembly approved Item 09-16, approved Item 09-13, and approved Item 09-12.

The assembly viewed a brief video on the “Living Waters for the World” project. Warner reported that the committee had taken final action on Item 09-A–B.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues and the committee report is as follows:

#### **Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues**

[Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk. Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).]

**\*Item 09-01. On the Church Addressing Intergenerational Injustice in America—Approved. (See page 851.)**

**\*Item 09-02. On the Use of Non-Disposable Food Service Items—Approved. (See page 853.)**

**\*Item 09-03. On Requesting that the 218th General Assembly Celebrate the Mission “Living Waters for the World” and View a Video Describing that Ministry—Approved. (See page 855.)**

**Item 09-04. On Instructing PDA to Continue to Work on Nurturing Partnerships with Presbyteries Affected by the Storms of 2005—Answered with an alternate resolution and with floor amendment. (See page 857.) Alternate Resolution:**

**In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:**

**[This item of business was generated by combining Items 09-04 and 09-17.]**

**Whereas Presbyterians throughout the General Assembly have been generous and gracious in responding to the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma with gifts of time, resources, and prayers; and**

**Whereas Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has been and continues to be abundantly helpful in providing leadership and resources in the affected areas and in coordinating relief efforts throughout the denomination; and**

**Whereas PDA and the presbyteries and synods involved in recovery efforts recognize that the work of rebuilding is far from complete and have worked together to develop a long-term financial response plan, therefore, be it**

**Resolved, that the 218th General Assembly (2008)**

**1. Thanks Presbyterians throughout the denomination for their generous giving, prayers, and volunteer services in recovery efforts working not only with PDA but also in partnership with local congregations;**

**2. Thanks and commends the staff and volunteers of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, who, working under extremely difficult circumstances, created a framework for a continued and faithful response to the storms of 2005.**

3. Instructs Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to continue the work of nurturing partnerships with the presbyteries affected by the storms of 2005, including regular consultations concerning volunteers and resources.

4. Affirms and commends the long-term recovery plan for the Gulf Coast, which was developed jointly by PDA and the synods and presbyteries impacted by hurricanes Rita, Katrina, and Wilma. This plan, approved by the GAC, funds recovery efforts on the Gulf Coast through 2011 and allows for continuing evaluation and adjustments as circumstances change.

**\$Item 09-05. On Addressing the Tragedy of America's Gun Violence—Approved as amended, with floor amendment. (See page 859.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$5,660; (2009): \$24,650; (2010) \$5,240 (Per Capita-GAC)]**

**\$Item 09-06. Public Education in the 21st Century—Approved as amended. (See page 865.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$170; (2009): \$20,940; (2010) \$11,655 (Per Capita-GAC)]**

**Item 09-07. Homelessness to Hope: Just, Sustainable Communities for All People—Answered with an alternate resolution, with floor amendment. (See page 866.)**

In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:

The 218th General Assembly (2008) approves the recommendations below and receives the study paper that was attached to the original item of business, which provides rationale and resources for social policy, social service, and education:

The purpose of these recommendations is to provide information and guidance for governing bodies and direction for denominational advocates. These recommendations affirm the complexity of issues surrounding homelessness and the need for a holistic approach that (1) addresses ministry to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness and (2) the structural components necessary for a comprehensive solution.

The historical witness of the PC(USA) affirms the following principles, as foundational to faithful ministry with persons who are homeless:

- Universal access to safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing is a measure of a just society and a sign of the coming Reign of God.
- The church is called to create communities of hospitality that assure all members of society, including persons experiencing homelessness, a right to basic economic and social well-being, including safe, affordable housing.
- The church is called to honor God's gift of the earth and to create, through personal lifestyle choices and the structures of society, sustainable communities where people can be securely housed in just relationship with one another and the earth.
- The church is called to challenge society to provide safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing for all persons who cannot secure such housing through their own means.

1. Commend the ongoing witness, commitment, ministry and advocacy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), its General Assembly and agencies, the Presbyterian Washington Office, the Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness, and the more than 3,500 Presbyterian congregations reporting hands-on engagement in housing and homeless ministries. We commend previous Presbyterian commitments to actions aimed at preventing poverty, e.g. education, job development, day care, living wage, health care, and gambling toward strengthening individuals and families and individuals in their efforts to avoid homelessness.

2. Encourage congregations, presbyteries, synods, and other church-related entities to pursue comprehensive responses to the crisis of homelessness and affordable housing. The General Assembly Council ministries of Compassion, Peace and Justice will develop and provide resources (including this report) to help these entities in this task, covering such actions as:

- Shelters, transitional housing programs, mixed-income communities, and affordable housing in their communities;
- Links with service providers in the community;
- The impact of employment practices, including sustainable wages and benefits, employment of youth and adults reentering the workforce after being homeless or institutionalized;
- Links with local, regional, and national coalitions that advocate for worker justice and sustainable wages, green design in homes and communities, permanent affordable rental housing;

- Supporting residents of public housing in their efforts to organize and have voice in their communities;
- The application of stewardship strategies in the area of homelessness, such as allocating physical space for services for persons in need of housing assistance, tithing capital campaign proceeds;
- General Assembly resources available to congregations, such as the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Inc. (PILP).

3. Affirm that the church is called to offer its diverse resources in response to the crisis of homelessness and affordable rental housing, but also insist that faith communities cannot and should not be expected to address this crisis in isolation from governmental and private sector partnerships. Therefore, we advocate initiatives such as:

a. *Policy Affecting Housing and Housing Services*

(1) Preservation and development of housing programs at all governing levels that target households with low incomes and persons with special needs, especially the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program.

(2) Restoration and expansion of “Project-Based Section 8” and other federal subsidy and incentive programs that promote the construction of affordable housing, and revitalization of the 2.5 million units of affordable housing funded under this program.

(3) Development of Housing Trust Funds at municipal, state, and national levels, to make significant funding available to both urban and rural communities for the development of permanent, “green,” affordable housing.

(4) Enactment of inclusionary zoning policies and support for other strategies to achieve mixed-income communities, with attention to replacing housing units for persons with extremely low income when displaced through community development initiatives.

(5) Improved enforcement of existing nondiscrimination laws with regard to housing and home financing.

b. *Policy Affecting Services for Persons Experiencing Homelessness or at Risk of Homelessness*

(1) Revision of municipal zoning codes to include the temporary housing of persons (e.g. shelters, transitional housing, or supportive housing) as a permitted use, to facilitate the development of affordable rental housing, and to prohibit discrimination against persons based on their housing status.

(2) Increased funding for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other departments to progress toward the goal of ending chronic homelessness, such as:

(a) Expansion and adequate funding for Supportive Housing (housing plus services) for all people who have little or no income, are disabled, are formerly homeless, or are living with mental illness, to aid them in living independent, healthy, and fulfilling lives, and to prevent persons from recycling among the streets, the shelters, the jails, and the prisons.

(b) Continuation of and increased investment in the McKinney-Vento Act and related legislation, which provide funding for many services for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including amendments that would increase flexibility in program administration and make programs more performance-based.

(c) Expansion of Veterans Administration (VA) programs for veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to include funding for permanent housing and the creation of innovative new models for service, including programs to help reintegrate returning veterans into the community, encourage partnerships between the VA and community-based organizations, and link permanent housing for veterans and their families with supportive services.

(d) Renewal and expansion of federal funding to help communities prevent homelessness among youth and young adults, as well as persons with special needs as they reenter communities from jails and prisons, and to provide housing and supportive services.

(e) Restoration of funding for mainstream programs that have been utilized by states, cities, and counties to provide housing and services as part of their comprehensive plans to prevent and end homelessness. These include but are not limited to HUD’s Community Development Block Grant Program, the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program (Section 202), and Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities (Section 811) as well as Medicaid, and other grants to states and localities.

**c. *Policies Affecting Lending Practices***

- (1) Development of foreclosure prevention strategies and programs to benefit households at risk.
- (2) Restrict predatory and abusive lending practices, in consultation with the 217th General Assembly (1996)'s recommendations regarding "A Reformed Understanding of Usury in the 21st Century" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 805).

**d. *Policies Affecting Taxation***

- (1) Support of fiscally responsible federal budget priorities and adequate revenues to ensure long-term funding for critical housing assistance and other safety net programs for families with low income.
- (2) Advocacy for budget priorities at all levels of government that utilize incentives and tax credits to encourage "smart growth" and the development of sustainable communities.

(3) Increase tax benefits for those living at lower income levels, so as to achieve a more equitable distribution of tax benefits for the purpose of achieving greater economic stability for individuals and families at risk of homelessness such as:

- expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit to include workers not raising children
- expansion of the refundable Child Tax Credit by making it available to more low-income workers, and
- development at the state or federal level of a refundable tax credit targeted to low-income renters, similar to the subsidy provided to homeowners through the federal mortgage interest deduction.

4. That the General Assembly urge the Presbyterian Foundation, in collaboration with the General Assembly Council, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and the office on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, to expand its Creative Investment Program to invest meaningfully in the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to create a revolving loan fund available to Presbyterian congregations, presbyteries, synods, and coalitions in which church entities are involved, for predevelopment loans to support the construction and rehabilitation of permanent rental housing for individuals and families with low income and/or a history of homelessness.

**5. Direct the communication and distribution of this resolution:**

a. Direct the Office of the General Assembly, in collaboration with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, to publish this report in its entirety online and in hard copy, making copies available to each presbytery, resource center, synod, and requesting session, as well as colleges and seminaries related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and for distribution throughout the church through Presbyterian Distribution Services; and to notify the church of its availability through the PC(USA) Website.

b. Direct the General Assembly Council to facilitate the development of a portion of its website to make information, resources, and advocacy suggestions related to this resolution easily accessible to the church at all levels.

c. Urge the Office of Small Church and Community Ministries, in collaboration with the Presbyterian Washington Office and other church entities, to develop and/or make available resources to educate individual Presbyterians and congregations on the nature and extent of the crisis in homelessness and affordable housing, the types of housing that can address the needs of those caught in the cycle of homelessness, and ways to respond to and advocate for public policy directives.

6. Request that all PC(USA) members forgo one meal per week (if one is able) as an act of worship and humility. The value of that meal is to be pledged (in a manner of the donor's choice) to feeding those in need

**\$Item 09-08. God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation—Approved as amended. (See page 897.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$3,000; (2010): \$0 (Mission) for Recommendation 2.h.] [Financial Implications: (2008): \$6,565; (2009): \$12,960; (2010): \$3,220 (Per Capita-GAC) for Recommendation 2.i.]**

**Item 09-09. Social Creed for the 21st Century—Approved as amended. (See page 924.)**

**Item 09-10. U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming —Approved as amended. (See page 934.)**

**Item 09-11. Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the U.S. —Approved as Amended. (See page 958.)**

**\$Item 09-12. Resolution to Study Status of Women in PC(USA)—Approved. (See page 961.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$19,345; (2010): \$16,000 (Per Capita-GAC)]**

**\$Item 09-13. Declare a Decade of “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God”—Approved.** (See page 964.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$3,060; (2010): \$3,060 (Per Capita-GAC)]

**Item 09-14. Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform—Approved as amended.** (See page 977.)

**\$Item 09-15. Hurricane Katrina—Approved.** (See page 994.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$1,800; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)] [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$5,000; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]

**\$Item 09-16. Creating a Climate of Change—Approved as amended.** (See page 1009.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$12,960; (2010): \$12,960 (Per Capita-GAC)]

**Item 09-17. On the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Their Contributions in Recovery Work—Answered by action taken on Item 09-04.** (See page 1055.)

**Item 09-18. Withdrawn.**

**\*Item 09-19. Response to Smithfield Food Labor Situation—Approved.** (See page 1056.)

**Item 09-20. Commissioners' Resolution. Affirming the Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner Treatment, Torture, and Cruelty—Approved as amended and with comment.** (See page 1062.) *Comment:* The 218th General Assembly (2008) commends the 217th General Assembly (2006) for their action in approving “Human Rights in a Time of Terrorism and Torture (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 867ff).

**Item 09-21. Commissioners' Resolution. On Local Enforcement of National Immigration Laws That Adversely Affect Local Congregations—Approved as amended.** (See page 1064.)

## II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

**Item 09-A. Minutes, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy—Approved with comment.** *Comment:* That the minutes are approved with minor exceptions of inconsistencies.

**Item 09-B. Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Representation—Approved.**

## REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH ISSUES

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Cinda Gorman, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues, for a report from the committee.

The assembly approved Item 10-02 as amended and with comment and answered Item 10-01 with the action taken on Item 10-02.

The assembly answered Item 10-03 with an alternate resolution and answered Item 10-04 with the action on Item 10-03.

The report of the committee was continued by Vice-Moderator William McIvor.

The assembly approved Item 10-05 as amended.

The report of the committee was continued by Gorman.

Gorman introduced the committee recommendation on Item 10-06. A minority report was introduced. The minority report was perfected. The main motion was perfected. Moderator Reyes-Chow put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was defeated. The assembly approved Item 10-06 with amendment. Gorman reported that the committee had taken final action on Item 10-A.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues and the committee report is as follows:

### Assembly Committee on Health Issues

There are no items for the consent agenda. There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.

**Item 10-01. On Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to Develop a New Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Policy for the Church—Answered with action on taken on Item 10-02. (See page 1077.)**

**\$Item 10-02. On Directing the General Assembly Council to Develop and Fund a Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Policy for the PC(USA)—Approved as amended and with comment. (See page 1078.) [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$5,660; (2009): \$24,650; (2010): \$5,240 (Per Capita-GAC)] *Comment:* That those appointed to this study represent a broad range of folks theologically, since policies might be formed from this study.**

**\$Item 10-03. On Directing PC(USA) Entities to Reflect Balance in Advocating Both Sides of the Abortion Issue—Answered with an alternate resolution. (See page 1082.) [Financial Implications: (2008): \$8,378; (2009): \$65,437; (2010): \$32,686 (Mission)] Alternate Resolution Approved:**

In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:

The 218th General Assembly (2008) directs the appropriate PC(USA) entities to redevelop congregational resource materials, on the subject of reproductive options, to more adequately reflect the full spectrum of biblical, theological, and pastoral counsel, while remaining consistent with the policy of the 1992 report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion and the 2006 policy on Late-Term Pregnancies and Abortion. The General Assembly Council will report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

**Item 10-04. On Advocating and Funding Either Both Sides of the Abortion Issue or Neither—Answered with action taken on Item 10-03. (See page 1087.)**

**\$Item 10-05. Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness—Approved as Amended. (See page 1088.) [Financial Implications: (2006): \$0; (2009): \$10,800; (2010): \$10,800 (Mission)]**

**\$Item 10-06. On Supporting Single Payer Universal Healthcare Reform—Approved as Amended. (See page 1133.) [Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009) \$25,000; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]**

[The item listed below was acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

**Item 10-A. Cameron House Presentation—Approved as Amended. (See page 1136.)**

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick announced the details of meetings of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures and the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets that took place immediately following the business meeting.

#### RECESS

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Robert Austell, commissioner from the Presbytery of Charlotte, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 11:35 p.m. to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 28.

Saturday, June 28, 2008, 8:30 A.M.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened at 8:30 a.m. with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow presiding. Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Clara Sanders, youth advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Indian Nations, who led the assembly in the opening prayer.

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Adebisi Shofu, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee.

Shofu reported that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures examined the minutes of the General Assembly of Thursday, June 26, 2008, and found them in order. The assembly approved Item 02-05. (See page 137.) Shofu reported that the minutes of Friday, June 27, 2008, and Saturday, June 28, 2008, would be mailed to a subcommittee of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures for approval.

Protests found to be in decorous language are recorded in the *Minutes* as follows:

Protest of Item 05-12—From Ron Oldenkamp, commissioner from the Presbytery of Sacramento: “I protest against the action taken on Item 05-12, as I believe the action is a de facto amending of our *Book of Order* without going through the constitutional amendment process (sending an amendment to the presbyteries for their ratification).”

Protest of Item 07-02—From Rebecca Lee, commissioner from the Presbytery of Boise: “I was prepared to offer an amendment to 7-02. I had waited by the microphone for a considerable time, my number was entered, the amendment form submitted & sent to the podium. The item was announced and I was overlooked, a quick vote taken and the next item announced. I found that there was a failure of the machinery so that my number did not appear on the podium and of course being a short woman it is easy to not see me. Once the GA moved pass the item it is almost impossible to garner interest again in a prior item. An oral vote to take up 7-02 was defeated perhaps by 1/3 to 2/3 of the house. My amendment would have clarified 2 things: 1) Affirm our Stated Clerk’s Oct. 15, 2007 letter on the subject and 2( “receive” the Invitation to dialogue Common Word in lieu of “supporting” the document. This would have generated notice that response to a 132 Cleric document of 28 pages with one sentence might be more appropriately answered by affirming (and being consistent with) S.C. Kirkpatrick’s letter.”

Protest of Item 13-06—From Anne Weirich, commissioner from the Presbytery of Lake Michigan: “Minority report for Heidelberg Confession was allowed even though it was a report that recommended maintaining the status quo. I proposed a similar minority report on a completely different overture and was told – quite correctly – that it was not allowed to submit a minority report recommending the maintenance of the status quo. Therefore, I’m registering a complaint and would like this minuted and addressed.”

Protest of Committee 16 process—From Robert Austell, commissioner from the Presbytery of Charlotte; John Barlow, commissioner from the Presbytery of Carlisle; Christine Bohn, commissioner from the Presbytery of Detroit; LaVerne Davenport, commissioner from the Presbytery of Blackhawk; David Grove, commissioner from the Presbytery of Cherokee; David Jenkins, commissioner from the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina; William Teng, commissioner from the Presbytery of National Capital; and Saunda Thomas, commissioner from the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse: “We, members of Committee 16 (Worship and Spiritual Renewal) are deeply concerned about certain erroneous process information and action by the leadership team including the associate stated clerk, Gradye Parsons, which we believe made our work together as a committee ineffective. Three examples: a) We were specifically told by the associate stated clerk that we could not generate new business even in the area of worship and spiritual renewal but discovered Wednesday that there is a process to do that as evidenced by comm. 17’s report. b) We were told we could not add comment reflecting the effectiveness of the communal discernment process and discovered Wednesday during Com 17’s report that there is a procedure to do this. c) There were numerous occasions where the body itself was denied the opportunity to decide its own way forward and that decision was made for it by the leadership team and in many cases, the resource personnel.”

Protest of 08 GA—From Steve Aeschbacher, commissioner from the Presbytery of Seattle; Lisa Baker, commissioner from the Presbytery of Southern New England; Laureen Bodnar, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Jean Boisubin, commissioner from the Presbytery of New Covenant; George Bones, commissioner from the Presbytery of New Covenant; Bruce Bush, commissioner from the Presbytery of Stockton; Deena Candler, commissioner from the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley; Greg Carter, commissioner from the Presbytery of Inland Northwest; Maurice Caskey, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Diego; Nancy Cormack-Hughes, commissioner from the Presbytery of Utah; LaVerne Davenport, commissioner from the Presbytery of Blackhawk; Bob Davis, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Diego; Leslie Day-Ebert, commissioner from the Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Sylvia Dooling, commissioner from the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks; Mark Evans, commissioner from the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler; Paul Fandl, commissioner from the Presbytery of Stockton; Jack Foley, commissioner from the Presbytery of Cherokee; David Freehling, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pueblo; Douglas Garrard, commissioner from the Presbytery of Riverside; Paul Granstrom, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; David Grove, commissioner from the Presbytery of Cherokee; John Hamilton, commissioner from the Presbytery of Blackhawk; Kenneth Hetzel, commissioner from the Presbytery of Lake Huron; Jay Hull, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; Mark Hunt, commissioner from the Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic; Tim Hunt, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Francisco; Erma Jones, commissioner from the Presbytery of Cherokee; Mike Lambert, commissioner from the Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Conway Lanford, commissioner from the Presbytery of New Hope; Freda Lawther, commissioner from the Presbytery of Lake Huron; Rebecca Lee, commissioner from the Presbytery of Boise; Charlie Little, commissioner from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Jesse Mabanglo, commissioner from the Presbytery of Seattle; Steven Matthies, commissioner from the Presbytery of Whitewater Valley; Catherine McGowen, commissioner from the Presbytery of South Louisiana; Henry Meeuwse, commissioner from the Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic; James Moelk, commissioner



from the Presbytery of Lake Erie; Todd Mulford, commissioner from the Presbytery of South Louisiana; Louis Paradise, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Joaquin; James Park, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Gabriel; Doris Pate, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Diego; Mark Patterson, commissioner from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Gary Pichon, commissioner from the Presbytery of Cherokee; Gene Price, commissioner from the Presbytery of New Covenant; Terry Simm, commissioner from the Presbytery of Prospect Hill; Ben Ray, commissioner from the Presbytery of Southern Kansas; David Reimer, commissioner from the Presbytery of Newark; Won-Jong Rhee, commissioner from the Presbytery of Eastern Korean; Stephen Roosa, commissioner from the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks; Lawrence Ruby, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Frederick Seay, commissioner from the Presbytery of South Louisiana; John Sheldon, commissioner from the Presbytery of West Jersey; Archie Smith, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Joaquin; Betsy Straeter, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Gabriel; Thomas Straeter, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Diego; William Teng, commissioner from the Presbytery of National Capital; Paul Terry, commissioner from the Presbytery of Southern New England; Burfoot Ward, commissioner from the Presbytery of Lake Erie; Bob Welsh, commissioner from the Presbytery of Central Washington; and Warren Wilkewitz, commissioner from the Presbytery of Mid-South: “We, the undersigned, protest and grieve the decision of the majority of our fellow commissioners at this General Assembly. This body has inflicted deep wounds on the Presbyterian Church (USA) that threaten to undo us. This General Assembly told our congregations and the world by its actions here that it rejects the Scripture’s teaching and our Reformed confessions’ affirmation that sexual relations outside the covenant of marriage of a man and a woman does not comport with Christian faith. The majority of the General Assembly has recommended the removal of the requirement that our pastors and elders commit themselves either to a lifelong union of a man and a woman or chastity in singleness, and has acted to strip the church of its ability to set any binding standards for the behavior of its officers. We, the undersigned, mourn and protest the affront to the Church’s Savior that suggests that God blesses forms of sexual behavior which he has clearly said are sinful. We stand against these decisions and vow to join with the many thousands of our fellow Presbyterians who will resist these actions and remain faithful to the Lord of the Church, in whom we put our trust and our hope.”

Protest of Debate on Belhar Confession—From David Hicks, commissioner from the Presbytery of Grand Canyon: “The debate for the Belhar Confession was glossed over. The chair of the committee was waiting to speak to the overture but was ignored by the Moderator. Thus, the GA was unable to discuss this important legislation.”

Protest of Action of the GA—From Jon Faraone, commissioner from the Presbytery of Western Kentucky: “It is tragic that this stacked deck G.A. did what it did. They have split the church wide open leaving no hope at this time for any Peace Unity & Purity in our church which truly saddens & breaks my heart.”

Protest of Confrontation after Committee Testimony—From Gary Green, commissioner from the Presbytery of Grand Canyon: “Following my testimony before committee 11 on the evening of Tues. June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008, I was followed out of the committee conference room and confronted by a Mr. Glenn Dickson and verbally assaulted with charges of being a liar, but no specifics as to what he thought was a lie were mentioned. I believe that this needs to be brought to the attention of the Stated Clerk.”

Protest of Action Taken on Item 05-09 and 05-12—From Betsy Straeter, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Gabriel; and Tom Straeter, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Diego: “I protest the action taken by the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly as it pertains to actions 5-09 and 5-12 as in my opinion they are in violation of our vows as elders and ministers of the word and sacrament. These actions, though they may be in order according to our polity, violate our vow to be guided by scripture. In my opinion that sets up a situation where by, as a church, we will begin to act in violation of the scripture principles regarding the ordaining elders, ministers and deacons. As such they also set one portion of our constitution (our Book of Order) against another (our Confessions and Scripture). If ratified by our presbyteries our constitution will be significantly different than the one my church and I initially volunteered to follow.”

Protest of 08 GA—From Lisa Lani Esterling, commissioner from the Presbytery of South Louisiana: “We, the undersigned, protest and grieve the decision of the majority of our fellow commissioners at this General Assembly. This body has inflicted deep wounds on the Presbyterian Church (USA) that threaten to undo us. This General Assembly told our congregations and the world by its actions here that it rejects the Scripture’s teaching and our Reformed confessions’ affirmation that sexual relations outside the covenant of marriage of a man and a woman does not comport with Christian faith. The majority of the General Assembly has recommended the removal of the requirement that our pastors and elders commit themselves either to a lifelong union of a man and a woman or chastity in singleness, and has acted to strip the church of its ability to set any binding standards for the behavior of its officers. We, the undersigned, mourn and protest the affront to the Church’s Savior that suggests that God blesses forms of sexual behavior which he has clearly said are sinful. We stand against these decisions and vow to join with the many thousands of our fellow Presbyterians who will resist these actions and remain faithful to the Lord of the Church, in whom we put our trust and our hope. To approve an AI to prevent the local churches to fully study and discuss this does a disservice to our polity. In addition how this was seemingly ‘railroaded’ by leadership is unconscionable. It was apparent that little or no thought was given to the wounds this will inflict in presbyteries who are struggling to find a path toward unity.”

Protest of 08 GA—From Frederick Seay, commissioner from the Presbytery of South Louisiana: “We, the undersigned, protest and grieve the decision of the majority of our fellow commissioners at this General Assembly. This body has inflicted deep wounds on the Presbyterian Church (USA) that threaten to undo us. This General Assembly told our congregations and the world by its actions here that it rejects the Scripture’s teaching and our Reformed confessions’ affirmation that sexual relations outside the covenant of marriage of a man and a woman does not comport with Christian faith. The majority of the General Assembly has recommended the removal of the requirement that our pastors and elders commit themselves either to a lifelong union of a man and a woman or chastity in singleness, and has acted to strip the church of its ability to set any binding standards for the behavior of its officers. We, the undersigned, mourn and protest the affront to the Church’s Savior that suggests that God blesses forms of sexual behavior which he has clearly said are sinful. We stand against these decisions and vow to join with the many thousands of our fellow Presbyterians who will resist these actions and remain faithful to the Lord of the Church, in whom we put our trust and our hope. To approve an AI to prevent the local churches to fully study and discuss this does a disservice to our polity. In addition how this was seemingly ‘railroaded’ by leadership is unconscionable. It was apparent that little or no thought was given to the wounds this will inflict in presbyteries who are struggling to find a path toward unity. Agreed-I am deeply disturbed that the 1978 ‘AI’ was discussed with no opportunity for the presbyteries and local churches to study, pray, discuss, and discern. These actions work against fostering a climate across the PCUSA for prayerful discernment of God’s will for the church in this matter.”

Protest of 08 GA—From William Stepp, commissioner from the Presbytery of Tropical Florida: “We, the undersigned, protest and grieve the decision of the majority of our fellow commissioners at this General Assembly. This body has inflicted deep wounds on the Presbyterian Church (USA) that threaten to undo us. This General Assembly told our congregations and the world by its actions here that it rejects the Scripture’s teaching and our Reformed confessions’ affirmation that sexual relations outside the covenant of marriage of a man and a woman does not comport with Christian faith. The majority of the General Assembly has recommended the removal of the requirement for ordination that our pastors and elders commit themselves either to a lifelong union of a man and a woman or chastity in singleness. We, the undersigned, mourn and protest the affront to the Church’s Savior that suggests that God blesses forms of sexual behavior which he has clearly said are sinful. We stand against these decisions and vow to join with the many thousands of our fellow Presbyterians who will resist these actions and remain faithful to the Lord of the Church, in whom we put our trust and our hope.”

Protest of Report of the Church Orders and Ministry Committee—From Bruce Bush, commissioner from the Presbytery of Stockton; Paul Fandl, commissioner from the Presbytery of Stockton; Paul Granstrom, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; Kenneth Hetzel, commissioner from the Presbytery of Lake Huron; Jay Hull, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; and Terry Simm, commissioner from the Presbytery of Prospect Hill: “We the undersigned protest the action of the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly during the report of Committee 5, Church Orders and Ministry. Our conscience was violated by the procedure employed to change the PC USA practice and governance regarding ordination without the participation of the larger church through presbytery action.”

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE**  
**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized George Kimm, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report from the committee. Kimm reported that the total financial implications of actions approved by the assembly are \$53,330 for 2008; \$341,385 for 2009; and \$118,595 for 2010. In order to accommodate those actions, the assembly approved amendments to the previously approved Item 03-16, Recommendations 5(a) and 6 as follows (see pages 164, 167–68 ):

“5(a). approve the proposed 2009 expenditure budget totaling ~~\$12,308,884~~ \$12,650,269 and a proposed 2010 expenditure budget totaling ~~\$15,310,620~~ \$15,429,215.

6. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council approve and recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve an increase in the per capita apportionment rate from \$5.79 to ~~\$6.04~~ \$6.15 per active member for 2009, and that the same rate be effective for 2010, without change.”

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE**  
**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Kears Pollock, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, for a report from the committee. Pollock announced that the total financial implications of actions approved by the assembly are \$8,378 for 2008; \$233,512 for 2009; and \$56,238 for 2010. The assembly approved Item 08-1NB (see page 750).

**INTRODUCTION OF THE 219TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2010) COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Sandra Hawley and Manley Olsen, co-moderators of the Committee on Local Arrangements Committee for the 219th General Assembly (2010), to bring greetings to the assembly.

**INTRODUCTIONS OF CHAIRS-ELECT OF  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Allison Seed, chair of the General Assembly Council, and Catherine Ulrich, chair of the Committee on the Office of General Assembly, to introduce chairs-elect of the committees.

Seed introduced Carol Adcock, chair-elect of the General Assembly Council, and Ulrich introduced Dennis Hughes, moderator-elect of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

**THANKS TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE  
FROM THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Marlena DeGroot, youth advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Glacier, and Dale Utt, youth advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Twin City Area, to offer thanks to the Committee on Local Arrangements from the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures.

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Deborah Davies, Assistant Stated Clerk, and Kerry Rice, Assistant Stated Clerk, to make a presentation to the representatives from the Presbytery of San Jose, the Presbytery of San Francisco, the Presbytery of the Redwoods, and the Synod of the Pacific.

**PRESENTATION FROM YOUTH ADVISORY DELEGATE CAUCUS**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Brian Bivin, youth advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Pueblo, and Courtney Payne, youth advisory delegate from the Presbytery of the Western Reserve, for presentations to Moderator Reyes-Chow, Vice-Moderator Byron Wade, and Stated Clerk-elect Gradye Parsons.

**THANKS TO STAFF**

Moderator Reyes-Chow recognized Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick, who offered thanks to the staff and volunteers who labored at the General Assembly.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THANKS**

Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick made several logistical announcements. Stated Clerk-elect Gradye Parsons offered a word of thanks to Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick.

**WORSHIP**

Moderator Reyes-Chow and Vice-Moderator Wade led the assembly in a closing service of worship.

**RECESS**

Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow declared the 218th General Assembly (2008) in recess to be adjourned and dissolved upon the convening of the 219th General Assembly (2010) on July 3, 2010, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The assembly was recessed at 10:40 a.m.



## **SECTION TWO**

Assembly Committee Reports Containing  
All Reports, Referrals, and Recommendations of the  
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly,  
the Office of the General Assembly, Permanent and Special Committees,  
the General Assembly Council, the Board of Pensions,  
the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation,  
the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation,  
Overtures, and Commissioners' Resolutions



## Item 00-01

[The assembly approved Item 00-01. See pp. 17, 26]

**The General Assembly Nominating Committee recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) elect the following nominees:**

Key for General Assembly Nominating Committee Report

1. Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri (YA) HFE 26-35 De San Juan BPR AL NEW

*means*

Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri (Young Adult), Hispanic/Latina, 26-35 years old, De San Juan Presbytery, Synod of Puerto Rico, At-large position, New Nomination

Key:

**DIVERSITY INFORMATION:**

(1<sup>st</sup> letter designation) A-Asian American; B-African American; H-Hispanic/Latina/Latino; M-Middle Eastern; N-Native American; O-Other; W-Caucasian. Note: More than one letter separated by a “/” indicates the racial identification of persons requesting to be identified as bi-racial or multiracial, i.e. H/B-Hispanic /Latina/Latino and African American.

(2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> letter designations) FC-Female Clergy; FE-Female Elder; FL-Female Layperson; MC-Male Clergy; ME-Male Elder; ML-Male Layperson

**SYNOD:**

ANW-Synod of Alaska-Northwest; BPR- Sinodo Borinquen en Puerto Rico (Synod of Puerto Rico); COV-Synod of the Covenant; LAK-Synod of Lakes and Prairies; LIN-Synod of Lincoln Trails; LW-Synod of Living Waters; MAM-Synod of Mid-America; MAT-Synod of Mid-Atlantic; NE-Synod of the Northeast; PAC-Synod of the Pacific; ROC-Synod of the Rocky Mountains; SA-Synod of the South Atlantic; SCH-Synod of Southern California and Hawaii; SUN-Synod of the Sun; SW-Synod of the Southwest; TRI-Synod of the Trinity

**MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY AND OTHER ABBREVIATIONS:**

A-Asian American; AA-Asian-American At-Large slot; AC-Asian Caucus; ACWC-Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns; AH-Hispanic/Latina/Latino At-Large slot; AL-At-Large; B-African-American; BA-African-American At-Large slot; BC-Black Caucus; CW-Clergywoman; D-Known (Reported) Disability; EXT—Extension of term due to structural change to entity; FDN-Foundation; GAC-General Assembly Council; GANC-General Assembly Nominating Committee; H-Hispanic/Latina/Latino; HC-Hispanic/Latino Caucus; M-Middle Eastern; MA-Middle Eastern At-Large slot; N-Native American; NA-Native American At-Large slot; N/A-Not Applicable; NC-Native American Caucus; NP--Non-Presbyterian; O-Other; P-Presbytery; PTI-Presbyterian Theological Institution; PW-Presbyterian Women; RE-Racial Ethnic; S-Synod; W-Caucasian; WCL-Woman Church Lay Employee; YA-Young Adult (35 years or younger when nominated);

†—Appointed by General Assembly Moderator (upon recommendation of GANC) to fill vacancy between General Assemblies

### A. Advisory Committee on the Constitution

#### 1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010

1.	Stewart Pollock	WMC	46-55	Pittsburgh	TRI	AL	NEW †
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#### 2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2014

2.	Susan Evans	BFE	56-65	Philadelphia	TRI	AL	NEW
3.	Keith Geckeler	WMC	56-65	Los Ranchos	SCH	AL	NEW
4.	Heahwan Rim	AMC	56-65	Midwest Hanmi	LIN	AL	NEW

### B. Advisory Committee on Litigation

#### 1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010

1.	William Reid Dalton	WMC	46-55	Salem	MAT	AL	NEW
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**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

2.	Franklin Rodriguez	HME	36-45	Del Suroeste	BPR	AL	REN
3.	Robin W. Hadfield	WFE	56-65	Homestead	LAK	AL	NEW

**C. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	John Knapp	WME	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW †
2.	John Michael Castronis	WMC	56-65	Charleston-Atlantic	SA	GAC	NEW

**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

3.	Dianne L. Briscoe	BFE	46-55	Denver	ROC	AL	REN
4.	Marsha Fowler	WFC	56-65	San Gabriel	SCH	AL	REN †
5.	Lewis S. Mudge	WMC	65+	San Francisco	PAC	AL	REN
6.	William Saint	WMO	56-65	National Capital	MAT	AL	REN
8.	Christine Darden	BFE	56-65	Eastern Virginia	MAT	AL	NEW
9.	Jean Demmler	WFE	56-65	Denver	ROC	GAC	NEW

**D. Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Buddy Monahan	NMC	36-45	Santa Fe	SW	NC	NEW
2.	Patricia Morse	BFO	46-55	National Capital	MAT	BA	NEW
3.	Noushin Framke	MFE	36-45	Newark	NE	AL	NEW †

**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

4.	Cecilia Casal	HFE	46-55	Tres Rios	SUN	AH	NEW
5.	Aida Faris	MFE	65+	Mission	SUN	MC	NEW
6.	Stephen C. Hsieh	AMC	65+	San Jose	PAC	AC	NEW
7.	Carroll Jenkins	BMC	65+	Baltimore	MAT	BC	NEW
8.	Tammy RedOwl	NFC	36-45	Yukon	ANW	NA	NEW
9.	Cynthia Holder Rich	WFC	46-55	Lake Michigan	COV	AL	NEW

**E. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty	WFC	36-45	Mid-Kentucky	LW	AL	NEW
2.	Gay Byron	BFC	46-55	Genesee Valley	NE	AL	NEW †
3.	Belinda Rice	BFE	46-55	Charlotte	MAT	WCL	NEW †



**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

5.	Terry Alexander	WMC	56-65	Western North Carolina	MAT	AL	REN
6.	F. William Gray	WME	56-65	Western New York	NE	AL	REN
7.	Jerri Rodewald	WFE	65+	Riverside	SCH	AL	REN
8.	Darcy Metcalfe (YA)	WFE	26-35	Wabash Valley	LIN	AL	NEW
9.	N'Yisrela Watts-Afriyie	BFE	46-55	Pacific	SCH	AL	NEW

**F. Audit Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Jesse C. Swanigan	BME	65+	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	REN
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**G. Board of Pensions****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Kathleen Crighton	WFC	46-55	South Louisiana	SUN	AL	REN
2.	Anne Drennan	WFE	46-55	Monmouth	NE	AL	REN
3.	Blythe Kieffer	WFC	46-55	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	REN
4.	Christopher Mason	WME	46-55	New York City	NE	AL	REN
5.	Thomas Paisley, Jr.	WME	56-65	Lehigh	TRI	AL	REN
6.	Susan Reimann	WFL	36-45	New Brunswick	NE	AL	REN
7.	Nancy Rhodes	WFO	46-55	New Hope	MAT	AL	REN
8.	Laird J. Stuart	WMC	56-65	San Francisco	PAC	AL	REN
9.	Bob Gorsky	WME	46-55	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
10.	Judith Harris	WFO	46-55	Lehigh	TRI	AL	NEW
11.	Richard Hodde	WME	46-55	Charlotte	MAT	AL	NEW
12.	John Hougen	WMC	46-55	East Iowa	LAK	AL	NEW
13.	Linda Jacobsen	WFE	46-55	Philadelphia	TRI	AL	NEW
14.	Frank James (D)	BME	56-65	Sheppards and Lapsley	LAK	AL	NEW
15.	Bettina Kilburn	WFC	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW
16.	Joseph M. Kinard	BME	56-65	San Diego	SCH	AL	NEW
17.	Alan D. Ford	WME	46-55	Elizabeth	NE	GAC	NEW

**H. Committee on Ecumenical Relations (General Assembly)****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Scott Anderson	WME	46-55	The John Knox	LAK	AL	NEW
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**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Vincent Das	AME	65+	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	REN
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## 00 PLENARY

3.	Sarah Segal McCaslin (YA)	WFO	26-35	New York City	NE	AL	REN
4.	Joseph Pallikkathayil	OMC	56-65	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN
5.	George B. Telford	WMC	65+	The James	MAT	AL	REN
6.	Aimee Moiso (YA)	WFC	26-35	San Jose	PAC	AL	NEW
7.	Rodney Petersen	WMC	46-55	Boston	NE	AL	NEW

**I. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Chris Rhodes	WME	46-55	Redwoods	PAC	AL	NEW
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**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Barbara L. Corwin	WFE	56-65	Kendall	PAC	AL	REN
3.	Kent Grimes	WME	65+	Mid-South	LW	AL	REN
4.	Leah Johnson	WFE	56-65	Donegal	TRI	AL	NEW
5.	Eileen W. Lindner	WFC	46-55	Palisades	NE	AL	NEW
6.	Virginia Rainey	WFE	56-65	Huntingdon	TRI	AL	NEW
7.	Vincent A. Thomas	BME	46-55	Twin Cities Area	LAK	AL	NEW
8.	Robert Wilson	BME	65+	North Alabama	LW	AL	NEW

**J. Committee on Representation (General Assembly)****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Deborah Fair	BFE	56-65	Detroit	COV	S	NEW
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**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Stanley Bhasker	AMC	36-45	Huntingdon	TRI	S	REN
3.	John A.T. Gulden (YA)	WMC	26-35	Mid-Kentucky	LW	S	REN
4.	Alma-jean Marion	BFE	56-65	Seattle	ANW	S	REN
5.	Randel Bohanon	NME	56-65	Eastern Oklahoma	SUN	S	NEW
6.	J. Stafford Fredericks	WME	56-65	Pacific	SCH	S	NEW
7.	Alice Ridgill (YA)	BFC	26-35	Trinity	SA	S	NEW
8.	Eliud Serrano Arroyo (YA)	HME	26-35	Del Noroeste	BPR	S	NEW
9.	Pending				MAT	S	NEW

**K. Committee on Theological Education****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Chandler Stokes	WMC	46-55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	NEW
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**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Terry Holland	MFE	65+	San Joaquin	PAC	AL	REN
3.	Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri (YA)	HFE	26-35	De San Juan	BPR	AL	NEW
4.	K. C. Ptomey	WMC	56-65	Middle Tennessee	LW	AL	NEW
5.	Max Sherman	WME	65+	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
6.	Landon Whitsitt (YA)	WMC	26-35	Heartland	MAM	AL	NEW
7.	Kathryn Wolf (YA)	WFO	18-25	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW

**L. General Assembly Council****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Dietmar Fritsch	WME	65+	Denver	ROC	Commissioner	2004GA	NEW
2.	Sung Sam Kim	AME	56-65	Atlantic Korean American	MAT	Commissioner	2004GA	NEW
3.	Won-jong Rhee	AME		Eastern Korean	NE	Presbytery		NEW
4.	Philip L. Hougen	WMC	56-65			Ecumenical	Advisory	NEW
5.	Michael Kinnamon	WMC	46-55			Ecumenical	Advisory	NEW

**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

6	Alan D. Ford	WME	46-55	Elizabeth	NE	Commissioner	2006GA	REN
7.	Ethan R. Powell (YA)	WME	18-25	Geneva	NE	Young Adult		REN
8.	Jean Demmler	WFE	56-65	Denver	ROC	Presbytery		REN
9.	Thomas W. Gillespie	WMC	65+	New Brunswick	NE	Presbytery		REN
10..	LaVert Jones	BME	56-65	Flint River	SA	Presbytery		REN
11.	Jacquelin J. Lyman	WFE	65+	Riverside	SCH	Presbytery		REN
12.	Susan J. Ezell	WFC	56-65	Lackawanna	TRI	Presbytery		EXT
13.	Michael W. Kruse	WME	36-45	Heartland	MAM	Presbytery		EXT
14.	Carolyn McLarnan	WFE	46-55	Mississippi	LW	Presbytery		EXT
15.	Aleida Jernigan	HFC	65+	The Cascades	PAC	Presbytery Staff		NEW
16.	Teresa A. Bryce	BFE	46-55	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	Commissioner	2006GA	NEW
17.	Bruce Reyes-Chow	AMC	36-45	San Francisco	PAC	Moderator	2008GA	NEW

**3. GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

18.	Melissa DeRosia (YA)	WFC	26-35	Lake Huron	COV	Young Adult		NEW
19.	Matthew Schramm (YA)	WMC	26-35	Newton	NE	Young Adult		NEW
20.	Clarence Antioquia	NML	65+	North Puget Sound	ANW	Presbytery		NEW
21.	Arthur Canada	BMC	56-65	Charlotte	MAT	Presbytery		NEW
22.	Roger J. Gench	WMC	46-55	National Capital	MAT	Presbytery		NEW
23.	Jack D. Hodges	WMC	65+	The Cascades	PAC	Presbytery		NEW
24.	Jan Martin	WFE	65+	Milwaukee	LAK	Presbytery		NEW
25.	Cruz Alberto Negron	HMC	36-45	De San Juan	BPR	Presbytery		NEW
26.	Cathryn C. Piekarski	WFE	56-65	Muskingum Valley	COV	Presbytery		NEW
27.	Clark D. Cowden	WMC	36-45	San Diego	SCH	Presbytery Staff		NEW
28.	Reginald V. Parsons	WMC	65+	St. Augustine	SA	Synod Staff		NEW
29.	Steve Aeschbacher	WME	46-55	Seattle	ANW	Commissioner	2008GA	NEW
30.	Joyce A. Smith	BFE	65+	Scioto Valley	COV	Commissioner	2008GA	NEW

**M. Mission Development Resources Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Anne D. Brown	WFE	65+	Southern Kansas	MAM	S	REN
2.	Edwin Lupberger	WME	65+	South Louisiana	SUN	AL	REN
3.	Harold H. Shin	AMC	56-65	Midwest Hanmi	LIN	AL	REN
4.	Joan Fong	AFE	46-55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	NEW
5.	Trey Hammond	WMC	46-55	Santa Fe	SW	S	NEW
6.	Steven Shussett	WMC	36-45	Lehigh	TRI	S	NEW
7.	Karen Garrett	WFL	36-45	Heartland	MAM	FND	NEW

**N. Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Joanne Rodriguez	HFE	36-45	New Brunswick	NE	AL	NEW
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**O. Permanent Judicial Commission (General Assembly)****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	A. Bates Butler, III	WME	56-65	deCristo	SW	S	NEW
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**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Yun Jin Kim	AMC		Atlantic Korean American	MAT	S	NEW
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**3. GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

3.	Tony Cook	WME	56-65	Olympia	ANW	S	REN
4.	Angel Casaus	HME	56-65	Del Suroeste	BPR	S	NEW
5.	Bradley C. Copeland	WMC	56-65	Riverside	SCH	S	NEW
6.	Meta Shoup Cramer	WFC	56-65	Eastminster	COV	S	NEW
7.	H. Clifford Looney	WME	56-65	Boise	PAC	S	NEW
8.	Michael B. Lukens	WMC	65+	Winnebago	LAK	S	NEW

**P. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Lois A. Clarke	WFE	56-65	Abingdon	MAT	AL	REN
2.	Karen Garrett	WFL	36-45	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN
3.	Doug McArthur	WML	36-45	Denver	ROC	AL	REN
4.	David A. Davis	WMC	36-45	New Brunswick	NE	AL	NEW
5.	Enid Flores	HFO	36-45	De San Juan	BPR	AL	NEW
6.	Victor L. Hymes	BME	46-55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	NEW
7.	Paul E. Lee	AME	36-45	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
8.	D. Scott Weimer	WMC	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW
9.	Margaret West	WFO	56-65	Charlotte	MAT	AL	NEW
10.	Louise Westfall	WFC	46-55	Western Reserve	COV	AL	NEW

**Q. Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Cornelius Blanding	BML	36-45			NP	NEW †
2.	Iris Colon-Lucio	HFC		Milwaukee	LAK	P	NEW †

**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

3.	Karen Finney	BFE	56-65	Santa Fe	SW	S	REN
4.	Julius A. Montero, Jr.	AMC	36-45	Blackhawk	LIN	AL	REN
5.	Josephine Njoroge	BFE	56-65	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN
6.	Andrew P. Gutierrez	HME	65+	San Gabriel	SCH	S	NEW
7.	Eddie Jusino	HMC	46-55	Long Island	NE	P	NEW
8.	Levi Martinez	HME	65+	Utah	ROC	P	NEW
9.	Bernadette Hightower-Hughes	BFO	46-55			NP	NEW
10.	T. Ewen Holmes	WMC	46-55	Grand Canyon	SW	AL	NEW
11.	Selma Jackson	BFE	56-65	New York City	NE	AL	NEW
12.	Emanuel Nasir	AMC	56-65	West Jersey	NE	AL	NEW
13.	Joe Nelson	NFE	65+	Palo Duro	SUN	AL	NEW
14.	Kevin L. Nollette	WMC	46-55	North Puget Sound	ANW	AL	NEW
15.	Wilma Quinonez-Cubero (YA)	HFE	18-25	De San Juan	BPR	AL	NEW
16.	Tricia Dillon Thomas (YA)	WFL	26-35	Peace River	SA	AL	NEW
17.	Lori Winblood	NFE	46-55	Western Colorado	ROC	AL	NEW
18.	Oscar L. Heyward	BME	56-65	New York City	NE	P	NEW

**R. Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel****1. GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Albert A. Hockaday	BMC	65+	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
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**2. GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

2.	Richard A. Cooper	WMC	56-65	Western Kentucky	LW	AL	REN
3.	Dwayne G. Lee	WME	56-65	New Hope	MAT	AL	REN
4.	Karen Stocks	WFC	46-55	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
5.	Donna C. Weddle	WFC	56-65	National Capital	MAT	AL	NEW

**S. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Mary Jane Potter	WFE	46-55	New York City	NE	AL	REN
2.	Donna Wenger	WFE	56-65	Carlisle	TRI	AL	REN
3.	Jeff Holland	WMC	36-45	Santa Barbara	SCH	AL	NEW
4.	Brooks Smith	WMC	56-65	Elizabeth	NE	AL	NEW

**T. Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Luis G. Collazo	HMC	56-65	Del Norte	BPR	AL	REN
2.	Helen G. Engeseth	WFE	65+	Nevada	PAC	AL	REN
3.	R. Michael Winters	WMC	56-65	Chicago	LIN	AL	REN
4.	Lynn McClintock	WFC	46-55	Shenandoah	MAT	AL	NEW

**U. Presbyterian Men****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	David Caves, Jr.	WMC	56-65	Kiskiminetas	TRI	AL	NEW
2.	George Goodman	BMC	65+	The Peaks	MAT	AL	NEW

**V. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Board of Directors****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Deborah Block	WFC	46-55	Milwaukee	LAK	AL	REN
2.	Adlai Amor	AME	46-55	National Capital	MAT	AL	NEW
3.	Elizabeth Caldwell	WFC	56-65	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
4.	John Temple	WMO	65+	Hudson River	NE	AL	NEW

**W. Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examination of Candidates****GANC Nomination—Class of 2012**

1.	Michelle Bartel	WFC	36-45	Ohio Valley	LIN	AL	REN
2.	Jeffrey Siemon	WMC	36-45	San Gabriel	SCH	AL	REN
3.	Marsha M. Wilfong	WFC	46-55	The John Knox	LAK	PTI	REN
4.	Janis Alling Adams	WFE	46-55	Cincinnati	COV	AL	NEW
5.	Angel L. De La Cruz	BMC	36-45	Shenango	TRI	AL	NEW
6.	Eriberto Soto	HMC	56-65	Charleston-Atlantic	SA	AL	NEW

**[X. Review Committee on the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.]****[GANC Nomination—Class of 2010]**

1.	Pending					Comm	NEW
2.	Pending					Comm	NEW
3.	Chuck Sparks	WME	56-65	Denver	ROC	Comm	NEW
4.	Wayland Wong	AMC	65+	Los Ranchos	SCH	Comm	NEW
5.	Franklin D. Colelough (Chair)	BMC	56-65	New Harmony	SA	At-Large	NEW
6.	Gregory C. Gibson	WMC	56-65	Miami	COV	At-Large	NEW
7.	Margaret Jorgensen	WFC	56-65	Mid-South	LW	At-Large	NEW
8.	Efrain Rivera Vega	HFE	56-65	De San Juan	BPR	At-Large	NEW
9.	Martha P. Farmer	WFE	65+	Transylvania	LW	Agency	NEW
10.	Isaiah Jones	BMC	65+	San Jose	PAC	Agency	NEW
11.	Judy D. Lussie (D)	AFE	56-65	San Francisco	PAC	Agency	NEW
12.	Cathy Ulrich	WFC	46-55	Arkansas	SUN	Agency	NEW

**[Y. Review Committee on the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation]****[GANC Nomination—Class of 2010]**

1.	Mary Gene Boteler, Chair	WFC	46-55	Giddings Lovejoy	MAM	Comm	NEW
2.	Ernest E. Ettlich	OME	65+	The Cascades	PAC	Comm	NEW
3.	Carolyn K. Heyward	BFC	55-65	Charleston-Atlantic	SA	Comm	NEW
4.	Pending					Comm	NEW
5.	Jose Luis Casal	HMC	56-65	Tres Rios	SUN	At-Large	NEW
6.	David H. Hintz	WME	52-65	Heartland	MAM	At-Large	NEW
7.	Rodger Y. Nishioka	AME	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	At-Large	NEW
8.	Marvin L. Roloff	WMC	65+	Ecumenical		At-Large	NEW
9.	Karen E. Dimon	WFC	46-55	Cayuga-Syracuse	NE	Agency	NEW
10.	Pending					Agency	NEW
11.	Pending					Agency	NEW
12.	Pending					Agency	NEW

**Z. Review Committee on the Service of the Whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Leslie Day- Ebert	WFE	56-65	Los Ranchos	SCH	Comm	NEW
2.	John G. McFayden, Chair	WMC	46-55	Chicago	LIN	Comm	NEW
3.	Kevin L. Porter	BMC	36-45	Philadelphia	TRI	Comm	NEW
4.	Irvin S. Moxley	BMC	65+	Scioto Valley	COV	Comm	NEW
5.	Clemente H. Anzaldua	HME	56-65	Mission	SUN	At-Large	NEW
6.	Yubang (Joshua) Lee	AME	65+	Eastern Korean	NE	At-Large	NEW
7.	Thomas C. Sheffield	WMC	56-65	Denver	ROC	At-Large	NEW
8.	Judith Wellington	NFC	46-55	Santa Fe	SW	At-Large	NEW
9.	Sandra L. Peirce	WFC	56-65	Sacramento	PAC	Agency	NEW
10.	Earldean Robbins	BFE	65+	San Francisco	PAC	Agency	NEW
11.	Jose R. Irizarry	HMC	36-45	San Juan	BPR	Agency	NEW
12.	Alvin H. Puryear	BME	65+	Eastern Virginia	MAT	Agency	NEW
13.	Allison K. Seed	WFC	46-55	Heartland	MAM	Agency	NEW
14.	Elinor K. Hite	WFE	56-65	Chicago	LIN	Agency	NEW

**AA. Stewardship Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2010**

1.	Jack D. Shelver	WME	65+	San Diego	SCH	AL	NEW
2.	Steve Tonissen	WME	56-65	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW

## Item 00-02

[The assembly approved Item 00-02. See p. 3.]

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following assembly committee structure [a brief list of the business to be referred to that committee follows the committee title]:

### 02 Bills and Overtures:

Docket of the assembly and referrals of business to assembly committees after commencement of General Assembly (Standing Rules C.4. b.); appeal of persons denied the right to speak at a public hearing (Standing Rule E.5.b.); review requests for distribution of material to commissioners (Standing Rule E.6.c.); review requests from agencies to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings during assembly meeting (Standing Rule E.6.d.); recommend approval of time limits on debate (Standing Rule F.1.b.); review and recommend approval of General Assembly *Minutes* (Standing Rule F.1.c.); requests for presentations to the assembly (Standing Rule F.1.d.); review protests, determine if entered in the *Minutes*, prepare response if needed (Standing Rule F.1.e.); report on assembly committee requests for establishment of special committees or commissions (Standing Rule K.1.a.–b.).

### 03 General Assembly Procedures:

*Consider matters related to:* meetings of the assembly; per capita budget; standing rule amendments; operation of the Office of the General Assembly; statistics; publishing of reports; General Assembly Nominating Committee process; special committees; commissioners and advisory delegates credentials/leaves of absence.

### 04 Church Polity:

*Consider matters related to:* amendments to Chapters I, III–V, VII–XIV, XVI–XVIII of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; amendments to the Rules of Discipline with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice. Marriage and Civil Unions. Advisory Committee on Litigation.

### 05 Church Orders and Ministry:

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to Chapter VI of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; recruiting, enlistment of persons to service of church. Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

### 06 Form of Government Revision:

*Consider matters related to:* The report of the General Assembly Task Force on the revision of the Form of Government.

### 07 Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations:

*Consider matters related to:* amendments to Chapter XV of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; matters dealing with relationships with, and attitudes toward, other religious movements or bodies; conversations with other Presbyterian denominations; nominations for ecumenical advisory delegates; nominations for delegations to corresponding churches; reports of corresponding bodies.

### 08 Mission Coordination and Budgets:

*Consider matters related to:* Mission programs authorized by General Assembly; PC(USA) vision and mission goals; *Organization for Mission* and General Assembly Council *Manual of Operations*; mission budget; audits; churchwide compensation.

### 09 Social Justice Issues:

*Consider matters related to:* Concerns of church in national affairs; national military matters; matters relating to righteousness and justice of persons/organizations. General Assembly Committee on Representation. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.

### 10 Health Issues:

*Consider matters related to:* Health, managed care, disabilities, abortion.

### 11 Peacemaking and International Issues:

*Consider matters related to:* Peacemaking, international military affairs, and the arms race; international matters; human rights; plight of refugees worldwide; international economic justice; global evangelism and education.



**12 Church Growth and Christian Education:**

*Consider matters related to:* Items concerning evangelism, outreach, and church growth as they relate to congregations and governing bodies of the church; higher education; matters relating to Christian educators; church transfers, PILP.

**13 Theological Issues and Institutions:**

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to *The Book of Confessions*, the Directory for Worship and Chapter II of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; authority and interpretation of Scripture; theological institutions; celebration of Lord's Supper requests.

**14 Review of GA Permanent Committees:**

*Consider matters related to:* Review of the work of the General Assembly Permanent, Advocacy, and Advisory Committees as Scheduled (See *Organization for Mission*, Section IV.D.2.). PCCE, ACREC, GAPJC.

**15 Board of Pensions , Presbyterian Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing:**

*Consider matters related to:* Report of Board of Pensions; business related to the church's pension, annuity, and medical plans; other forms of such programs, including government or private retirement programs; business related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

**16 Worship and Spiritual Renewal**

*Consider matters related to:* How the General Assembly does its business in a way that reflects its common faith in Jesus Christ and how the church can seek a spiritual renewal through its congregations and presbyteries.

**17 Youth**

Consider matters related to: Youth, ministry for and with youth, youth participation in the church.

**Item 00-03**

[The assembly approved Item 00-03. See pp. 5, 41.]

*Report of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee*

**The Stated Clerk Nomination Committee unanimously and enthusiastically recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve that the Reverend Gradye Parsons be elected as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.**

*Rationale*

Gradye Parsons has many spiritual gifts, experiences, and skills to serve most effectively as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. These include a strong and abiding faith, a deep love for the church, demonstrated ability to use a vision of the church and a sense of mission in planning and decision making, leadership in new and creative thinking in serving the church of the future, and a breadth of experience at all levels of the church.

In our interview with Gradye, the committee was excited to hear about Gradye's vision of a church with a missional focus, where polity is a helpful means to that end, and where elders are trained and equipped to take a leadership role alongside ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Gradye was instrumental in bringing about the National Elders Conference in 2007.

His references (colleagues from several positions of leadership in the church) confirm a practical theologian with a solid knowledge of Reformed tradition and a leader with an ability to see the big picture and also offer concrete proposals, a collaborative working style, a pastor's heart, a calming presence, and a good sense of humor. He has built strong relationships with middle governing body leaders and people across the theological spectrum of the church.

Gradye Parsons has the breadth and depth of experience at all levels of the church to take on the many and varied responsibilities of the Stated Clerk. Gradye has served the church as parish pastor (fifteen years), executive presbyter and stated clerk (six years), and Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly (eight years). His responsibilities as Associate Stated Clerk have included General Assembly meeting planning and implementation, staff resource to several General Assembly committees, and general supervision of the management of the Office of the General Assembly.

Gradye Parsons had brought his creative leadership to challenges such as encouraging the church to explore new tools of discernment and other innovative ways of decision making, revitalizing elder leadership in the church, moving to biennial assemblies, and developing a review process for the six national agencies of the church.

The members of the committee joyfully and without reservation recommend to you the Reverend Gradye Parsons as our nominee for Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

### ***Background***

The Stated Clerk Nomination Committee was elected by the 217th General Assembly (2006). The nine members include four past General Assembly commissioners: Elders Tom Adger (Atlanta, Georgia) and Joan Fong (Fremont, California); ministers: Anna Case Winters (Chicago, Illinois) and Lyle Hillegas (Santa Barbara, California); three persons from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly: Elder Steve Grace (Beulah, Michigan, moderator), and Ministers Helen Baily Cochrane (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania) and John Purcell (Dallas, Texas); a representative from General Assembly Council: Elder Pamila Deichmann (Winterset, Iowa), and a middle governing body staff representation: Minister Donnie Woods, executive presbyter and stated clerk of Charleston-Atlantic Presbytery (Charleston, South Carolina). The Reverend Carol McDonald, Synod of the Lincoln Trails co-executive, served as staff to the committee.

We were guided in our work by the section in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly related to the Election of the Stated Clerk (H2b(3) and (4)). Our nomination process was carried out in three segments: a churchwide application process (September–December 2007), a review and interview process (January–February 2008), and a selection and announcement process (March–May 2008).

We met face-to-face three times: May 21–23, 2007; January 19–21, 2008; and March 28–30, 2008, with other numerous telephone conference call meetings.

**Application Process:** Following our meeting in May 2007, the committee established a Web page containing the Stated Clerk job description, Stated Clerk responsibilities, and other background materials. We developed an application form that included biographical information and general background questions as well as six supplemental questions. The committee issued a churchwide invitation to encourage persons (elders and ministers of Word and Sacrament) to submit an application. This was published in a number of print and electronic media.

As specified in the Standing Rules, applications had to be submitted by December 23, 2007 (180 days before the start of the General Assembly). The committee received fourteen applications. The committee sought and received 3–5 letters of reference for each applicant.

**Review and Interview Process:** At its meeting in January 2008, the committee thoroughly reviewed all the applications and letters of reference and decided to conduct a telephone interview with each applicant. Interview format: After brief introductions and opening prayer, the committee moderator presented three questions and the interviewee was given fifteen minutes to respond to all three—a format which somewhat parallels the Q&A period for Stated Clerk candidates at General Assembly. All committee members were present for all the telephone interviews.

**Selection and Announcement Process:** To assist the committee in making a recommendation of a nominee to the General Assembly, the committee invited five applicants for a personal interview. Those interviews were held on March 28–29, 2008. All committee members participated in the interviews. Following the interviews, it was clear to all the members of the committee that the person God was calling to serve the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly was the Reverend Gradye Parsons. After confirming Gradye's willingness to serve if elected, the committee announced its selection to the church through a press release on April 3, 2008.

The committee informed the other applicants that they had until May 7, 2008 (forty-five days before the start of the General Assembly) to inform the committee that they intend to stand against the committee's nominee for Stated Clerk. Three applicants submitted declarations of intent to the committee by May 7: the Reverend Dr. Winfield Jones (Pearland, Texas), the Reverend Edward Koster, (Detroit, Michigan), and the Reverend Dr. William Tarbell (Saluda, South Carolina).

The committee prepared and gave to each candidate five questions, the answers to which are included in the information packet for commissioners and advisory delegates. The packet of information (including biographical information and a personal statement prepared by each candidate) was published by the Office of the General Assembly on PC-biz and in print.

The committee will present its report and its nominee, the Reverend Gradye Parsons, on Sunday afternoon, June 22, during the 5–6 p.m. session of the meeting of the 218th General Assembly (2008).

## Item 00-04

[The assembly approved Item 00-04 with amendment. See p. 18.]

*Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006) Nominations for Members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee.*

The Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006) places in nomination the following persons for election to the General Assembly Nominating Committee:

<i>Nominee</i>	<i>Diversity</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Synod of Residence</i>
<i>Class of 2012</i>			
<del>William E. King</del>	<del>WMC</del>	<del>46-55</del>	<del>Trinity †]</del>
<del>Catherine Purves</del>	<del>WFC</del>	<del>55-65</del>	<del>Trinity]</del>

*Class of 2014*

Joan Carpenter	WFE	65+	Southern California and Hawaii
Warner R. Durnell	BMC	56-65	Living Waters
Roger Howell	WME	65+	Covenant
Elsa Mojica-Simpson	HFE	56-65	Sun
Jose L. Torres Hernandez	(YA) HME	25-	Puerto Rico

### *Rationale*

The *Book of Order* (G-13.0111) mandates the following for the General Assembly Nominating Committee: "... The committee shall consist of members equal in number to the synods of the church, each member resident in a different synod, and members distributed so that there are one third ministers (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen. ... Within thirty days prior to the regular meeting of the General Assembly, the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall nominate persons for election by the General Assembly to fill the vacancies occurring at the adjournment of the ensuing General Assembly. ..."

There are five vacancies on the General Assembly Nominating Committee. The Moderator has consulted with each of the synods where a vacancy exists. Each of the persons nominated has been highly recommended by one or more person in her or his synod. This slate of nominees represents the greater diversity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as mandated by G-4.0403 in the *Book of Order*.

If this slate is elected, the full membership of the General Assembly Nominating Committee will consist of  
 5 laywomen  
 5 laymen  
 6 ministers of the Word and Sacrament

The racial/ethnic breakdown will be:

2 Asian American  
 2 African American  
 2 Hispanic/Latina/Latino  
 1 Native American  
 9 Caucasian

Key to abbreviations:

BMC=African American, Male, Clergy

HFE=Hispanic/Latina, Female, Elder

HME=Hispanic/Latino, Male, Elder

WFE=White, Female, Elder

WME=White, Male, Elder

YA=Young Adult

†=Moderatorial appointment to fill vacancy



**Item 01-01**

[The assembly approved Item 01-01. See p. 3]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the proposed docket as follows:

**Proposed Docket  
218th General Assembly (2008)  
San Jose, California**

**Saturday, June 21**

10:00 pm	<b>218TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENES</b> <b>BUSINESS MEETING I</b> Worship Commissioning Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee on Local Arrangements</li> <li>• Moderator's Report</li> <li>• General Assembly Council</li> </ul> Announcements Closing Prayer Recess
12:00 Noon 1:30pm	Group Meal Opening Prayer <b>BUSINESS MEETING 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientations (Three segments)</li> <li>• General Assembly Nominating Committee</li> <li>• Assembly Committee on Business Referrals</li> </ul> Announcements Closing Prayers Recess
5:00 pm 7:00 pm	Dinner Break Opening Prayer <b>BUSINESS MEETING 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Moderator</li> </ul> Announcements Closing Prayer Recess

**Sunday, June 22**

10:00am 10:00am 12:00 Noon 1:30-3:30	Opening Worship Service NEW BUSINESS DEADLINE Lunch on own Moderator's Reception
5:00pm	<b>BUSINESS MEETING 4</b> Stated Clerk Nomination Disability Awareness Committee Orientation
6:00pm 7:30pm	Group Meal <i>Committee Meeting 1</i>

**Monday, June 23**

7:00am 9:30 am 12:00 noon 1:30pm 5:30pm 6:45pm 8:00pm	GA Breakfast with Morning Prayer (group meal) <i>Committee Meeting 2</i> Lunch Break <i>Committee Meeting 3</i> Group Dinner Evening Worship (Civic Auditorium) <i>Committee Meeting 4</i>
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01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

**Tuesday, June 24**

8:30am Morning Worship (Civic Auditorium)  
9:30am *Committee Meeting 5*  
12:00pm Lunch Break  
1:30pm *Committee Meeting 6*  
Free Evening (Assembly Committees Will Meet Only as Needed)

**Wednesday, June 25**

8:30am Ecumenical Worship Service (Civic Auditorium)  
9:30am Report Reading Time  
10:00-Noon Stated Clerk Candidates Meet and Greet  
12:00 Noon Seminary Lunches  
2:30pm Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 5**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Stated Clerk's Orientation II
- Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess  
6:00pm Dinner Break  
7:30pm Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 6**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Thursday, June 26**

8:30am Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 7**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- General Assembly Nominating Committee
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess  
12:00pm Group Lunch  
1:30pm Worship (In Plenary)  
2:30pm **BUSINESS MEETING 8**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess  
6:00pm Dinner on own  
7:30pm Opening Prayer

01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

**BUSINESS MEETING 9**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Friday, June 27**

8:30am

Opening Prayer

**BUSINESS MEETING 10**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Stated Clerk's Election
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

12:00pm

Lunch on own

1:30pm

Worship (in Plenary)

2:30pm

**BUSINESS MEETING 11**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

6:00pm

Group Dinner

7:30pm

**BUSINESS MEETING 12**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Saturday, June 28**

8:30am

Morning Worship (in Plenary)

**BUSINESS MEETING 13**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Introduction of Presbytery of Twin Cities Area Committee on Local Arrangements

Closing Prayer

Noon

ADJOURN

## Item 01-02

[The assembly approved Item 01-02 as amended. See p. 5.]

### I. REFERRALS IN PROGRESS

#### A. *Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy*

1. *2006 Referral: Item 09-10. Report: Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability. Recommendation A.4., Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to Prepare an Accompanying Study Guide, Which Would Include Diverse Responses on the Issues Presented in the Paper—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 826).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

2. *2006 Referral: Alternate Resolution to Item 09-14. The 217th General Assembly (2006) Directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in Consultation with the Presbyterian Washington Office, and Appropriate Entities to Assess the Effects on Christian Witness to Society of Government Faith-Based Initiatives and Other Vehicles By Which Presbyterian Churches and Groups Closely Affiliated with Congregations Accepts Moneys from Government Bodies with Particular Attention to Contracts Affecting Public Education; Consider Means to Gather Information by Congregations on the Proportion of Government Contracts and Moneys to Individual Church Budgets; Examine the Effectiveness of Publicly Supported Programs in Presbyterian Churches, in Consultation with Presbyteries and Synods; and Recommend to the 218th General Assembly (2008) Guidelines on the Acceptance of Such Moneys, Especially with Regard to Public Schools, Charter Schools, After-School Programs, Tutoring Programs, and Other Such Services for Public School Children—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 878).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

#### B. *Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns*

*2004 Referral: Item 05-03. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Request the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, Following Review of Resources Currently Available to Meet the Needs of Clergywomen in the Call Process and in Pastorates, to Make Recommendations That Contribute to a Pro-active, Health-giving Ministry to and Relationship with Our Clergywomen—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 77, 389–90).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

#### C. *Committee on the Office of the General Assembly*

*2002 Referral: Item 02-01. Recommendation 6. COGA to Prepare an Evaluation of Biennial Assemblies After the 219th General Assembly (2010) Through a Special Task Group or Committee Appointed by the Stated Clerk and Executive Director. Report to 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 26, 159).*

Final Response will be presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

#### D. *General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations*

*2006 Referral: Item 07-05. On Becoming a "Provisional" Participant in Christian Churches Together—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 574)*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

#### E. *General Assembly Council*

1. *2006 Referral: Item 09-09. Report: Economic Security for Older Adults, Recommendation 14. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Call Upon the Office of National Health Ministries to Provide Information Through Its Website, Publications, and Workshops, and Training on Congregational Care, Healthful Living, and Health Care Access for All People—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 815).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).



2. *2003 Referral: Item 09-01. Reclaiming the Vision: A Mission Strategy to Strengthen the partnership Between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Its Related Schools, Colleges, and Universities, Recommendation 9. That the General Assembly Require the National Ministries Division, Higher Education Program Area, to Return to the General Assembly with a Progress Report in Three Years, and a Full Assessment of the Response to the Recommendations in the Report in Five Years—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 24, 523).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

*Progress Report:* Due to the General Assembly Council (GAC) restructure, the dissolution of the National Ministries Division in the fall of 2006, and the closure of the Higher Education program area in 2002, the final report has been delayed. Progress has been made by the GAC by recommitting to the covenant with the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU) and by reasserting an emphasis by GAC leadership to visit the Presbyterian-related colleges and universities in the last year. The Executive Director has had numerous visits to related colleges and universities in the last two years and was in attendance at the APCU annual meeting in 2007.

3. *2006 Referral: Item 09-10. Report: Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability, Recommendation C. In Order to Manage Technology for the Common Good, Through the Office of the Stated Clerk, the Washington and United Nations Offices, and Other Appropriate Agencies to Carry Out Item 1. Concerning Public Domain Intellectual Property, Item 2. Concerning Agricultural Technology, and Item 3. Concerning the Internet—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 826–27).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

4. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Report: Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.c.(1), That the General Assembly Council Facilitate, with Middle Governing Bodies, a Strategy to Educate, Train, Research, and Provide Advocacy for Peopling Living with Disabilities and Their Families in Church and Society by Assisting Them in Developing Guidelines and Training Procedures for Use by Church Leaders in Local Congregations—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 921).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

5. *2006 Referral: Item 11-28. On Supporting the Peace Process in Sudan—From the Presbyteries of Trinity and She-nango, Recommendation 3. Direct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment to Explore the Appropriateness of Recommending to the General Assembly That It Add to Its Divestment List Those Companies Profiting from the Sale of Armaments, Helicopters, Tanks, and Other War Material to the Government of Sudan until These Companies Either Suspend Their Operations in Sudan or a Just and Lasting Peace Exists for All People of Sudan (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 1002–5).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

6. *2006. Referral: Item 11-36. On Recognizing the Value of Proactive, Constructive Nonviolence and Establishing Nonviolence Training—From the Presbytery of Baltimore (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 46, 1018–19).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

7. *2006 Referral: Item 11-37. On Advocating for Positive Change in Darfur and All of Sudan—From the Presbytery of the Palisades (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 46, 1019–21).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

8. *2002 Referral: Item 11-02. Report: A Comprehensive Strategy for Ministries with Native American: 2002 Supplemental Recommendations of the General Assembly Special Task Force on Native American Ministries, Recommendation 4, That a Report on Implementation of the Recommended Strategies Be Presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010), in Coordination with Native American Consulting Committee and Appropriate General Assembly Entities—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 23, 559).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

9. *2002 Referral: Item 09-03. Recommendation to Delay Implementation of Overture 01-55. On Directing CMD to Develop Study Materials to Provide Guidance on the Relationship of the Finding of the Sciences to the Affirmation of God as*

*Creator of the Universe—From the Presbytery of National Capital (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 38, 467–86) Until Sufficient New Funding Is Provided—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 45, 493).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

10. *2003 Referral: Item 10-06. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Urge the General Assembly Council, Congregational Ministries Division, to Develop and Produce Processes and Materials for the Incorporation and Reception of New Adult Members Based on The Study Catechism (Full Version)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 22, 565).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

11. *2004 Referral: Item 06-09. On Re-Examining the Relationship Between Christians and Jews and the Implications for Our Evangelism and New Church Development—From the Presbytery of Hudson River (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 20, 440).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

12. *2006 Referral: Item 07-06, Recommendation 1.d., That the General Assembly Council's Office of Theology and Worship Consider Drafting a Report on Reformed Theology and Economic Justice, Especially Dealing with the Theological Language Appropriate to Address Social and Economic Justice—From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Delegation to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches General Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 16, 575–79).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

13. *2006 Referral: Item 13-03. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Authorize the Office of Theology and Worship to Undertake a Study of "Salvation and Sin," and Report the Results of Its Study to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1101).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

14. *2006 Referral: Item 13-04. Recommendation 4. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Authorize the Office of Theology and Worship to Gather Learning's, Insights, and Experiences, from Churches That Engage in This Discipline (Practices that Deepen Baptismal Life and Discipleship), and to Submit a Final Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1102).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

15. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing. Recommendation 4. Instruct the Office of Theology and Worship to Make "The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing" Available to the Church, with Study Guide, in Both Print and Electronic Forms—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

16. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing. Recommendation 5. Encourage the Office of Theology and Worship to Work with Congregational Ministries Publishing and/or Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to Make Available Liturgical Resources Based on "The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing"—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

17. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing. Recommendation 6. Encourage the Office of Theology and Worship to Work with Congregational Ministries Publishing and/or Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to Make Available the Historical Resources on Prayer and Worship That Underlie "The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing"—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

18. *2006 Referral: Item 13-10. On the Development of a Denominational E-Hymnal—From the Presbytery of Miami (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1141–42).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

19. *2003 Referral: Item 10-07. Recommendation 3. That the General Assembly Instruct the Congregational Ministries Division, Office of Theology and Worship, to Report Annually the Number of Presbyteries That Participate in “Celebrating the Lord’s Supper Each Lord’s Day”—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 22, 566).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

20. *2006 Referral: Item 10-05. On Teen Suicide and Self-Injury—From the Presbytery of St. Augustine (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 916–19).*

Final response will begin being presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

*Progress Report:* Item 10-07 calls on the Office of Theology and Worship to provide resources for celebrating the Lord’s Supper each Lord’s Day within presbyteries. By June 2008, the Office of Theology and Worship will have resources produced for this purpose. The Office of Theology and Worship will begin reporting the number of presbyteries participating by the 219th General Assembly (2010).

21. *Alternate Resolution to 2004 Referral: Item 04-12. Recommendation 2. That the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council Office of Theology and Worship Undertake an Analysis of the Directory of Worship with the Goal of Evaluating Its Influence and Effectiveness in Guiding Sessions, Pastors, and Higher Governing Bodies in Planning and Conducting Worship That Is Authentically Reformed and Culturally Appropriate—From the 216th General Assembly (2004) (Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 86).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

22. *2004 Referral: Item 06-06. Report, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Understanding of the 16th and 17th Century Condemnation of Other Churches in The Book of Confessions, Recommendation 4. That the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Theology and Worship Be Requested to Initiate Conversations with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Seeking a WARC Statement on the Issue and Report Results of These Conversations to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 21, 424).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

23. *2002 Referral: Item 08-11. That the General Assembly Council Implement the Mission Initiative, Report on Its Progress Annually with a Final Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), and Report on the Web Quarterly the Cash Receipts and Disbursements of All Mission Initiative Funds—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 77, 461).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

*Progress Report:* The Mission Initiative Steering Committee, chaired by Joanna Adams and Dave Peterson, has met regularly since the last assembly. Jan Opdyke resigned as campaign director in October of 2006. David York provided leadership until July 2007, when Robert Thompson became interim director of Funds Development and assumed direction of the campaign.

In November of 2006, Tom Gillespie was named honorary campaign chair for the conclusion of the campaign.

In December of 2006, the General Assembly Council Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the General Assembly Council, voted to extend the campaign by twelve months through the close of the 218th General Assembly (2008), so that the campaign cycle would coincide with the schedule for biennial assemblies.

An analysis of campaign status and campaign activities conducted in the last half of 2007 resulted in a reduction of more than \$7,000,000 from the \$27,560,000 in cash and pledges reported as of June 30, 2007. This adjustment was due primarily to unrealistic commitments by several presbyteries and presbytery campaigns that did not reach commitment objectives.

In October of 2007, the General Assembly Council Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the General Assembly Council, adopted revised parameters to guide the conclusion of the campaign:

## 01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

### Resolution

Where the following eight (8) requirements are met, as they may apply to a particular gift, the funds generated will be counted towards the \$40 million funds development goal of the Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands (MIJHH) in support of international mission personnel and church growth:

1. The donor may be an individual member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PCUSA) or an individual not a PCUSA member. The donor may be a PCUSA governing body, a PCUSA-related or supportive agency or corporation, or a non PCUSA affiliated foundation, corporation, or other entity.

2. The donor will have been informed about MIJHH prior to making the gift and the donor will express in writing an intent that the gift is for MIJHH.

3. The gift may be made in the form of immediately available monies, an irrevocable endowment established and dedicated for the benefit of a MIJHH eligible purpose, or a signed pledge commitment.

4. The gift must be fully paid by December 31, 2012, except in cases of endowments created in accordance with requirement number 3, herein that may extend in perpetuity.

5. The gift may or may not flow to the General Assembly Council (GAC). The gift may remain with other PCUSA governing bodies. The gift may flow to other PCUSA-related agencies or church partners. An acceptable irrevocable endowment may be made through the PCUSA Foundation or other institutions approved by the GAC as to purpose, security and suitability of the investment.

6. The gift must advance either PCUSA international mission personnel or PCUSA church growth as those terms are defined below:

A. International mission personnel means personnel whose primary work is outside the U.S. and advances the global witness and service of the PCUSA, whether or not the personnel are sent by the GAC. To further clarify the intent of this paragraph:

i. International mission personnel may be sent by all PCUSA governing bodies or other PCUSA-related agencies. If the personnel are being sent by other than the GAC's World Mission Program Area (World Mission), then the sending entity and World Mission must be in agreement that the proposed position is consistent with and supportive of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s work and witness in the place to which the personnel are being sent and such personnel must attend a World Mission orientation for mission personnel prior to deployment;

ii. At the GAC, international mission personnel must be new positions. That is a position that has not existed previously or has not been filled in the past 3-5 year term. A person with missionary experience is not excluded from candidacy;

iii. Donors may give for the purposes of PCUSA international mission personnel generally or for a particular PCUSA mission personnel position;

iv. International mission personnel is also understood to include projects related to a PCUSA mission personnel position, as described above; and,

v. The Agreement between the Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands and the Worldwide Ministries Division (predecessor to the current PCUSA World Mission area) on funding International Mission Personnel and dated April 27, 2005 is hereby incorporated by reference. In the event any of the provisions of that Agreement should conflict with those otherwise stated herein, the explicit provisions of this Resolution shall apply.

B. Church growth means providing funding for:

i. grants for new church development, especially in racial ethnic, Immigrant, and Gen-X new church developments;

ii. grants for church redevelopment for existing congregations;

iii. grants for racial ethnic and immigrant fellowships;

iv. grants for specialized ministries such as day care centers, youth outreach programs, and parish nurses;

v. grants and loans for "bricks-and mortar" projects, including property acquisition, building construction, building repair, and expansion; and,

vi. grants and loans for technology upgrades to assist worship;

7. In reporting gifts, the following financial reporting standards shall apply:

A. Campaign total will consist of:

i. Face value of outright gifts and pledges from individuals, foundations or other entities received and payable within the campaign period and post campaign accounting period and no later than December 31, 2012;

ii. Face value of outright gifts and pledges from congregations and middle governing bodies received and payable within the national campaign period and post campaign accounting period and no later than December 31, 2012. It is understood that said gifts and pledges may also be counted as commitments and contributions to local fund raising efforts.

B. To be reported, all pledges shall be in written form with signature by the individual donor, the donor's legal representative or trustee: All pledges from congregations require written verification by the clerk of session or the stated clerk of the presbytery. The date of recording for financial reporting purposes shall be the date of the vote by the session or the middle governing body, if verification is received within 5 working days past the end of the quarter.

C. Outright gifts shall be recorded when assets are transferred irrevocably to the PCUSA or the Presbyterian Foundation. Deferred gifts will be reported only when assets are transferred, or in the case where no assets are transferred, when the donor consummates a legally binding pledge agreement or other irrevocable document with the PCUSA or the Presbyterian Foundation.

8. If questions arise regarding whether or not the requirements set forth above have been met, a request for clarification will be presented in written form to the full Steering Committee of MIJHH for its review and validation, and the full committee is hereby authorized to determine whether the funds generated are within the campaign or not. Further, upon its review and validation, the Steering Committee of MIJHH shall immediately report such determination to the GAC or if the GAC is not in session, to the GAC Executive Committee.

Further, and recognizing that certain commitments and agreements have been made relative to that certain gift from Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church which does not fall within all the parameters set forth above and while still honoring the commitments and assurances made to previous MIJHH donors, a one-time exception will be made to treat the MAPC as counting toward the goals of MIJHH to the extent that: i. funds generated from its quasi endowment shall be used consistent with item 6.A.i., above; and, ii. gifts shall be recorded only in an amount equivalent either to a signed pledge to fund such position(s) or in the alternative, in the amount(s) actually received by MIJHH prior to December 31, 2012, as such gifts are received.

Campaign activity has focused on a limited number of potential prospects within high potential congregations. A Leadership Task Force of Steering Committee members has been actively engaged in the campaign, identifying and contacting these congregations. Many of these congregations will not take action before June 30, 2008, but they are being reintroduced to the good work of Presbyterian World Mission, and this has been one of the primary aims of the campaign: “Renewing the Church for Mission.”

Financial reports of campaign pledges and receipts are posted quarterly on the Web site [www.pcusa.org/missioninitiative](http://www.pcusa.org/missioninitiative).

#### **F. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation***

*1999 Referral: 30.035–048. Approve and Authorize the Creation of New Covenant Annuity Insurance Company (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 37, 500).*

Final response will be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The insurance company has not yet been chartered in any state and has not commenced operations.

#### **G. *Presbyterian Publishing Corporation***

*2006 Referral: Item 13-10. Development of a New Denominational Hymnal for Corporate Worship (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1141–42).*

*2006 Referral: Item 13-11. Development of a New Denominational Hymnal for Corporate Worship (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1142–43).*

Final response will be presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

*Progress Report:* As directed by the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC), Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM), and Office of Theology and Worship (OTW) will address the research and development for an internet-based denominational resource as part of the ongoing work of a new denominational hymnal for corporate worship.

As directed by the 217th General Assembly (2006), the PPC will bear the expenses of the hymnal committee, all other development costs, publication, and marketing/promotion expenses, but will work in consultation and collaboration with PAM and OTW.

The PPC, PAM, and OTW worked in consultation to develop a job description to enlist applicants for the hymnal editor position. After a search for applicants and interviews conducted by the three entities, one candidate surfaced with exemplary skills, experience, and references. David E. Eicher joined the staff of Presbyterian Publishing Corporation on January 1, 2008.

The PPC, PAM, and OTW are currently accepting and reviewing candidates for the hymnal committee. The hymnal committee will be chosen based on skills, experience, and in light of the directions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) to be a group of eight–twelve people with at least two members being under age twenty-five. The PPC, PAM, and OTW will accept applications and references through July 11, 2008. A copy of the application can be found on the hymnal project Web-site at [www.presbyterianhymnal.org](http://www.presbyterianhymnal.org). The hymnal committee will be named by August 15, 2008, with a first meeting scheduled for September 22 and 23, 2008, in Louisville, Kentucky. It is anticipated that the hymnal committee, once constituted, will be supplemented by an ecumenical advisory group and presbytery representatives.

## II. FINAL RESPONSES TO REFERRALS

### A. *Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy*

1. *1999 Referral: 25.039 Response to Recommendation Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in Consultation with Appropriate Entities, to Develop a Comprehensive Serious Mental Illness Policy, Including Justice Issues and Full Participation in the Life of the Church, and Report to the 217th General Assembly (2005)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 42, 309).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 10-05, the proposed policy on “Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness.”

2. *1999 Referral: Overture 99-17. On Affirming the Equality of Women and Men—From the Presbytery of North Puget Sound (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 80, 591).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-08, “God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation,” p. 897.

3. *2001 Referral: 25.110. Response to Recommendation Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to Instruct Its Task Forces on Disabilities and Serious Mental Illness to Include the Dimension of Domestic Violence and Its Impact in Their Respective Work—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 61, 239).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by the action taken on Item 10-06, Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 919–39), and by Item 10-05, the proposed policy on “Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness,” p. 1088.

4. *2002 Referral: Item 12-06. Overture 02-57. On Revising the Denominational Policy on the Issue of Energy—From the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 72, 596–97).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-10, “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming,” p. 934

5. *2004 Referral: Item 08-18. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Celebrating the “Social Creed” of the Churches and Considering a 21st Century Social Creed, Recommendation 2., That the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy Initiate a Survey of Key Christian Principles to Guide 21st Century Presbyterians and Others in Addressing Major and Likely Future Concerns, Using Cost-Effective Measures, Volunteer Experts, and Past General Assembly Statements (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 18, 627–29).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-09, “A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century: Toward a New Social Awakening,” p. 924.

6. *2004 Referral: Item 08-18. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Celebrating the “Social Creed” of the Churches and Considering a 21st Century Social Creed, Recommendation 3. That the Office of the General Assembly, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and Other Appropriate Agencies of Our Denomination, Develop Recommendations for the 217th General Assembly (2006) Concerning the Possible Goals, Basic Commitments, and Effectiveness of an Updated Social Creed for the 21st Century (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 18, 627–29).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-09, “A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century: Toward a New Social Awakening,” p. 924.

7. *2004 Referral: Item 08-18. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Celebrating the “Social Creed” of the Churches and Considering a 21st Century Social Creed, Recommendation 4. That the Work of This Commissioners’ Resolution Be Coordinated with the Office of Theology and Worship (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 18, 627–29).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-09, “A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century: Toward a New Social Awakening,” including the showing of the video documentary, *The Social Creed: Toward a New Soul Awakening 1908–2008*, p. 924.

8. *2004 Referral: Item 10-02. Task Force on Election Report and Recommendations, Recommendation 1. That the General Assembly Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to Develop a Resolution on the Disen-*

*franchisement of People of Color in the U.S. Electoral Process for Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 56, 686–700).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-14, “Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights and Electoral Reform,” p. 977.

9. *2004 Referral: Item 10-02. Task Force on Election Report and Recommendations, Recommendation 2. That the General Assembly Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to Participate in the Work of Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy as It Develops a Resolution—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 56, 686–700).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-14, “Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights and Electoral Reform,” p. 977

10. *2006 Referral: Item 07-09. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Presbyterian Accompaniment Program in Colombia, Recommendation 5. The 217th General Assembly (2006) Referred Recommendation 5 to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Peacemaking Office with a Request to Include a Report in Their Next Human Rights Update Report—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 16, 580).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 11-18, the report on Human Rights in Colombia, p. 1180.

11. *2006 Referral: Item 09-02. Resolution on Smithfield Packing, Inc.—From the Presbytery of New Hope (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 784–87).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-19, p. 1056, recommendations regarding Smithfield Packing, Inc.

12. *2006 Referral: Item 09-16. On Being Faithfully Engaged in the Ministry of Ending Homelessness—From the Presbytery of New York City (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 883–85).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-07, “From Homelessness to Hope: Constructing Just, Sustainable Communities For All God’s People,” p. 91.

13. *2006 Referral: Item 09-22. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Calling All Presbyterians to Take Positive and Immediate Steps to Live Carbon Neutral Lives (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 895–98).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-10, “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming,” p. 934.

## **B. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns**

1. *2004 Referral: Item 07-08. Report, Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Recommendation 3.a., That the General Assembly Encourage All PC(USA) Corporate Agencies to Discontinue Utilization of the Term, “Racial Ethnic,” and Replace Such Reference with, “Emerging Majorities”—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Task Force to Examine GA Entities (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 51, 540).*

*Response:* After giving further consideration to the recommendation, ACREC voted at its November 12–13 meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, to take no further action to change the usage of the term “racial ethnic” in the PC(USA).

2. *2006 Referral: Item 08-12. Joint Resolution Regarding the Women of Color Consultation Report and Recommendations, Recommendation 1. Create a Task Force to Respond to the Recommendations in the Women of Color Consultation Report—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36–37, 677–706)*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-13, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God,” report of the Joint Task Force on the Women of Color Consultation to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

3. *2006 Referral: Item 10-09. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Closing the Chef Menteur Landfill in New Orleans—(Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 941–42).*

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 09-15, “Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future,” joint resolution with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

### **C. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns**

*2006 Referral: Item 14-ACWC R, Report, Review of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, Recommendation 1 That the ACWC develop a strategy for increasing effective communications with synods. (Minutes, 2006, Part 1, p 1164]*

*Response:* Among the survey results for the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) review at the 217th General Assembly (2006), synods and presbyteries showed limited familiarity with the work of the committee. The primary role of ACWC is in relating to the General Assembly and General Assembly Council (GAC). The focus of the committee with presbyteries and synods is in how the General Assembly and GAC support, resource, and relate with regard to items and issues of women’s concerns. Regular monitoring and review of presbyteries and synods is not a primary responsibility.

Regarding its assembly work, ACWC primarily relies on available mechanisms to report the work of the General Assembly. The ACWC maintains a Website and prints its reports for publication and distribution. The ACWC, recognizing the need to improve its communications, has (1) created a subcommittee to direct the content of its Website and provide for regular updates, (2) commissioned a new logo, (3) written and designed a new brochure to introduce and interpret the committee’s mission, (4) evaluated the quality and quantity of communications, (5) gathered data, hosted consultations and open forums, and analyzed input to share with the whole committee, and (6) developed strategies of how to share materials with middle governing bodies.

### **D. Board of Pensions**

1. *2006 Referral: Item 08-01. On Clarifying the Practice of Our Theology of Call for Those Serving General Assembly Entities—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36, 623–26).*

*Response:* As approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006), Item 08-01 instructed the Board of Pensions, along with other General Assembly entities, to “review [its] policies and practices and to effect any needed changes to bring them into full compliance with the *Book of Order* (G-11.0410) and General Assembly policies so that every minister of Word and Sacrament employed by them in any relationship shall have a call as defined by the Constitution of the church with full constitutional participation by the appropriate presbytery.”

The Board of Pensions has reviewed its policies and procedures and certifies that they fully comply with G-11.0410 and General Assembly policies.

2. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Report, Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.j.(2). That the Board of Pensions Be Sensitive to, Reasonable in Its Requests, and Timely in Its Actions Regarding Disabilities—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 923).*

*Response:* The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved Item 10-06, a paper from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) called *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities*. In this item, the Board of Pensions (BOP) was urged to

... continue to be

(a) sensitive to and thoughtful about the time demands that compliance with Benefits Plan requirements for documentation of medical status and medical needs place on families already strained by a disabling condition;

(b) reasonable in its requests for medical documentation and proactive in assisting families with compliance;

(c) timely in its actions and communications, so that Plan members and their families are well-informed about their participation status with the Board of Pensions;

(d) in direct communication with Plan members living with disabilities, so that the Board of Pensions may have a full appreciation of their particular circumstances and needs, leading to holistic care for the person and the family; and

(e) in partnership with employing organizations and national and local church leadership in coordinating the scope of the Medical Plan and the Assistance Program in order to offer appropriate care for all Plan members.

Since the 217th General Assembly (2006), in response to this referral and feedback from disabled members and the larger church community, the BOP made significant administrative changes to the disability plan.



Because of the disappointing performance of Aetna (formerly Broadspire Services, Inc.) in providing care management services to our disabled members, the BOP initiated a search for a more qualified and service centric vendor partner. In concert with the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod), the BOP's benefits team evaluated several disability management firms and collectively determined to engage Liberty Mutual, effective April 1, 2008.

Liberty Mutual is a highly qualified vendor partner, sensitive to the unique needs of our disabled population and committed to supporting the BOP's part of the church's mission in caring for these most vulnerable members and their families. Together we have established contractual performance standards that address:

- Timely decisions;
- Sensitive and appropriate care management by licensed and trained clinicians;
- Vocational support and training where appropriate;
- Member advocacy with government-sponsored entitlement programs.

The quality of support expected in this partnership relationship with Liberty Mutual is designed to permit BOP staff to engage more fully in supportive relationships with disabled members, ensuring that they understand and have access to the full range of BOP sponsored programs. These programs include, but are not limited to, the Medical Plan, the Employee Assistance Program, behavioral health benefits, and various assistance programs.

Our objective for members suffering disabilities is exactly the same as for all plan members: to ensure that they have their unique needs met in an integrated and holistic way.

3. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report of the Older Adult Task Force. Recommendation 1.a.(4), Encourage Ongoing Relationship Between PC(USA) Board of Pensions and Office of Older Adult Ministries—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069).*

*Response:* The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved Item 12-12, the Older Adult Ministries Task Force Report. In the report, the General Assembly “encourage[d] the ongoing relationship between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions and the Office of Older Adult Ministries to ensure the long-term financial viability of the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors.”

The following response has been jointly approved by the General Assembly Council and the Board of Pensions:

Where there are active chapters of the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors (ARMSS), the Board of Pensions includes them in any retiree events sponsored by the Board of Pensions. Some retiree events at the presbytery level are jointly sponsored by the Board of Pensions and ARMSS. Additionally, the Board of Pensions is supportive of the ministries of ARMSS by providing a staff liaison to the organization. This relationship promotes good communications between the Board of Pensions and ARMSS.

4. *2006 Referral: Item 15-04. On Pension and Medical Insurance Needs of Small Churches—From the Presbytery of Long Island (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 10, 1320).*

As approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006), Item 15-04 directed the Board of Pensions “to study the pension and medical insurance needs of particular churches served by part-time pastors such as tentmakers, and to consider new guidelines to allow flexibility for participation of churches served by these pastors.”

In the overture, the concerns of clergy leadership in particular churches were raised, focusing primarily on small churches whose limited resources make it impossible for them to call full-time pastors. Their leadership needs then must be met in a variety of ways; the overture cites yoked parishes, stated supplies, and tentmakers as examples. Given that some of these part-time pastors have other employment and perhaps access to other benefit programs, the overture suggests that greater flexibility is required in the structure of the Benefits Plan designed and administered by the Board of Pensions (BOP), if the needs of these pastors are to be met.

Tentmaker is not a tightly defined category. Taking its name from the biblical model of Paul, who made his tents to support himself and his ministry, generally the term tentmaker is used to describe those who serve a congregation less than full time and have other employment as their primary source of income. Some are employed in academic settings; others have lay, secular employment.

The church has long understood that ministry does not easily lend itself to traditional definitions of “hours of service.” In studying those tentmakers who are members of the BOP’s Benefits Plan, we note that some report working as few as ten hours per week, others more than thirty. While there is a large disparity in their formal number of hours worked, there is no doubt that a minister will respond to a call from a hospital whether they have already worked the number of hours for which they are paid or not. Nevertheless, the Benefits Plan funding and benefits design is premised on certain assumptions. The assumptions currently used to define levels of service are based on the prevailing industry and government standards.

During its study, the BOP considered these concerns and notes the following:

- Benefits Plan participation in the Traditional Program (Pension, Medical and Death and Disability plan membership, with dues based on 31.5 percent of effective salary) is mandated by the *Book of Order* (G-14.0534) only for those ministers of the Word and Sacrament serving as pastors in called and installed positions. As noted in the overture, a church can be served in many different ways. For some churches, choosing to be served by someone other than a called and installed pastor may solve the benefit cost problem in that participation in the Traditional Benefits Plan is not required.
- Through the BOP’s Affiliated Benefits Program (ABP), a minister of the Word and Sacrament not serving in a called position, a commissioned lay pastor or another church worker may be eligible for enrollment in the Medical Plan, with or without Death and Disability Plan enrollment, but excluded from the defined benefit Pension Plan. In this circumstance, retirement income benefits could be funded through the Retirement Savings Plan, a 403(b)(9) defined contribution program, which allows contributions from employing organizations, employees, or both. The ABP option, approved by the 212th General Assembly (2000) and available since 2001, was specifically designed to provide the flexibility in plan selection that the overture seeks.
- Because all components of the Benefits Plan, including the ABP, are designed to conform with legal standards for employment-based coverage, there needs to be a permanent employment relationship between each member and his or her employing organization for participation. The twenty hour per week eligibility requirement is a government and industry standard used to establish the existence of such a permanent relationship for any optional coverage. The *Book of Order* (G-14.0534) mandates that those serving in called and installed pastoral positions be enrolled in the Traditional Benefits Plan.

There currently exists significant flexibility in how to structure pastoral service arrangements to provide congregations with the options they need. In addition to the existing structural flexibility, the BOP also notes that it continues to study Plan design and eligibility issues in the context of the church community, with the 2008 Business Plan including “a forward-looking review of the Medical Plan, its membership, finances, funding and underlying principles in the context of emerging developments in healthcare plan design, legal changes and denominational resources” (Board of Pensions 2008 Business and Financial Plans, p. 5).

In other conversations with an advocate of the original overture, a number of specific requests for changes to present Benefits Plan provisions were outlined and the BOP studied and considered each of these in turn, as described below.

*Overture advocate’s request: Lower the fifty percent rule to forty percent as regards pensions with the understanding that the full payment as presently in place regarding medical insurance be continued for those engaged at the new forty percent level.*

*BOP response:* The “fifty percent rule” refers to the Benefits Plan eligibility requirement of twenty hours per week (or one thousand hours per year) for benefit coverage. As noted above, this is the prevailing government and industry standard for employer-based coverage requirements. The BOP has determined this to be a reasonable and uniform measure of a permanent employment relationship that qualifies for employment-based coverage and has based all of its funding and benefits formulas on this standard. The BOP realizes that church employers and presbyteries may have adopted other standards in connection with their minimum terms of call. The BOP must have a single standard to use as an assumption for its funding and benefit design. Any significant departure from the twenty-hour assumption could adversely impact the median salary benchmarks and result in a decrease in benefits for other members or an increase in dues percentages for the larger community.

The twenty-hour requirement is reasonable because the BOP assumes in most cases employment of less than twenty hours represents neither an individual’s primary employment relationship, nor the primary source of support for a person or household. It has long been the BOP’s position that medical coverage and other benefits should flow from an individual or household’s primary employment relationship.

*Overture advocate’s request: Separate pension and medical insurance for tentmaker clergy so that they may be able to choose between medical plans of their other employment or of their spouses’ employment and that of the Board of Pensions.*

*BOP response:* For those part-time clergy for whom ministry is the primary employment relationship, the Affiliated Benefits Program is available as described in the second bulleted point above.

However, to separate the components of the Traditional Benefits Plan would be inconsistent with the community nature of its design and funding. In the design of the Traditional Benefits Plan, individuals do not “buy coverage.” Rather, the community nature of the Plan stretches across all its benefit components with dues paid on each participating position for the good of the whole, again across all programs. In consultation with the larger church, the directors of the BOP have reviewed these core principles a number of times and, although there are drawbacks to them, consistently determined that they continue to provide the best infrastructure for the Plan and its members as a whole. Any change to allow members to retain pension coverage while declining medical benefits would have to apply to all and could not be limited to a subset of members. A member who is part of a dual-income family or retired military, for example, might prefer to take advantage of other medical coverage if that option existed.

If a particular church does not want to participate in the community of the Traditional Benefits Plan, it has the option to seek pastoral service in ways other than a called and installed pastor. Then, in most instances, there is no obligation to enroll those who serve the particular church in the Benefits Plan. What is not offered is the opportunity to enroll an individual member for only those portions of the Traditional Benefits Plan that the individual believes will provide direct personal benefit.

*Overture advocate’s request:* Allow tent maker clergy to participate in the defined contributions plan instead of the defined benefits plan of the Board of Pension when they are not eligible for inclusion in the present pension plan.

*BOP response:* This option is already available to those employed for twenty or more hours per week. The defined contribution plan (called the Retirement Savings Plan) is an employment-based program and the BOP uses the government and industry standard of twenty hours per week as the determinant of a permanent employment relationship.

#### **E. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly**

*2006 Referral. Item 06-01. Rec. 4. Direct the COGA, and Urge Those Who Plan and Moderate Meetings of other Governing Bodies, to Explore the Use of Alternate Forms of Discernment (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 514).*

*Response:* The Office of the General Assembly (OGA) has partnered with the Peacemaking Program to produce a booklet on discernment for use by congregations and middle governing bodies. In addition, discernment practices have been taught at the OGA’s Fall Polity Conference, the Moderators’ Conference, and in several presbyteries.

#### **F. General Assembly Council**

1. *2004 Referral: Item 07-06. Report of the Special Offerings Review Task Force. Recommendation 6. That the General Assembly Council Develop and Propose a Conceptual Framework for a New Mission Funding Strategy for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Special Offerings Review Task Force (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 50, 494).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 08-12, Funding Christ’s Mission Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

2. *2004 Referral: Item 07-08. Report, Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Recommendation 3.d. That PC(USA) Corporate Agencies Adopt for Utilization and Implementation, the Tools of Cultural Proficiency, Proceeding in Light of and According to the Confessional and Biblical Witness of the PC(USA)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Task Force to Examine GA Entities (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 51, 541).*

*Response:* The Office for Cultural Proficiency is an available resource for PC(USA) corporate agencies in providing a holistic approach to climate change and development through the utilization and implementation of the tools of cultural proficiency. This office is poised to work collaboratively with agencies in its mission to transform the organizational culture to one that is an open, inclusive, compassionate, and healthy church corporation.

3. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Report, Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.c.(2). That the General Assembly Council Facilitate, with the Middle Governing Bodies, a Strategy to Invite and Encourage People Living with Disabilities to Seek Leadership and Employment Positions Throughout the Church—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 921).*

*Response:* The General Assembly Council (GAC) supports presbytery committees on preparation for ministry (CPM) and committees on ministry. In all aspects of that work, the Office of Vocation encourages committees and search committees to consider all persons for leadership. The Office of Vocation works to educate the church about the gifts and calling of

all baptized Christians. Through resources and training events, presbytery CPM's are urged to provide reasonable accommodations for persons under care who have disabilities, especially in the ordination exam process. In order to participate in the national call system, search committees are required to affirm intention to follow the commitment to diversity as articulated at G-4.0403. Committees on ministry are asked if they have counseled with the pastor nominating committee regarding equal opportunity.

4. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.e. That an Appropriate Connecting Point (or Points) Be Clearly Identified Within the Mission Work Plan Structure That Will Relate to the Needs and Issues of the Older Adult Ministry Networks, and That These Connecting Points Be Identified Within the Existing G.A.C. Staff—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1070).*

*Response:* See coordinated response to the recommendations from 2006 Referral, Item 12-12, F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, below.

5. *2006 Referral: Item 11-01 On Rescinding and Modifying Certain Actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Recommendation 5. Recognizing That the Situation on the Ground in the Israel-Palestine Area Is Rapidly Changing, the General Assembly Council (GAC) Is Directed to Carefully Monitor Ongoing Developments of the Situation in the Middle East and to Examine the Policies of the PC(USA) Related to the Middle East, in Order to Make a Comprehensive Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008). (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp 44, 943–48)*

In consideration of the above, the General Assembly Council is monitoring developments of the situation by:

- a. Remaining in communications with church partners in Israel/Palestine and the wider Middle East region;
- b. Hearing reports from various program offices at GAC meetings regarding the situation on the ground and the church's ongoing engagement with the Middle East and receiving accounts of progress on the implementation of actions of earlier assemblies;
- c. Praying for and celebrating the witness of the Christians of the Middle East in the midst of situations of hardship, conflict, and hope;
- d. Capitalizing on the commitment and energy of the GAC-related Israel/Palestine Mission Network that has been a vital resource of information, education, partnership, and advocacy for the church, as well as other denominational and ecumenical/interfaith organizations that work tirelessly for peace in the Middle East (e.g., Churches for Middle East Peace, the National Inter-religious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East, and the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship,);
- e. Participating in dialogue and conversations with Jewish and Muslim leadership in the United States and in Israel/Palestine;
- f. Participating in a delegation that visited Israel/Palestine in January 2007, represented by the GAC chair and Executive Director, along with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the director of the Peace & Justice program area, and the coordinator of the Office for the Middle East; and in other ways, individually and collectively.

Recognizing that the situation on the ground in Israel-Palestine is rapidly changing, the 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the General Assembly Council (GAC) to “carefully monitor ongoing developments of the situation in the Middle East and to examine the policies of the PC(USA) related to the Middle East, in order to make a comprehensive report to the 218th General Assembly (2008).” A preliminary response to that referral was made in the February 2008 GAC meeting, citing several ways the GAC has been monitoring the situation. The response also promised the submission of a more comprehensive report with recommendation(s) to the April 23–25 meeting of the GAC, (thereby meeting the forty-five-day deadline of materials to be forwarded to the 218th General Assembly (2008)). The following paragraphs summarize a review of PC(USA) policy in light of developments on the ground<sup>1</sup> and the PC(USA)'s concern for the dwindling presence of Christians in Israel/Palestine and other parts of the region. Mentioned as well are signs of hope, the meaning of which remains ambiguous for both the church here and in the Middle East.

### *Policy Summary*

Presbyterian involvement and investment in the region dates back to the early 19th century. Educational institutions established by the PC(USA) in Lebanon and Egypt continue to this day. The PC(USA) also supports educational institutions in Israel/Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East. The PC(USA) is present through faithful and enduring mission and ecumenical relationships.

The Middle East contains not only ancient cultures and active warfare, but also intensified religio-political ideologies and increasingly pivotal oil supplies. In the 1950s and 60s, the church's mission policies affirmed post-colonial development,

a process then affected by the struggle between Cold War power blocs. In the 1970s and 80s, democracy, religious freedom, and human rights became continuing concerns, this last especially visible in annual General Assembly human rights updates. More recently, immigration from and within the Middle East has made its countries more visible to U.S. eyes; broad currents in Islamic thought also respond to globalization and less-welcomed elements of modernity. A resolution on the Iraq war also submitted to the 218th General Assembly (2008) looks at particular developments in that country, but can only suggest the various dimensions of struggle among Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs, and religious and secular nationalist elements that exist across the region.

With regard to Israel/Palestine, since 1948 the church, through a pattern of regular General Assembly statements, has expressed concern for the fate of refugees displaced by the formation of the State of Israel, for the security of Israeli citizens, and for the establishment of peace and security with justice in the region. In 1974, the church completed a major policy statement examining the changed realities of West Bank occupation after the 1967 and 1973 wars. In 1997, an extensive Resolution on the Middle East explored the 1980 Camp David peace agreement between Egypt and Israel, the first Intifada, the Madrid Conference in 1991, the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles, and the Oslo Accords. Resolutions since 1997 have focused on human rights, the continued expansion of settlements (now accommodating more than 400,000 settlers), the cessation of the peace process from September 2001 to November 2007, and the ongoing violence perpetrated by various Palestinian organizations as well as the government of Israel.

The 216th and 217th General Assemblies (2004) and (2006) expressed more intense concern for the dwindling Christian population in the Holy Land. In response to the Second Intifada and the beginning of construction of the "wall" or "separation barrier," the 216th General Assembly (2004) called for initiating "a process of selective, phased divestment." In 2006, the assembly urged that financial investments of the PC(USA) as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested only in peaceful pursuits. The assembly also affirmed the customary corporate engagement process of MRTI to be the proper vehicle for achieving that goal.

#### *The Situation on the Ground*

During the past two years, the news media, as well as organizations that monitor the situation on the ground, have reported the continued deterioration of relations between Israel and the Palestinians, despite initiatives of neighboring states (such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt) and of the United States (e.g., the Annapolis Conference of November 2007, and President Bush's December 2007 visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories). Violence has increased. There are more suicide bombings and rockets hurled by Palestinian groups into southern Israel. Israeli armed forces continue their attacks inside Gaza, killing both militants and unarmed civilians including children and women. Humanitarian aid and relief organizations have reported that living conditions for the 1.5 million persons living in Gaza are the worst in 40 years.<sup>2</sup> In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, the government of Israel continues to implement the policies of Palestinian home demolitions, the expansion of Israeli settlements, and the restriction of movement of Palestinians. Whether through the roadblocks and checkpoints, the "Israeli-only" routes, the continuing construction of the Separation Barrier on confiscated land, or imprisonment and administrative detention, the situation on the ground is continually changing, mostly for the worse.<sup>3</sup> News reports, however, still indicate that the majority of Israelis and the majority of Palestinians hunger for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Many are still crying "peace, peace, when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14 NRSV).

#### *Signs of Hope?*

In the broader Middle East region overall, there are also some positive changes. Cells of suicide bombers are small in comparison with the number of reformers demanding change through attempted legislative petitions and mass protest. One quarter of Lebanon's population took to the streets in 2005, peacefully insisting that Syria withdraw its troops and Syria did, after years of de facto occupation. Egyptians who have been living under unrelenting martial law since Sadat's assassination are also protesting peacefully, creating organizations to monitor government corruption and excess. International access to information has increased and this helps greatly. Due to new technologies, people are able to exchange ideas more. In Israel/Palestine itself, more Palestinians are developing nonviolent spiritual and cultural programs and projects to resist the occupation without being destroyed themselves by rage or resentment. When abuse occurs, it is more widely known.

While the transition from autocratic government to more open processes may be long, difficult and unpredictable, we must rejoice in the change that is happening.

What this change means for the church, as well as other aspects of diverse Middle Eastern cultures, remains unclear.

#### *Messages from Partners*

On the eve of the Annapolis conference last November, following a meeting of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders in Jerusalem, where a common commitment was made to work together toward reconciliation and peace, one of our partner churches in the Holy Land sent a message expressing their hope to the political leaders gathered in Maryland. In part it said,

It is our responsibility to find the right way to live together in peace rather than to fight and to kill. We believers from three religions have been placed in this land—Jews, Christians and Muslims—among one another. Palestinians yearn for the end to occupation and for what they see as their inalienable rights. Israelis long for the day when they can live in personal and national security. Together we must find ways of reaching these goals ... If we, faith leaders steeped in the religious sensitivities of the land, can take an unprecedented move toward reconciliation, then you can, too. We urge the Americans, the European countries, the Quartet and Arab countries to seize the momentum ...<sup>4</sup>

In another message<sup>5</sup> from the Latin Rite (Catholic) Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Michel Sabbah reminded the world of the Holy Land's "universal vocation"—for Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Druze. For Christians, who are "few in number," the reality of the land is "linked to the mystery of Jesus." He then called upon them to love God in every human person, "for it is God whom we love in the friend or the enemy. ..."

Jewish, Christian, and Muslim leaders, members of the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, were in Washington in early November 2007 to meet with U.S. lawmakers and their American co-religionists to express both their yearning and their shared commitment to work for peace. In a public statement<sup>6</sup> the clerics pledged to "find the right way to live together in peace" and promised cooperation related to the Holy Sites that "respects their integrity and independence and avoids any act of desecration, aggression or harm." On the issue of Jerusalem the leaders said they will "work to secure open access to the Old City for all communities, and seek a common vision for this city which all of us regard as holy."

The consistent message of our Christian, ecumenical, and interfaith partners is a message of reconciliation, hope, peace, and love, even though violence, terror, enmity, demonization, fear, suspicion, oppression, and injustice prevail.

The cry for solidarity, support, advocacy, and—above all—prayer resounds from our partner churches.

#### Endnotes

1. Resource materials describing current realities are available through the Middle East Office of the GAC, upon request.
2. See, for example, the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza Humanitarian Situation Report Escalation of Violence 27 Feb.–3 March 2008," and Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children, *et al*, *The Gaza Strip: A Humanitarian Implosion*. Published in early 2008.
3. See Website of B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories at [www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org).
4. Younan, Bishop Munib A. *An Open Letter to Annapolis Leaders: Half Empty or Half Full?* The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). November 2007.
5. Sabbah, HB Patriarch Michel. *Pastoral Letter*. March 1, 2008.
6. Full text of the statement issued by the Council of Religious Institutions in the Holy Land is found on the Website of Churches for Middle East Peace, <http://www.cmep.org/Alerts/2007Nov12.htm>

6. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.f. That the General Assembly Council Authorize Funding of an Older Adult Ministries Review Team Consisting of Five Persons to Meet Annually for Ten Years to Review the Progress of Older Adult Ministries and Report to the General Assembly at the 218th, 219th, 220th, and 221st General Assemblies (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014) as Funding Is Available—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1071).*

*Response:* The recommendations from the 217th General Assembly (2006) regarding older adult ministry were approved contingent upon the availability of financial resources and future General Assembly Council structure.

In May 2006, prior to the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Office of Older Adult Ministry was closed as part of the budget reductions. Nonetheless, significant work in the area of older adult ministry has been possible through other offices within the General Assembly Council.

- a. Resources for older adult ministry published, revised, distributed within the past two years include:

- (1) *Older Adult Week Planning Guide*

- (2) *Agenda* (a quarterly newsletter concerning ministry with older adults and issues such as the life stages, circumstances, and transitions of older adults)

- (3) *Dimensions of Older Adult Ministry: A Handbook* by Richard L. Morgan

(4) *Older Adult Ministry: A Guide for Presbytery Committees*

(5) *Older Adult Ministry: A Guide for Sessions*

b. Stewardship resources for baby boomers and Gen Xers have been made available on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Stewardship Website: [www.pcusa.org/stewardship](http://www.pcusa.org/stewardship).

c. While the Office of Older Adult Ministries no longer exists, the GAC and the Board of Pensions work with the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors, to sponsor retiree events at the presbytery level.

d. The General Assembly Council supports and promotes the work of the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network through the Mission Interpretation office of Communications and Funds Development.

e. The General Assembly Council has created, produced, and promoted resources for evangelism with baby boomers and Gen Xers through its *Here and Now* campaign. For more information regarding *Here and Now*, visit [www.pcusa.org/hereandnow](http://www.pcusa.org/hereandnow).

f. The General Assembly Council promotes accessibility, in all its forms, through an annual “Access Sunday” emphasis.

g. The General Assembly Council promotes parish nursing as part of its comprehensive resources for healthy congregations, through its National Health Ministries Office. Specific resources about parish nursing can be found online at [www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/parishnursing](http://www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/parishnursing). The GAC seeks to strengthen the communication network among all health ministry practitioners.

h. The General Assembly Council has highlighted health disparities that exist in the United States, and their root causes in poverty, racism, and other historic barriers to healthcare, through the Washington Office, National Health Ministries, and the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association.

i. The General Assembly Council has entered in a covenant with the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (PAHSA) in order to collaborate in efforts concerning housing options, elder day care, senior centers, home health, and housing services.

j. Funding was not available for the following work:

(1) Distance learning opportunities, such as on-line courses, teleconferences, and web-casts to increase leadership skills in aging issues, have not been possible within the available financial resources of the General Assembly Council.

(2) That the General Assembly Council authorize funding of an Older Adult Ministries Review Team consisting of five persons to meet annually for ten years to review the progress of older adult ministries and report to the General Assembly Council the church’s progress on these recommendations at the 218th, 219th, 220th, and 221st General Assemblies (2008), (2010), (2012), and (2014).

*7. 2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.d.(4). That the General Assembly Council Promote the Formation or Expansion of Parish Nursing and Other Health Ministries at All Levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Authorize the Formation of an Official Denominational Network of Parish Nurses, Continue Work to Maintain and Strengthen Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and to Raise Awareness About and to Identify Solutions to the Continuing Disparities in Illness, Health Care, and Mortality That Exist Among Racial Ethnic Persons—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1070).*

*Response:* For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

*8. 2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.d.(6). That the General Assembly Council Establish a Covenant Partnership with the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (PAHSA) to Produce and Distribute Resource Materials Concerning Housing Options, Elder Day Care, Senior Centers, Home Health and Housing Services—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1070).*

*Response:* For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

9. *2006 Referral: Item 11-27. On Appointing a Special Committee to Explore the Radical Reduction of the Impact of Malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa—From the Presbytery of Northern New York (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 1000–1002).*

*Response:* Item 11-27 mandates an initiative (with no specified activities) aimed at reducing the toll of malaria in sub-Saharan Africa. This is to be developed by a special committee appointed by the Moderator, to “create a framework for collaboration” by PC(USA) partners and secular organizations. The resolution calls for the creation of an Extra Commitment Opportunity Account to accept donations designated for the expenses of the special committee.

The core mandate of the resolution, the development of “an international plan of action” by a special committee, has not progressed due to the lack of minimum required funding. As of November 30, 2007, \$8,062.79 had been donated to the designated account for this resolution. A minimum of \$16,000 in additional funding must be in ECO 053503, and substantial future funding committed before this effort can get off the ground.

Implementation of the resolution began with the establishment of ECO Account 053503 and with a meeting of staff of the GAC International Health Ministries office (Bob Ellis and Gail Bingham), the primary author of Item 11-27 (the Reverend Fred Garry, First Presbyterian Church, Watertown, N.Y.), and representatives of the sponsor of Item 11-27, the Presbytery of Northern New York and its Malawi Partnership Committee. At that meeting it was agreed that a minimum of \$24,000 was necessary to begin the work of the special committee. A list was created at that meeting of potential special committee candidates, based on their knowledge, experience, and interest related to the issue of malaria prevention.

To build awareness of and financial support for the resolution, International Health Ministries promoted it on the PC(USA) Website, in issues of the IHM quarterly newsletter, in presentations before PC(USA) mission networks, and through IHM-related mission personnel. The IHM contacted persons on the list of potential special committee members, to inform them of the resolution and determine their willingness to be considered by the Moderator for appointment. The manager of General Assembly Nominations and Moderatorial Staff Services, Valerie Small, advised IHM that the list of candidates could not be submitted to the Moderator, nor could other suitable candidates be identified for her consideration until at least \$24,000 was in ECO 053503.

In April 2007, Bob Ellis, Gail Bingham, and Valerie Small held a conference call with Moderator Joan Gray to discuss the status of the resolution. In May 2007, Vice Moderator Bob Wilson conferred with Gail Bingham on the resolution prior to a visit by Bob to the Presbytery of Northern New York.

In July 2007, a congregation in California donated \$5,000 to E053503. There have been no contributions to the account since then. Given that \$24,000 is considered “start-up funds” and the total financial implication reported to the General Assembly for this resolution was \$75,000, it appears unlikely that substantial progress on implementation will be reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

10. *2002 Referral: Item 11-05. Commissioners’ Resolution 02-10. On Affirming the Church Growth Strategy Report (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 25, 565–66).*

*Response:* *The Vision for Church Growth for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* and the *Racial Ethnic/Immigrant Evangelism and Church Growth Strategy* have been foundational works in the reorganization of the General Assembly Council’s Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area.

The first ever General Assembly Council National Presbyterian Evangelism Conference was held in Nashville, Tennessee, in the fall of 2007, with more than 500 Presbyterians attending. There were sixty workshops on a myriad of subjects and engaging worship through out the conference.

Training for new church development (NCD) pastors, coaches, and presbytery staff has increased to an all-time high. Currently there are fifty NCD coaches that are trained and working in the denomination with another thirty-five NCD projects waiting for a coach.

Multicultural churches are growing in the denomination and the Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area was able to add field staff in 2007 to accompany churches on their transition to becoming a multicultural church.

Mission Program Grants office funded 205 new and ongoing projects across 101 presbyteries in 16 synods being supported by General Assembly Council Mission Program Grants. Projects funded include new church developments and helping to transform existing congregations.



11. *2004 Referral: Item 09-15. On Directing the National Ministries Division (NMD) to Develop a Plan for Resourcing and Funding Evangelism with Racial Ethnic Persons and Persons of Limited Economic Resources—From the Presbytery of Miami (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 42, 668–69).*

*Response:* The General Assembly Council's Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area through the Small Church and Community ministries office has a plan that works in partnership with other GAC ministries like Racial Ethnic Congregational Enhancement offices, the Self-Development of People program, the Hunger program, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association to resource and fund ministries that reach out and tell the Good News of Jesus Christ to racial ethnic persons and persons with limited economic resources.

12. *2006 Referral: Item 12-08. On Combating the Decline in Members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1064–66).*

*Response:* The restructure of the General Assembly Council focused the work of an entire ministry area on evangelism and church growth. The GAC also made combating the decline of members a priority in the councils mission work plan for 2007–2008.

In 2007, the GAC completed a research survey looking at the factors that were consistent in the fastest growing congregations in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In addition, the Evangelism and Church Growth area also published and distributed a resource named the *Vital Signs of Urban Congregations*, a book that promoted models of ministry, which highlight communities of faith that are actively growing in discipleship and numbers.

13. *2004 Referral: Item 12-03. On Confronting Christian Zionism, Recommendation 7. To Urge Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Related Colleges and Seminaries to Address this Issue—From the Presbytery of Chicago (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 67–70, 856).*

*Response:* The Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area of the General Assembly Council called an associate for Collegiate Ministries in August of 2007. The Colligate Ministries office, Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities, and the Committee on Theological Education have communicated with colleges, universities, and presbyterian seminaries on the issues of Christian Zionism and Eschatological theology. If there is evidence of value in further conversations, those three entities will continue to collaborate in educating Presbyterian students on these matters.

14. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.a.(4). That the General Assembly Encourage the Ongoing Relationship Between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions and the Office of Older Adult Ministries to Ensure the Long-Term Financial Viability of the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069).*

*Response:* For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

15. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.f. That the General Assembly Council Authorize Funding of an Older Adult Ministries Review Team Consisting of Five Persons to Meet Annually for Ten Years to Review the Progress of Older Adult Ministries and Report to the General Assembly at the 218th, 219th, 220th, and 221st General Assemblies (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014) as Funding Is Available—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1071).*

*Response:* For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

16. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.c. That the General Assembly Council, Through the Office of Evangelism and Witness and in Collaboration with the Office of Older Adult Ministries, Develop Congregational Evangelism Resources Targeted at Baby Boomers (Persons Born 1946–1964) and Gen Xer's (Born 1965–1980) in the Life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1070).*

*Response:* For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

17. *2004 Referral: Item 10-03. Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations, Recommendation 6, That the Peacemaking Program, in Consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Racial Ethnic Ministries Program Area, Design a Study Resource on Reparations, Reconciliation, and Renewal That Includes Worship Services of*

*Remembering and Confessing the Impacts of Racism and Moving Toward Reparation, Reconciliation, and Renewal, and Make It Available to the Church at Large—From the General Assembly Council Task Force to Study Reparations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 704).*

*Response:* The study guide is posted on [www.pcusa.org/reparations/](http://www.pcusa.org/reparations/).

18. *2004 Referral: Item 10-03. Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations, Recommendation 11. That the United Nations Office Monitor and Support International Efforts Related to Reparations, Renewal, and Reconciliation, and Report Their Efforts to the 217th General Assembly (2006)—From the General Assembly Council Task Force to Study Reparations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 705).*

*Response:* The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through the Presbyterian United Nations Office, has monitored and supported international efforts related to reparations, renewal, and reconciliation through the following UN processes:

a. 19–20 November 2007. A two-day panel meeting was held in Freetown, Sierra Leone, under the auspices of the United Nations and the country's main human rights body as part of efforts to implement the findings of Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The commission had made a number of recommendations to deal with past abuses and violations and foster reconciliation, which included the payment of reparations by the government to amputees and other wounded victims, those who were sexually violated, and the widows and children who suffered deprivation, displacement, or worse between 1991 and 2002. The panel recommended meeting victims' needs in health, housing, pensions, education, skills training and micro-credit, community reparations, and symbolic reparations. The reparations program was identified as a priority area for assistance for the UN Peace Building Fund, which provides funding to help address the root causes of conflict and facilitate the consolidation of peace.

b. 6 May–20 June 2007. The UN Committee Against Torture considered reports submitted by States Parties under Article 19 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In particular, the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina committed to establish a comprehensive reparation program for victims of harsh violations of human rights that would address restitution, compensation, satisfaction, and rehabilitation.

c. 27 July 2006. The United Nations Compensation Commission, which settles the damage claims of those who suffered losses due to Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, announced the disbursement of about \$396.5 million, bringing the total paid out to date to nearly \$21 billion. With this payment, the commission said all claims of individuals had been paid in full for death or personal injury. Forty-nine other claims, including environmental claims, remain to be paid.

d. 27 January 2006. At its forty-first session, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child welcomed the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR) presented to the President of the Republic of Peru in August 2003, as well as the fact that among its recommendations there was the establishment of an Integral Plan of Reparations for the victims of violence. However, it remained concerned that the recommendations had been only partly implemented and that, so far, only few victims have been granted reparations.

e. November 10, 2005. Sixtieth UN General Assembly, Third Committee, 38th & 39th Meetings. Principles on the Right to Reparations for Victims of Gross Human Rights Violations were approved. The principles were negotiated over a fifteen-year period. The principles will help victims and their representatives, as well as states design and implement public policies on reparations.

19. *2006 Referral: Item 08-06. On Funding the Fight Against HIV/AIDS and Diseases of Poverty—From the Presbytery of Ohio Valley (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36–37, 632–34).*

*Response:* The Peacemaking Offering promotional material encouraged congregations, presbyteries, and synods to use all or part of their share of the offering to go for work with AIDS-related ministries. A fact sheet on AIDS and Peacemaking was included in the offering packet. The resource "25 Ways your congregation can enhance its commitment to peacemaking using its 25 percent of the peacemaking offering" included two ideas for AIDS-related ministries. Connections between peacemaking, the Peacemaking Offering, and the response to HIV/AIDS pandemic were made through a travel/study seminar to South Africa and Malawi in partnership with the Office on International AIDS Ministries and the Presbyterian AIDS Network. Information on HIV/AIDS regularly appeared in Peacemaking Program publications.

20. *2006 Referral: Item 09-09. Report: Economic Security for Older Adults, Recommendation 13. Call on the Presbyterian Washington Office to Keep Abreast of Pending Legislation Affecting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and Health Insurance, and to Alert Elected Officials and Church Members About These Policies and Recommendations—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 815).*

*Response:* The Washington Office has been following the issues of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other social insurance programs. Fortunately, the movement to privatize Social Security has lost momentum for the time being, but during the short time that the issue was on the Congressional agenda, the Washington Office worked with other members of the faith

community to produce updated Principles on Social Security, sent action alerts when appropriate, and wrote articles alerting Presbyterians to the situation in Washington. The Washington Office accessed some resources outside the faith community including through its relationships with the AARP, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and the National Committee to Preserve Medicare and Social Security. A Washington Office staff person presented on these issues at the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging's spring conference in 2006. Additionally, in the past, the PC(USA) has been represented at the National Coalition on Aging, a delegate council of the National Council on Aging.

On issues of Medicare, Medicaid, and other social safety-net programs for older adults, the Washington Office has been active among the ecumenical and interfaith community working on these issues. The Washington Office has further participated with the Families USA Medicaid Coalition, which provides information and suggests legislative strategy on these issues. The Washington Office continues to follow legislation concerning regulatory changes and funding levels for Medicaid, Medicare, and Medicare Part D, the prescription drug benefit.

Also with respect to the safety net for older adults, the Washington Office has been active in calling for reform of the 2007 Farm Bill, which includes funding for nutrition programs, such as the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), that target poor, aging beneficiaries with food assistance. The Washington Office has devoted considerable time and resource to advocating for preservation, protection, and expansion of Medicare, Medicaid, TEFAP, and other programs, also producing action alerts to Presbyterians and presenting on these issues at local Presbyterian churches, where invited.

21. *2006 Referral: Item 09-10. Report: Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability, Recommendation D.1. in Order to Support Fair Exchange in International Trade, Call Upon the United States and Other Developed Country Governments to Abandon the Use of Tariffs and Other Trade Barriers that Favor the Exports of Advanced Economies and Discriminate Against Those of Poor Countries and to Participate in Systematic Debt Relief for Poorer Nations—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 827).*

*Response:* The Washington Office, in coalition with other faith-based groups and denominations in the Interfaith Working Group on Trade and Investment (IWGTI), advocated for a new framework for negotiating trade deals that would lead to just trade agreements. The office published articles on the issue of trade and trade agreements calling for opposition to the U.S. Peru Free Trade Agreement, the U.S. Colombia Free Trade Agreement, the U.S. Korea Free Trade Agreement, and the U.S. Panama Free Trade Agreement. Action alerts were sent out repeatedly throughout the year calling for a change in trade policy that would not favor the developed states over the poor. In addition, in coalition with the IWGTI, the Washington Office met with congressional staff and leadership advocating for just trade. The IWGTI issue repeated calls to members of congress through letters and meetings to oppose unjust trade deals. The Washington Office has continued to monitor the free trade agreements.

The Washington Office also worked in coalition with our partners in Jubilee USA and the One Campaign to advocate for the Jubilee Act (S2166 and HR2634). The Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation will expand eligibility for 100 percent debt cancellation without harmful economic conditions to 67 impoverished countries in the Global South. The Washington Office cosponsored a prayer breakfast in the House of Representatives, signed on to letters in support of the legislation, and sent out action alerts to our grassroots calling for them to contact their members of congress in support of the act.

In addition, the Washington Office has focused considerable time, resource, and energy on reform of the 2007 Farm Bill, calling for a change in policy to reduce the trade-distorting effects of U.S. farm subsidies in the global marketplace and to increase and improve U.S. international food aid. The Washington Office worked hand-in-hand with the Presbyterian Hunger Program on this issue. During 2007, the Washington Office sent six action alerts on reform of the farm bill, wrote newsletter articles, presented the issue at local churches, when invited, and at the Presbyterians for Restoring Creation conference in October 2007.

In addition, the Washington Office was an active member in the Religious Working Group on the Farm Bill, a coalition of organizations including many other Christian denominations, Bread for the World, Church World Service, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Oxfam. The Washington Office closely coordinated its work on farm bill reform with the United Church of the Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society (the five denominations–5D). This 5D coordinating committee received a grant from Oxfam and hired a consultant to facilitate and coordinate the 5D farm bill work.

22. *2006 Referral: Item 09-10. Report: Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability, Recommendation E.1. Urge the U.S. Administration and Congress to Commit to Full Support of the Call for Developed Countries to Provide Annually Seven-Tenths of 1 Percent of Gross Domestic Product in Economic Assistance to Less Developed Countries, and To Appropriate Annually Such Funds Beginning by Fiscal Year 2008, Without Requiring That These Funds*

*Be Used to Purchase U.S. Products—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 827).*

*Response:* The Washington Office has advocated with congress and the administration urging the U.S. government to support a significant increase in development assistance and provide 7 percent of GDP in assistance to less developed countries. In addition, the Washington office has advocated in coalition with the One Campaign and Bread for the World for significant increases in development assistance through advocacy in support of the Global Child Survival Act (H.R.2266/S.1418), which would increase U.S. investment in child survival and maternal health programs.

In addition, the Washington Office has, in coalition with the One Campaign, advocated in support of the Education for All Act (HR 2092/S 1259), which would amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for developing countries to promote quality basic education and to establish the achievement of universal basic education in all developing countries as an objective of United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes.

23. *2006 Referral: Item 09-15. On Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants—From the Presbytery of New York City. Recommendation 8. Advocate General Assembly Policies on Advocacy and Welcome for Immigrants Through the Washington Office of the PC (USA) and the Office of the Stated Clerk, Including Amicus Curiae Briefs, if Necessary (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 881).*

*Response:* The Washington Office has over the past two years advocated for a just immigration policy based on the principles set out in Item 9-15. In coalition with the Latin American Working Group and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the Washington Office advocated to congress and the administration through visits, letters, and grassroots education for a more just immigration policy. Several articles on the issue were published in the Washington Report to Presbyterians and action alerts on specific immigration bills were sent out in the Witness in Washington Weekly. An intern was hired for the summer of 2007 to specifically work on this issue. Unfortunately, a just immigration policy has yet to be passed.

24. *2006 Referral: Item 09-15. On Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants—From the Presbytery of New York City, Recommendation 11. Express Our Grave Concern About the Negative Impact of the Growing Effort to Make the Border More Secure Through Building Walls Designed to Move Migrant Patterns Further into the More Dangerous Part of the Borderlands, by Increasing the Number of Federal Agents, and by Deploying Armed National Guard to the Already Volatile Region (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 881).*

*Response:* The Washington Office, on its own as well as in coalition with the Border Working Group, advocated to congress and the administration against the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border by the building of the wall and the deploying of armed national guardsmen to the region. The Washington Office participated in visits to members of congress on the issue in addition to sending letters to congress and the administration and activating grassroots through action alerts and educational materials. The educational materials focused on the dangers posed to migrants by the militarization of the border.

25. *2006 Referral: Item 09-23. Commissioners' Resolution. On Abandoning Mountaintop Removal of Coal (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 898-99).*

*Response:* Letters related to the General Assembly action were sent to major coal companies, and select elected officials in states impacted by the mountaintop removal method of mining. In addition, a shareholder resolution with Arch Coal on issues related to coal production was co-filed by the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) with stock owned by the Board of Pensions.

26. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Report: Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.c.(9). That the General Assembly Council Direct the Social Welfare Organizations Office of the National Ministries Division to Continue to Support Existing Programs and Congregations Seeking to Cultivate Inclusive Ministries with People Living with Disabilities—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 922).*

*Response:* The Social Welfare Organizations, of Peace and Justice Ministry, continues to support the work of Presbyterians for Disability (PDC) and the PC(USA) Disability Consultants although funds for these programs have been seriously cut. To maintain these ministries, additional budget needs to be supported.

27. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Report: Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.c. (10). That the General Assembly Council Direct the Presbyterian Washington Office and Other Appropriate General Assembly Entities to Convey Disability Policy Concerns to Political Leaders and Church Members; Monitor Legislation at the Federal Level and Notify Presbyterians When They Have an Opportunity to Influence Such Legislation, Affirm Historical Strides Made Through Federal Legislation, and Support New Legislative Initiatives That Affirm the*

*Full Humanity and Advance the Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 922).*

*Response:* In accordance with the above directive, the Washington Office affirms the previous legislative strides made toward a more inclusive and accessible society in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), among others, and works to try to build upon the solid foundation provided by the ADA. The Washington Office has worked on various issues related to disability, but in particular has focused efforts on access to health care for people with disabilities, with a focus on mental illness, and adequate funding and expanded access to supportive services in private homes as well as facilities. Mental Health Parity has been an issue on the legislative calendar in 2007–2008 and the Washington Office is working to communicate Presbyterian support for Mental Health Parity to legislators and administrators in Washington, DC. Presbyterians were alerted for action on mental health parity as the bill, passed in the Senate, approached consideration in the House of Representatives. The Washington Office has further followed issues of access to housing equipped with supportive services for people with disabilities, including the Community Choice Act and Section 811 of the housing code.

28. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Report: Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.c. (11). That the General Assembly Council Direct the Presbyterian United Nations Office and Other Appropriate General Assembly Entities to Convey Disability Policy Concerns to the Appropriate Leaders in the United Nations—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 922).*

*Response:* The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through the Presbyterian United Nations Office, has conveyed disability policy concerns through sustained participation and engagement with the following UN processes:

a. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006, and opened for signature on 30 March 2007. On 30 March, eighty-one member states and the European Community signed the convention, the highest number of signatures of any human rights convention on its opening day. The convention was negotiated during eight sessions of an Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly from 2002 to 2006.

b. Report of the special rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development—46th Session [E/CN.5/2008/3] - [E/CN.5/2008/3 Report in MS Word](#).

c. The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons, 3 December, aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of the benefits to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic, and cultural life. It was established by the World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons and adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1982.

29. *2006 Referral: Item 11-25. On Condemning International Trafficking in and Sexual Exploitation of Children—From the Synod of the Northeast, Recommendation 2. Direct the General Assembly Council, Justice and Compassion Mission Area, and the Associate for Child Advocacy to Raise Awareness within Our Presbyteries and Local Churches, Provide Educational Resources and Reference Lists, and to Network with Other Groups Advocating on This Issue, Including ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism)—(Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 994).*

*Response:* In conjunction and consultation with other GAC staff (International Health Ministries; Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association; Mission Responsibility Through Investment; Women’s Ministries; Presbyterian Women; Hunger Program; the Sexual Misconduct Ombudsperson; and others) as well as the Office of the General Assembly’s staff person for Immigration Issues, a four-session study on sex trafficking was written and produced for *The Thoughtful Christian*, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation’s online adult studies. A resource list is a part of the study.

Information and suggested action steps to address child sex trafficking were also included in *Are All The Children Well? A Presbyterian Sabbath Supplement to the 2007 National Observance of Children’s Sabbaths Manual* produced by Children’s Defense Fund. Both the manual and the supplement were provided to congregations at no cost through Pentecost offering funds.

At the invitation of the board for Mission Responsibility Through Investment, the Associate for Child Advocacy participated in a seminar on child sex trafficking held in Los Angeles.

Along with other ecumenical agencies, The Presbyterian Hunger Program provided funding for the development of a DVD resource, *Lives for Sale: A Documentary on Immigration and Human Trafficking* (produced by Maryknoll and Lightfoot Films)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) joined other agencies in the submission of ECPAT-USA's submission of the Alternative Report to the United State's Initial Report concerning the Optional Protocol on the Sale of the Child. The associate for Child Advocacy is in conversation with ECPAT about other ways to collaborate.

To familiarize staff and personnel with this issue, in June 2007, a brown bag lunch discussion series on sex trafficking facilitated by the associate for Child Advocacy and the intern for the Office of Women's Advocacy was held for staff and other interested persons.

30. *2006 Referral: Item 11-26. On Expressing the Church's Concern for the People of Haiti—From the Presbytery of Tropical Florida (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 997–99).*

*Response:* Over the past two years, the Washington Office, on its own as well as with its partners in the Jubilee USA coalition, have been advocating for comprehensive debt relief legislation that would relieve Haiti from its crushing debt. It has done this through grassroots education on the issue, action alerts, direct advocacy, and coalition work. The Washington Office in coalition with Jubilee USA sent letters to congress urging them to support the debt relief legislation for Haiti both in 2006 and 2007. The Washington Office cosponsored several briefings on the hill regarding this issue as well as participating in meetings with various members' offices.

In the summer and fall of 2006, the Washington Office called for advocates to ask their members of congress to support a Haiti debt cancellation resolution (H.RES. 888) urging the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and Inter-American Bank to cancel Haiti's debt. An article in the July/August 2006 report was dedicated to this issue as well as several alerts in the Witness in Washington Weekly. In 2007, the Washington Office urged support for similar legislation and co-sponsored the Haiti Days of Action on October 2–4.

In addition, the Washington Office has advocated in support of legislation that would render Haitian nationals eligible for temporary protected states (H.R. 522).

31. *2006 Referral: Item 11-33. The Commitment to Peacemaking, Recommendation 9. That a Report Be Made to the 218th General Assembly (2008) on the Number of Sessions That Have Adopted the "Commitment to Peacemaking"—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 46, 1013).*

*Response:* As of February 5, 2008, 4,514 congregations have made the "Commitment to Peacemaking." Additionally three presbyteries have made the "Commitment to Peacemaking" since the 217th General Assembly (2006). This information will be updated and reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues.

32. *Alternate Resolution to 2006 Referral: Item 11-01. On Rescinding and Modifying Certain Actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Recommendations 2.a. -d. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Ensure That Its Strategies for Engaging Corporations with Regard to Israeli and Palestinian Territories—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 44, 943–54).*

**[This response was removed from the consent agenda and assigned as Item 11-29. The assembly approved the response. See pp. 5, 46, 47, 1226.]**

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 11-27, p. 1223.

33. *2003 Referral: Item 09-03. Strategy for Ministry with Hispanic-Latino Constituencies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Recommendation 6. That the General Assembly Request the General Assembly Council, Through Its National Ministries Division, Racial Ethnic Ministries Program Area, and the Office of Hispanic Congregational Enhancement, to Organize a National Consultation Event in 2006 to Determine How Best to Implement the Strategy, Explore the Issues Raised by It, and Monitor the Progress of the Recommendations and Report Its Findings to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 25, 532).*

*Response:* In response to the 215th General Assembly (2003) action, a consultation was held in October 2005, in Dallas, Texas. Participants at the consultation determined that developing a manual for implementation was the most effective way to engage the whole church into this ministry effort. In 2006, a *Manual for Implementation* was created and distributed to all Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian churches, organizations, and related ministries. And, *The Strategy for Ministry with Hispanic-Latino Constituencies* is available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese at [www.pcusa.org/hispanic](http://www.pcusa.org/hispanic).

From July 2004–December 2005, thirty-two presentations and workshops on Hispanic church development were presented to sixteen presbyteries, three synods, two theological seminaries, and at six national events. These events were coordi-

nated together with middle governing bodies and the Hispanic Congregational Enhancement Office. The Office of Youth Ministry developed specific workshops to be offered at youth leader development events and conferences. A progress report was reported to the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part 1, pp. 90–91, 99). Bilingual curriculum materials in Spanish are available for youth: *Lecciones Cristianas Para Jóvenes*. Portuguese translation of these resources is under development. The General Assembly Council is aware of the need for resources in various languages and is investigating ways that this can be done.

The National Hispanic/Latino Caucus, the Hispanic Congregational Enhancement Office Advisory Committee, and General Assembly Council staff is implementing a five to ten-year plan. The implementation started in 2007 with two synods, the Hispanic caucus, and the annual gatherings of women and youth, and of the caucus' assembly in 2007. Plans in 2008 include training in four synods with the Hispanic caucus.

34. *2004 Referral: Item 10-01. Recommendation 8. To Direct Racial Ethnic Ministries to Assist the National Presbyterian Black Caucus to Develop a Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 56, 683).*

*Response:* See Item 12-01, “Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations,” from the General Assembly Council, p. 1235.

35. *2006 Referral: Item 09-15. On Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants—From the Presbytery of New York City, Recommendation 9. Direct the General Assembly Council to Create and Facilitate a Network of “Immigrant Welcome” Churches That Agree with the Affirmations of This Overture (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 881).*

*Response:* The Office of New Immigrant Groups Ministries in the U.S.A. in the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministries area worked in collaboration with the Office of the General Assembly, who in 2006 created the network of Presbyterians for Just Immigration, with participation from middle governing bodies and congregations. Workshops and presentations on welcoming new immigrants into our denomination were offered in two synods and nine presbyteries in 2007.

36. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Report: Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.c.(8). That the General Assembly Council Direct the Racial Ethnic Congregational Enhancement, Middle Eastern Ministries, Immigrant Group Ministries, and Evangelism and Racial Cultural Diversity Offices, in Partnership with the Racial Ethnic Caucuses, the Coordinating Councils and Networks of These Offices, Social Welfare Organization Offices, and with All Governing Bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Develop Strategies for the Full and Faithful Implementation of This Policy—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 920–21).*

*Response:* The Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministries area engages with racial ethnic caucuses, coordinating councils, networks, and governing bodies. The ministry works to educate the church about the inclusion of all people in all ministries of the church, including the full inclusion of people with disabilities. The initial response for the implementation of the “Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities” policy entailed seeking understanding and sensitivity to the issues involved in developing strategies for the inclusion of people with disabilities. The first step, therefore, was for the Racial Ethnic Congregational Enhancement offices to contact racial ethnic caucuses, coordinating councils, networks, other constituency groups, and governing bodies to acquaint them with the report. A portion of the letter, sent along with the report, follows:

The policy affirms the Church’s efforts to ensure that buildings and grounds are physically accessible and inviting to persons with disabilities. The policy paper “Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities,” affirms that all the entities of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are to take appropriate steps to ensure that members with disabilities are fully included in the ministries of the Church. The policy also provides a theological understanding of living with disabilities, and encourages advocacy with and on behalf of people with disabilities in local, national and international contexts. This policy paper also includes a study guide. You are encouraged to use this policy paper as a resource for your continuing efforts in helping the Church and the larger community to be a more inclusive place for persons with disabilities. Thank you for reviewing this policy paper, which was approved by the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2006) and for your part in developing strategies to help the whole church live into the body of Christ.

As justice for all is an important value in the General Assembly Council and in our ministry area, we plan to follow up this contact by developing and implementing strategies in partnership with the caucuses and councils for a full and faithful response to the recommendation.

37. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.d.(5). That the General Assembly Council, Through the Racial Ethnic Program Area and in Collaboration with the Office of Older Adult Ministries, Produce Resources, Workshops, Conferences, Seminars, and Health Fairs That Will Focus on Special Aging Concerns and*

*Health Care Disparities of Racial Ethnic Persons—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1070).*

*Response:* With the new structure approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006), there is no longer an office nor is there is a budget to complete this referral. However, some ministry with older adults is being done. For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

38. *2006 Referral: Item 12-13. Report: Racial Ethnic Education Support Work Group. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Reaffirm the Church’s Mission of Racial Ethnic Educational Support and Its Commitment to the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPRI); That a Special Group Be Formed to Develop Educational Guidelines and Standards and a Method of Applying Them in Order to Ensure That the Christmas Joy Offering Supports Institutions That Can Most Effectively Serve Populations for Whom Access to Educational Opportunities Would Be Difficult and That the Educational Guidelines, Standards, and the Method for Applying Them Should Be Completed, Enacted, and Reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008); That Until Guidelines and Standards Are Established, the Christmas Joy Offering Continue to Be Used Exclusively for the HPREI’s with Whom the GAC Has Traditionally Covenanted; and that the GAC Consider Establishing a Special Fund and Case Statement to Help Meet the Unique Needs of the HPREI’s—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1081–82).*

*Response:* See Item 08-02, Institutional Standards for Participating in the Christmas Joy Offering, from the General Assembly Council, p. 583.

39. *2002 Referral: Item 07-07. Overture 02-32. On Instructing the Office of Theology and Worship to Develop a Theological Statement of Our Faith—From the Presbytery of the James (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 39, 432).*

*Response:* Item 07-07 was referred to the Office of Theology and Worship as “guidance.” Over the past five years, the Office of Theology and Worship has engaged in a variety of work to express the church’s faith in a contemporary world. This has included “Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ,” the book *Conversations with the Confessions* (Geneva Press), work on the French Confession of 1559, and a study guide to the Belhar Confession.

40. *2002 Referral: Item 07-09. Overture 02-38. On Formulating a New PC(USA) Confession of Faith for the 21st Century—From the Presbytery of South Alabama (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 39, 434–35).*

*Response:* Item 07-09 was referred to the Office of Theology and Worship as “advice and counsel.” Over the past five years the Office of Theology and Worship has engaged in a variety of work to express the church’s faith in a contemporary world. This has included “Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ,” the book *Conversations with the Confessions* (Geneva Press), work on the French Confession of 1559, and a study guide to the Belhar Confession.

41. *Alternate Resolution to 2002 Referral: Item 13-07. Recommendation That the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, Implement Commissioners’ Resolution 01-22. On a Churchwide Dialogue on End-of-Life Issues (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 49, 498)—From the 214th General Assembly (2002) (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 71, 654).*

*Response:* The Office of Theology and Worship, in conjunction with the Office of National Health Ministries and the Duke Institute on Care at the End of Life, held a churchwide conference, “In Life and in Death We Belong to God,” at Duke University in the Spring of 2007. This conference focused on palliative care and congregational ministry. A follow-up study guide will be available by June of 2008.

42. *2003 Referral: Item 05-03. Recommendation 1. That the General Assembly Approve Participation in the Seventh Round of Reform/Catholic Dialogue and Requests a Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 13, 339–40).*

*Response:* A report on the Reformed/Catholic Dialogue will come before the 218th General Assembly (2008) through the report of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

43. *2003 Referral: Item 06-11. Commissioners’ Resolution 03-10. On Reaffirming Spiritual Formation as an Important Priority at All Levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 44, 406-7).*

*Response:* Spiritual formation is integral to the General Assembly Council’s Mission Work Plan. The Theology Worship and Education ministry area includes an Office of Christian Formation, which in turn includes an associate for spiritual formation. Numerous publications and programs ensure that spiritual formation is not an isolated program, but rather an enduring element of all ministries within Theology Worship and Education.



44. *2004 Referral: Item 06-06. Report, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Understanding of the 16th and 17th Century Condemnation of Other Churches in The Book of Confessions, Recommendation 5. That the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Theology and Worship Be Requested to Initiate Conversations with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Seeking a Joint Catholic-Presbyterian Statement on the 16th and 17th Century Condemnations and Characterizations and Report Results of These Conversations to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 21, 424).*

*Response:* The current five-year round of the Catholic-Reformed Dialogue has focused attention on sacraments in the faith and life of the churches. Significant results have issued from the dialogue, including an agreement on the mutual recognition of Baptism. The matter of 16th and 17th century condemnations will have to await a future round of the dialogue.

45. *2004 Referral: Item 10-03. Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations, Recommendation 4.d., That the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, Receive Responses, Prepare a Summary, and Report Results to the 218th General Assembly (2008), Together with Possible Recommendations for Further Engagement with the Belhar Confession—From the General Assembly Council Task Force to Study Reparations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 701).*

*Response:* The Office of Theology and Worship has produced an in-depth study guide for the Belhar Confession available electronically on the PC(USA) Website. A print version available for order will be available in Spring 2008. <http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/confession/belharstudyguide.pdf>

46. *2006 Referral: Item 04-05. On Commending Study of the Definitive Guidance of 1978—From the Presbytery of Stockton (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 33–34, 338–39).*

*Response:* The study guide was produced and posted on the PC(USA) Website in January 2008. <http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/issues/definitiveguidance.pdf>

47. *2006 Referral: Item 06-07. On Making Resources Available to Aid in the Implementation of the Report of the Theological Task Force—From the Presbytery of Albany (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, 539–40).*

*Response:* Numerous resources from several sources were made available via electronic and print media, as well as events in presbyteries and conferences.

48. *2006 Referral: Item 12-01. On Creating the Office of Minister of Christian Education—From the Presbytery of Mission (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14, 1027–49).*

*2006 Referral: Item 12-02. On Amending the Book of Order to Create a Fourth Office to Be Known as Education Elder—From the Presbytery of Shenandoah (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14, 1049–60).*

*Response:* The place of Christian educators within Presbyterian polity has been a matter of discussion for decades. From time to time, proposals have been made to create a fourth ordained office—in addition to deacons, elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. The church has not approved these proposals. Instead, a process for certification of Christian educators has provided the means to prepare and recognize persons for service as educators in congregations and middle governing bodies (G-14.0130, 14.0710-.0732).

The two overtures sent to the 217th General Assembly (2007) were referred to the Office of Theology and Worship for study and response.

The overtures from the Presbyteries of Mission and Shenandoah each propose an ordination process for Christian educators, but they differ in their understanding of the nature of a fourth office.

The Presbytery of Mission proposes the creation of the office of “minister of Christian education” (Item 12-01), while the Presbytery of Shenandoah proposes the creation of the office of “educating elder” (Item 12-02). The Presbytery of Mission’s “minister of Christian education” proposal stipulates the same preparation process as that for minister of the Word and Sacrament, with minor changes to recognize the specialized nature of education ministry. The Presbytery of Shenandoah’s “educating elder” proposal sets forth a process for certified Christian elders to be ordained as elders, with session and presbytery membership.

Both overtures find rationale for a “fourth office” in John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Calvin mentions both pastors and teachers: “There is, I believe, this difference between them: teachers are not put in charge of discipline, or administering the sacraments, or warnings and exhortations, but only of Scriptural interpretation—to keep doctrine whole and

pure among believers. But the pastoral office includes these functions within itself” (*Institutes*, 4.3.4). Calvin’s “teachers” were more akin to professors than to Christian educators in congregations, however. Most Reformed churches have not adopted Calvin’s distinction, noting instead “the pastoral office includes [teaching] functions within itself.” Historically, Presbyterian ministers have been called “teaching elders,” a designation that is emphasized in the proposed revision to the Form of Government in order to accentuate the crucial teaching function of the pastoral office.

Biblical, historical, theological, ecclesial, and ecumenical considerations point to the conclusion that creation of a fourth ordered ministry, whether minister of Christian education or educating elder, is not warranted. However, the concerns of Mission and Shenandoah presbyteries for the place of certified Christian educators in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are significant, both for educators and the denomination they serve. Many of the practical considerations that lead to ordination proposals are valid, and should be addressed by the church.

The *Book of Order* provides that “Persons called to particular service in the church may be certified by recognized agencies affiliated with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as having achieved proficiency in their field of expertise” (G-14.0130). Certification processes are currently in place for Christian educators, church musicians, administrative personnel, and church business administrators. The *Book of Order* makes formal provisions for certified Christian educators, including their relationship to the presbytery: certified Christian educators are given privilege of the floor at meetings of the presbytery, with vote as well as voice to those who are elders (G-14.0730c).

Presbyteries must set minimum requirements for certified Christian educator compensation and benefits, and grant access to the committee on ministry (G-14.0703a).

Certified Christian educators have a duty to report knowledge of abuse, neglect, or molestation (G-14.0732).

There are further provisions for certified Christian educators that should be considered by the church, however. The following are the central questions to be addressed:

a. Should the call to service in a congregation include three parties—the session, the certified Christian educator, and the presbytery, with terms of call and dissolution of call subject to agreement by all three? [This appears to be a logical extension of current provisions for minimum compensation and access to the committee on ministry.]

b. Should certified Christian educators who are not ministers or elders be ordained as ruling elders, either by the congregation in which they serve or by the presbytery? [This would not constitute a “fourth office,” but would recognize the appropriate inclusion of certified Christian educators in the office of ruling elder (note responsibilities of elders in G-6.0304). Ordination as elder without a term of service on a session would be consistent with the provision in G-6.0403b for deacons to be ordained and commissioned to service individually rather than as members of a board of deacons.]

c. Should certified Christian educators be given membership in the presbytery within whose bounds they serve? [Many certified Christian educators are barred from membership in the congregations they serve, and thus hold membership in distant congregations within the bounds of other presbyteries. These educators are without an ecclesial home.]

d. Should certified Christian educators be seated in session meetings, with voice but not vote? [This would be consistent with the provisions for participation in the presbytery. Certified Christian educators can be particularly helpful as sessions fulfill their responsibilities in G-10.0102a,c,e,f,k,l,p.]

These are important matters for certified Christian educators, congregations, presbyteries, and the whole church. The proposed revisions to the Form of Government may provide flexibility that will enable presbyteries and congregations to make some changes without specific, detailed amendments to the *Book of Order*. Other changes may require standardized churchwide practice. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will benefit from thoughtful consideration of the four central questions.

49. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.a.(1). That the General Assembly Council, Through Congregational Ministries Publishing, Develop a Series of Resources on Spirituality and Aging; Authorize the Office of Older Adult Ministries to Review, Update, and Republish Existing Resources in Older Adult Ministry as Needed; and Offer Distance Learning Opportunities Such as On-Line Courses, Teleconferences, and Web-Casts to Increase Leadership Skills in Aging Issues—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069).*

*Response:* Although a designated office for Older Adult Ministries was eliminated in May 2006, ministering to older adults continues to be an important issue for congregations. In this regard, other ministry areas of the General Assembly Council, such as the office of Christian education, national health ministries, and the office of vocation, continue to address questions that congregations may have about older adult ministries by networking across the denomination for recommended information, tools, and resources.

Resources available from Congregational Ministries Publishing:

*Dimensions of Older Adult Ministry: A Handbook.* Edited by Richard L. Morgan—This handbook takes up common issues surrounding the aging process, including learning in later life, nursing homes, retirement community living, elder abuse, late-life depression, Alzheimer’s disease, and other forms of dementia that plague older adults. There are also chapters on aging from both the Jewish and Islamic perspectives. This resource is a practical guide for caregivers and faith communities seeking help in overcoming barriers to ministering to older adults. PDS #1571530592 \$15.95

*Older Adult Ministry: A Guide for the Presbytery Committee* by Jack and Sue Angerman—This manual is designed to help presbyteries initiate ministries with older adults. It outlines how to proceed with this ministry on the presbytery level. Can be used by congregations. PDS #090300 \$9.95

*Older Adult Ministry: A Resource for Program Development.* This helpful manual, made up of articles by experts in the field of older adult ministry, provides strategies, program plans, and theological reflections for churches seeking resources for older adult ministry. PDS #085429 \$5.95

*Older Adult Ministry: A Guide for the Session and Congregations* revised and edited by Miriam Dunson. This manual has been fully revised and updated and is designed to help the congregation start an intentional older adult ministry. It illustrates how to set up a committee, how to educate the committee, and how to do a needs and skills assessment among older adults. It also provides many program ideas for use by congregations. PDS #7025000711 \$10.00

*ideas! For Church Leaders* magazine. There are many references to articles about older adults in past issues. Archives for *ideas!* magazine may be found at our Website: <http://www.pcusa.org/ideas/>

For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

50. 2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.d.(1). That the General Assembly Council, Through the Office of Theology and Worship, Encourage Congregations to Provide Large-Print Bibles, Hymnals, and Bulletins; Accessible, Safe Facilities; and Hearing Devices—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1070).

*Response:* An article titled “What is your congregation’s HQ (Hospitality Quotient)?” encouraging congregations to provide large-print Bibles, hymnals, bulletins, accessible facilities, and hearing devices, will be published in the summer 2008 issue of *ideas!* magazine and posted to the PC(USA) Website at [www.pcusa.org/ideas/](http://www.pcusa.org/ideas/). For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

51. 2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.b. That the General Council Support and Promote the Work of the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network and the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors as Collaborators in Joint Endeavors, Involving New Partners That Enhance and Expand Older Adult Ministries, and Do Items (a) through (d)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069–70).

*Response:* For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

52. 2004 Referral: Item 06-01. Recommendation 1. That the 216th General Assembly (2004) Approve the Expansion of Work Responding to the 1999 Referral to Better Equip the Church for Witness in a Pluralistic Society, to Be Designed and Carried Out by a Cross-Divisional Staff Team Coordinated by the Interfaith Relations Office—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 19, 419).

2004 Referral: Item 06-01. Recommendation 2. That the 216th General Assembly (2004) Approve Development of One or More Study Resources for Congregational Use, to Equip Presbyterians in Better Articulation of Their Faith in Interreligious Contexts—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 19, 419).

2004 Referral: Item 06-01. Recommendation 3. That a Final Report on This Project Be Presented to the 217th General Assembly (2006)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 19, 419).

*Response:* In consideration of Item 06-01, Recommendations 1 through 3, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations has created a subcommittee on interfaith relations to regularly review developments and needed actions on

issues of an interfaith nature, based on input from the Office of Interfaith Relations. This regular process of review and response takes the place of a one-time review.

53. *2006 Referral: Item 07-07. Recommendation 3. That the Office of Interfaith Relations Develop and the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations Review an Action Plan to Address Particular Issues of an Interfaith Nature, Building on Existing Policy—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 16, 579).*

*Response:* The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations has created a subcommittee on interfaith relations to regularly review developments and needed actions on issues of an interfaith nature, based on input from the Office of Interfaith Relations. This regular process of review and response takes the place of a one-time review.

54. *2006 Referral: Item 07-10. Commissioners' Resolution. On Celebrating and Protecting Cuba Partnership—(Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 16–17, 582–84).*

a. In regard to celebrating the partnership between the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

(1) Request the Stated Clerk to send a formal communication to the Synod Council of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba expressing the joy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the continuing partnership with the autonomous and independent Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba; congratulate that church on the forty years of its independent existence and on its significant contributions to the world ecumenical movement through leadership in the World Council of Churches, the Latin American Council of Churches, the Caribbean Council of Churches, and the Cuban Council of Churches; and expressing thanksgiving for the twenty years of joint mission partnership under the terms of the Mutual Mission Agreement which has resulted in the remarkable growth of partnership relationships between the governing bodies and congregations of the two churches.

(2) Request the Stated Clerk also to send a formal communication to the president and the Board of Directors of the Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Matanzas, Cuba, congratulating the seminary on its sixty years of significant contribution to the training of pastoral leadership for the Evangelical churches of Cuba and its valiant attempts to meet the challenge of the recent growth experienced by all the Cuban Christian churches.

*Response:* In consideration of the above directives, a.(1) and (2), letters have been sent as noted.

(3) Request the Stated Clerk and the General Assembly Council, through its Worldwide Ministries Division, to seek a way to respond to the request of the Ecumenical Theological Seminary of Matanzas, Cuba, to send an official representative to the 60th Anniversary Celebration in October 2006.

*Response:* In consideration of the above directive, the Reverend Dean Lewis represented PC(USA) at the 60th Anniversary Celebration in October 2006.

(4) Urge the committees and officials of the 217th General Assembly (2006) to make provision for commissioners to the General Assembly to hear directly from the Reverend Hector Mendez, moderator of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba.

*Response:* In consideration of the above directive, the Reverend Mendez addressed the 217th General Assembly (2006).

55. *2006 Referral: Item 08-17. Commissioners' Resolution. On the Moderator Convening a Meeting Regarding Worldwide Mission Work of the PC(USA)—(Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36–37, 746–47).*

*Response:* For response to this referral, see Item 08-20, p. 112.

56. *2006 Referral: Item 11-25. On Condemning International Trafficking in and Sexual Exploitation of Children—From the Synod of the Northeast. Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Council to Educate Mission Workers About the Issue of International Trafficking in Children and Sex Tourism and to Familiarize Staff and Personnel with This Issue—(Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 994).*

*Response:* In consideration of the above, the World Mission Education, Training, & Events area is educating mission workers about the issue of international trafficking in children and sex tourism through the work of Pat Hendrix, sexual misconduct ombudsperson. During orientation, sharing conferences, and mission personnel retreats, Pat gives presentations on human trafficking (causes, who is trafficked, case studies of victims and perpetrators), and child sex tourism (what can be done and who to notify if you suspect an American is involved in this practice). She also gives in-service training for PC(USA) staff on the same subjects.

57. *2006 Referral: Item 11-30. On Promoting a Free, Fair, and Democratic Election in the Democratic Republic of Congo—From the Presbytery of New Hope—(Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 1008–9).*

*Response:* In consideration of Item 11-30, a letter was sent out by the Stated Clerk on September 14, 2006, to the U.S. Congress, which included the following:

We asked that the Congress of the United States act upon the following goals:

- a. Send a bipartisan Congressional delegation to the Congo to assess the current situation.
- b. Utilize the resources of the U.S. government to increase support to the U.N. to stop armed conflicts that divide and kill people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- c. Support current efforts to bring unity and peace to the Congo as provided by the Global and Inclusive Accord.
- d. Provide significant financial support and other needed resources for the Congo's election and post-election expenses.
- e. Determine and utilize responsible channels for directing the use of this money for its intended purposes.
- f. Utilize the influence of the U.S. government to encourage the Congo's neighboring countries to cease their conflict and their interference in the Congo's internal affairs.
- g. Urge the Congolese government to place the education of its children and youth as a high priority by
  - (1) providing a free, appropriate education in primary and secondary schools, and
  - (2) paying teachers living wages.

A news article appearing in *IRIN* news confirmed on 29 October that the Congo Supreme Court did confirm Joseph Kabila Kabange as the president of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

KINSHASA, 28 November (*IRIN*)—The Supreme Court of the Democratic Republic of Congo on Monday declared Joseph Kabila winner of a controversial presidential run-off election held on 29 October.

“The Supreme Court of Justice declares Joseph Kabila Kabange elected by an absolute majority,” Benoit Lwamba Bindu, the court's first president, said in Kinshasa, the capital.

58. *Alternate Resolution to 2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing. Recommendation 3. Instruct the Office of Theology and Worship, and Congregational Ministries Publishing and Christian Education, to Prepare Study Materials for "The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing"—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

*Response:* For the response to this item, see Item 13-13, p. 1272.

59. *Alternate Resolution to 2006 Referral: Item 11-01. On Rescinding and Modifying Certain Actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Recommendations 2.a.–d. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Ensure That Its Strategies for Engaging Corporations with Regard to Israeli and Palestinian Territories—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 44, 943–54).*

*Response:* For the response to this referral, see Item 11-27, p. 1223.

60. *2006 Referral: Item 08-10. On the Elimination of Administration Costs on Restricted Mission Gifts—From the Presbytery of Baltimore (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36–37, 649–50).*

*Response:* The 217th General Assembly (2006) instructed the General Assembly Council to assist congregations in communicating to their membership the reality of changed patterns in unrestricted giving and the resulting cost implications of administering restricted funds, and implored the General Assembly Council and its Mission Funding Task Force to seek alternative means of budgeting in order to deal with this changing reality.

The GAC Mission Funding Task Force explored the changing patterns of unrestricted giving and has made a number of recommendations with regard to Funding for Specific Mission. (See Item 08-12, Mission Funding Task Force Report, “Funding Christ's Mission Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), p. 664.”) Among the recommendations is a proposed “Season of Interpretation” as a period of time each year, beginning in 2009, for the church to promote and interpret the work of its mission programs through local, regional, and national governing bodies. The interpretation would include information on how individuals' and congregations' giving to the mission of the church is used to bear witness to God's love and make a difference in the world. Part of the interpretation would be clear information on how gifts are used to provide both the activ-

ity and support network that enables mission to take place. Administrative costs are part of a broader interpretation piece of the whole network of support that makes mission possible. To that end, the request to assist congregations in communicating the reality of changed patterns and resulting administrative costs would be part of the comprehensive work of “A Season of Interpretation” in 2009 and following years.

In addition, the General Assembly Council approved another recommendation from its Mission Funding Task Force that will gradually implement, over a five-year period starting in 2009, a means of fairly and accurately allocating all costs associated with individual projects in the General Assembly mission budget, including the costs associated with the systems necessary for the support, promotion, and accountability of each item. The results of this system will be communicated to the church as part of the General Assembly Council’s mission interpretation.

61. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.a.(2). That the Office of the Executive Director, Through the Office of Older Adult Ministries, Develop Congregational Stewardship Education Resources Targeted at Baby Boomers (Persons Born 1946–1964) and Gen Xers (Born 1965–1980) in the Life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) – From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069).*

*Response:* For coordinated response to the recommendations from 2006 Referral, Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

62. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.a.(3). Encourage the Ongoing Relationship Between the Presbyterian Church Foundation and the Office of Older Adult Ministries as a \$6,000,000 Endowment Is Raised to Ensure the Long-Term Financial Viability of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Older Adult Ministries—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069).*

*Response:* For coordinated response to the recommendations from 2006 Referral, Item 12-12, see F. General Assembly Council Final Responses to Referrals, Referral 6, above.

63. *2004 Referral: Item 07-08. Report, Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Recommendation 3.1. That All CEO’s, Presidents, Directors, and Boards of Directors of General Assembly Agencies Be Encouraged to Demonstrate a Renewed Commitment to Racial and Gender Diversification in Upper Management Positions and to Report Successes, on a Per Agency Basis, to the 217th General Assembly (2008)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Task Force to Examine GA Entities (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 51, 545).*

*Response:* In creating the climate for change, and instilling a whole new Human Resources culture, we have renewed our commitment to diversity.

a. We are reinforcing the commitment with recruiting. For example, we require all leadership searches to publish the opening in minority sites. As new openings occur, we ask the hiring manager to look at their current racial and gender representation and determine where they have opportunity to increase diversity.

b. We confirm our desire for racial and gender inclusion in one of our core values. We define “Collaboration” as specifically calling for “... cultivating an inclusive, covenantal community. ...”

c. We have made changes at the Executive Leadership level of the GAC that address the gender representation. Prior to 2007, we had 7 people, 5 male and 2 female at that level. 5 were white, 2 were black. In 2007 we have a total of 6 people in the executive leadership level. 3 are male and 3 are female. 1 is black, 5 are white.

d. We have increased our racial representation of people with Asian, Hispanic, and multiple racial lines.

e. We have increased our gender representation of Hispanic and black females.

Going forward, with the new categories and continued awareness, we anticipate that 2008 will show even more diverse representation.

64. *2006 Referral: Item 08-01. On Clarifying the Practice of Our Theology of Call for Those Serving General Assembly Entities—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36, 623–26).*

*Response:* The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved Item 08-01 and in so doing instructed all of the entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to review their policies and practices and to effect any needed changes to bring them into full compliance with the *Book of Order* (G-11.0410) and General Assembly policies so that every minister of the Word and Sacrament employed by them in any relationship shall have a call as defined by the Constitution of the church with full constitu-

tional participation by the appropriate presbytery. This action also required changes in terms of call be shared with the presbytery of membership for their approval and the Board of Pensions; termination or settlement agreements be accessible to the presbytery's COM; the entity present certification of full compliance to the 218th General Assembly (2008); and each entity provide a report to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly listing called positions and together with full terms of call.

In practice, the entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are abiding by the requirements of the *Book of Order*. The General Assembly Council has reviewed and rewritten the Employee Handbook (September 2007) for General Assembly Council employees. It includes an expanded section on ministers of Word and Sacrament, making explicit the policies and procedures included in this overture. The General Assembly Council is operating in full compliance with this statement of policy:

#### 800. MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

##### 801. Terms of Call/ Notification and Consultation with Presbytery

All Ministers of the Word and Sacrament of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), ("Minister,") must have a written call before starting work, ordinarily in a form that includes:

- Description of goals and working relationships;
- Financial terms;
- Signature of the Minister;
- Signature of the presbytery of membership ("presbytery"); and
- Signature of the GAC. (See *Book of Order* G-11.0408B).

For Ministers employed in positions where ordination is a minimum qualification, the terms of call must at least meet the presbytery minimums for salary and study leave. For Ministers employed in positions where ordination is not a minimum qualification, the terms of call and benefits will be established by the employer and may or may not meet the presbytery minimums, but will be comparable to those offered to other staff in similar positions.

Prior to the offer of employment, the Human Resources Department will contact the Minister candidate's Committee on Ministry (COM) of the presbytery. Contact will be made through its stated clerk or executive presbyter to afford the presbytery the opportunity to communicate concerns about the candidate.

Prior to starting work, a Minister must consult with his or her COM and will be reminded by the Human Resources Department about the Minister's obligation to request and obtain the presbytery's approval of the terms of call. (See *Book of Order* G-11.0410.)

The Human Resources Department will:

- Provide the Minister with an offer letter that includes the written call (see above-listed requirements);
- Copy the presbytery COM through the stated clerk or executive presbyter on the offer letter; and
- Ask the stated clerk or executive presbyter to notify the Human Resources Department of approval, making clear that the employment relationship will not start without receipt of approval from the presbytery.

Written calls will be prepared for existing Minister staff members and submitted with an updated position description when the annual performance review is submitted to Human Resources Department.

During employment, the Human Resources Department will provide timely notification to the presbytery and the Board of Pensions (BOP) of any changes in the terms of call (*Book of Order*, G-11.0410).

If during employment, the employer becomes aware of any circumstances that might occasion discipline of a Minister under the *Book of Order*, the Human Resources Department will be informed and will notify and provide full information and cooperation to the presbytery's COM, unless prohibited by applicable law.

Upon termination of employment of a Minister, the Human Resources Department will provide timely notice of the dissolution of the call to the presbytery. If the dissolution was disciplinary in nature, then the notice will include the cause of dissolution. Financial provisions related to termination or settlement agreements are changes in terms of call that the Human Resources Department will share with the presbytery and with the BOP on a timely basis. Upon request of the presbytery's COM, the COM will be given access to all information contained in the Minister's termination (separation) or settlement agreement, regardless of whether the agreement contains a confidentiality clause, unless prohibited by applicable law. The Director of Human Resources and/or a representative of the Legal Services Office will respond to inquiries of appropriate officers of the presbytery.

The Human Resources Department will submit salary information to the General Assembly for publication in the minutes.

Employment of a Minister remains at-will and may be terminated at any time with or without cause and with or without notice.

##### 802. Manse/Housing Allowance

The Internal Revenue Code allows exempt level, ordained Minister staff members to exclude from gross income for income tax purposes, if designated in advance by the employer, any housing allowance paid as part of compensation when that allowance is used for specified purposes. The responsibility for accurate estimates of the housing allowance and payment of applicable taxes rests solely with the Minister staff member.

For purposes of this policy, "housing" means housing and furnishings.

Housing allowances are to be used for expenses such as:

- Rental of a home;

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- Purchase of a home, including down payment, mortgage, legal fees, fees for title search, installment payments, interest, taxes, fire and home liability insurance premiums, repairs, etc.;
- Operating expenses of a home, other than costs for food or domestic help, such as utilities, house furnishings, attached garage, sidewalks, and front and back yards; and
- Home owner association dues.

Due to Internal Revenue Service requirements, the manse allowance must be designated by the employer prior to the Minister staff member receiving the allowance (generally, before employment begins). The manse/housing allowance form is available from the Human Resources Department.

### 803. General

The nature of the relationship between persons ordained to Ministry of the Word and Sacrament and their presbyteries is governed by the *Book of Order*. They are generally covered by all provisions of this Staff Handbook except where excluded by federal, state, or local laws, including the ministerial exception.

### 804. Credited Service for Ministers

With regard to Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, in calculating “credited service” or “continuous credited service,” the commencement of such service shall be the date of ordination to the office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament by a presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as opposed to the date of hire by the GAC.

### 805. Withholding

The Internal Revenue Code exempts exempt-level, ordained Minister staff members from mandatory withholding. Such Minister staff members may pay their income and self-employment taxes via quarterly installments sent directly to the Internal Revenue Service or via voluntary withholding which may be arranged with the Human Resources Department and the Payroll Department by completing Internal Revenue Service Form W-4 (Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate). It is the Minister staff member’s sole responsibility to complete Form W-4 if voluntary withholding is desired. If no such completed form is submitted to the Human Resources Department, no withholding will take place and the Minister staff member will be responsible to make any and all tax payments to the Internal Revenue Service directly. As with the manse/housing allowance form, the responsibility for accurate estimates and completion of Internal Revenue Service Form W-4 rests solely with the Minister staff member.

### 806. Reporting of Disciplinary Matters

The Human Resources Department will report to the respective Minister’s COM of presbytery through its stated clerk or executive presbyter any disciplinary actions for violation of the GAC’s Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policies, Sexual Misconduct Policy or Ethics Policy for Employees of the General Assembly Council.

*65. 2006 Referral: Item 11-01/5. On Rescinding and Modifying Certain Actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Recommendation 5. Recognizing That The Situation on the Ground in the Israel-Palestine Area Is Rapidly Changing, the General Assembly Council (GAC) Is Directed to Carefully Monitor Ongoing Developments of the Situation in the Middle East and to Examine the Policies of the PC(USA) Related to the Middle East, in Order to Make a Comprehensive Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008).”*

In consideration of the above, the General Assembly Council (GAC) is monitoring developments of the situation by:

- a. Remaining in communications with church partners in Israel/Palestine and the wider Middle East region.
- b. Hearing reports from various program offices at GAC meetings regarding the situation on the ground and church’s ongoing engagement with the Middle East and receiving accounts of progress on the implementation of actions of earlier assemblies.
- c. Praying for and celebrating the witness of the Christians of the Middle East in the midst of situations of hardship, conflict, and hope.
- d. Capitalizing on the commitment and energy of the GAC-related Israel/Palestine Mission Network that has been a vital resource of information, education, partnership, and advocacy for the church, as well as other denominational and ecumenical/interfaith organizations that work tirelessly for peace in the Middle East (e.g., Churches for Middle East Peace, the National Inter-religious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East, and the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship).
- e. Participating in dialogue and conversations with Jewish and Muslim leadership in the United States and in Israel/Palestine.
- f. Participating in a delegation that visited Israel/Palestine in January 2007, represented by the GAC chair and Executive Director, along with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the director of the Peace & Justice program area, and the coordinator of the Office for the Middle East; and in other ways, individually and collectively.

Recognizing that the situation on the ground in Israel-Palestine is rapidly changing, the 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the General Assembly Council (GAC) “to carefully monitor ongoing developments of the situation in the Middle East and to examine the policies of the PC(USA) related to the Middle East, in order to make a comprehensive report to the



218th General Assembly (2008)” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 945). A preliminary response to that referral was made in the February 2008 GAC meeting, citing several ways the GAC has been monitoring the situation. The response also promised the submission of a more comprehensive report with recommendation(s) to the April 23–25 meeting of the GAC, (thereby meeting the 45-day deadline of materials to be forwarded to the 218th General Assembly (2008)). The following paragraphs summarize a review of PC(USA) policy in light of developments on the ground<sup>1</sup> and the PC(USA)’s concern for the dwindling presence of Christians in Israel/Palestine and other parts of the region. Mentioned as well are signs of hope, the meaning of which remains ambiguous for both the church here and in the Middle East.

### *Policy Summary*

Presbyterian involvement and investment in the region dates back to the early 19th century. Educational institutions established by the PC(USA) in Lebanon and Egypt continue to this day. The PC(USA) also supports educational institutions in Israel/Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East. The PC(USA) is present through faithful and enduring mission and ecumenical relationships.

The Middle East contains not only ancient cultures and active warfare, but also intensified religio-political ideologies and increasingly pivotal oil supplies. In the 1950s and 60s, the church’s mission policies affirmed post-colonial development, a process then affected by the struggle between Cold War power blocs. In the 1970s and 80s, democracy, religious freedom, and human rights became continuing concerns, this last especially visible in annual General Assembly human rights updates. More recently, immigration from and within the Middle East has made its countries more visible to U.S. eyes; broad currents in Islamic thought also respond to globalization and less-welcomed elements of modernity. A resolution on the Iraq war also submitted to the 218th General Assembly (2008) looks at particular developments in that country, but can only suggest the various dimensions of struggle among Sunni and Shi’a Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs, and religious and secular nationalist elements that exist across the region.

With regard to Israel/Palestine, since 1948 the church, (through a pattern of regular General Assembly statements), has expressed concern for the fate of refugees displaced by the formation of the State of Israel, for the security of Israeli citizens, and for the establishment of peace and security with justice in the region. In 1974, the church completed a major policy statement examining the changed realities of West Bank occupation after the 1967 and 1973 wars. In 1997, an extensive Resolution on the Middle East explored the 1980 Camp David peace agreement between Egypt and Israel, the first Intifada, the Madrid Conference in 1991, the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles, and the Oslo Accords. Resolutions since 1997 have focused on human rights, the continued expansion of settlements (now accommodating more than 400,000 settlers), the cessation of the peace process from September 2001 to November 2007, and the ongoing violence perpetrated by various Palestinian organizations as well as the government of Israel.

The 2004 and 2006 General Assemblies expressed more intense concern for the dwindling Christian population in the Holy Land. In response to the Second Intifada and the beginning of construction of the “wall” or “separation barrier,” the 216th General Assembly (2004) called for initiating “a process of selective, phased divestment.” In 2006, the assembly urged that financial investments of the PC(USA) as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested only in peaceful pursuits. The assembly also affirmed the customary corporate engagement process of MRTI to be the proper vehicle for achieving that goal.

### *The Situation on the Ground*

During the past two years, the news media, as well as organizations that monitor the situation on the ground, have reported the continued deterioration of relations between Israel and the Palestinians, despite initiatives of neighboring states (such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt) and of the United States (e.g., the Annapolis Conference of November 2007, and President Bush’s December 2007 visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories). Violence has increased. There are more suicide bombings and rockets hurled by Palestinian groups into southern Israel. Israeli armed forces continue their attacks inside Gaza, killing both militants and unarmed civilians, including children and women. Humanitarian aid and relief organizations have reported that living conditions for the 1.5 million persons living in Gaza are the worst in forty years.<sup>2</sup> In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, the government of Israel continues to implement the policies of Palestinian home demolitions, the expansion of Israeli settlements, and the restriction of movement of Palestinians. Whether through the roadblocks and checkpoints, the “Israeli-only” routes, the continuing construction of the Separation Barrier on confiscated land, or imprisonment and administrative detention, the situation on the ground is continually changing, mostly for the worse.<sup>3</sup> News reports, however, still indicate that the majority of Israelis and the majority of Palestinians hunger for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Many are still crying “peace, peace, when there is no peace” (Jer. 6:14, NRSV).

### *Signs of Hope?*

In the broader Middle East region overall, there are also some positive changes. Cells of suicide bombers are small in comparison with the number of reformers demanding change through attempted legislative petitions and mass protest. One

quarter of Lebanon's population took to the streets in 2005, peacefully insisting that Syria withdraw its troops and Syria did, after years of de facto occupation. Egyptians who have been living under unrelenting martial law since Sadat's assassination are also protesting peacefully, creating organizations to monitor government corruption and excess. International access to information has increased and this helps greatly. Due to new technologies, people are able to exchange ideas more. In Israel/Palestine itself, more Palestinians are developing nonviolent spiritual and cultural programs and projects to resist the occupation without being destroyed themselves by rage or resentment. When abuse occurs, it is more widely known.

While the transition from autocratic government to more open processes may be long, difficult, and unpredictable, we must rejoice in the change that is happening.

What this change means for the church, as well as other aspects of diverse Middle Eastern cultures, remains unclear.

### *Messages from Partners*

On the eve of the Annapolis conference last November, following a meeting of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders in Jerusalem, where a common commitment was made to work together toward reconciliation and peace, one of our partner churches in the Holy Land sent a message expressing their hope to the political leaders gathered in Maryland. In part it said,

It is our responsibility to find the right way to live together in peace rather than to fight and to kill. We believers from three religions have been placed in this land—Jews, Christians and Muslims—among one another. Palestinians yearn for the end to occupation and for what they see as their inalienable rights. Israelis long for the day when they can live in personal and national security. Together we must find ways of reaching these goals. ... If we, faith leaders steeped in the religious sensitivities of the land, can take an unprecedented move toward reconciliation, then you can, too. We urge the Americans, the European countries, the Quartet and Arab countries to seize the momentum. ...<sup>4</sup>

In another message<sup>5</sup> from the Latin Rite (Catholic) Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Michel Sabbah reminded the world of the Holy Land's "universal vocation"—for Jews, Christians, Muslims and Druze. For Christians, who are "few in number," the reality of the land is "linked to the mystery of Jesus." He then called upon them to love God in every human person "for it is God whom we love in the friend or the enemy. ..."

Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders, members of the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, were in Washington in early November 2007 to meet with U.S. lawmakers and their American co-religionists to express both their yearning and their shared commitment to work for peace. In a public statement<sup>6</sup> the clerics pledged to "find the right way to live together in peace" and promised cooperation related to the Holy Sites that "respects their integrity and independence and avoids any act of desecration, aggression or harm." On the issue of Jerusalem, the leaders said they will "work to secure open access to the Old City for all communities, and seek a common vision for this city which all of us regard as holy."

The consistent message of our Christian, ecumenical and interfaith partners is a message of reconciliation, hope, peace, and love, even though violence, terror, enmity, demonization, fear, suspicion, oppression, and injustice prevail.

The cry for solidarity, support, advocacy, and—above all—prayer resounds from our partner churches.

### Endnotes

1. Resource materials describing current realities are available through the Middle East Office of the GAC, upon request.
2. See, for example, the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza Humanitarian Situation Report Escalation of Violence 27 Feb.–3 March 2008," and Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children, et al, *The Gaza Strip: A Humanitarian Implosion*. Published in early 2008.
3. See Website of B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories at [www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org).
4. Younan, Bishop Munib A. *An Open Letter to Annapolis Leaders: Half Empty or Half Full?* The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). November 2007.
5. Sabbah, HB Patriarch Michel. *Pastoral Letter*. March 1, 2008.
6. Full text of the Statement issued by the Council of Religious Institutions in the Holy Land is found on the Website of Churches for Middle East Peace, <http://www.cmep.org/Alerts/2007Nov12.htm>.

### **G. General Assembly Nominating Committee**

1. *2006 Referral: Item 05-11. Recommendation 1. That the GANC, the Moderators of the 215th, the 216th, and the 217th General Assembly Appoint a Form of Government Task Force. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 39, 366)*

*Response:* The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed that the Moderators of the current and two most recent General Assemblies consult with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) in appointing members for the Form of

Government Task Force. Members of the GANC contributed names of persons corresponding with the categories of membership required for the task force as potential candidates for the pool of nominees being considered by the Moderators. In addition, the moderator of the GANC met, via conference call, with the General Assembly Moderators and was a part of the decision-making process.

2. *2006 Referral: Item 08-16. Grant the General Assembly Nominating Committee Latitude with Regard to the Composition of the General Assembly Council as the General Assembly Council Adjusts to the Changes Called for Pursuant to Item 08-08. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 37, 746)*

*Response:* In response to this referral, the 217th General Assembly (2006) did not elect new members to serve on the General Assembly Council nor did the General Assembly Nominating Committee fill vacancies created when members resigned. The composition of the General Assembly Council has been fully adjusted to be in accord with the *Book of Order* and the General Assembly Council's *Manual of Operations* mandates in the slate of nominees being presented to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

3. *2006 Referral: Item 10-06. "Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities" Recommendation 2.m. GANC to Encourage the Middle Governing Bodies to Increase the Percentage of Qualified People Living with Disabilities Serving on General Assembly Level Committees (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 924).*

The *Book of Order* stipulates that, "The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church" (G-4.0403).

Representatives for the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation met with members of the Presbyterians for Disabilities Concerns in New Orleans, Louisiana, in January 2007, to seek ways in which best to communicate with and encourage persons living with disabilities to serve the larger church on its agencies, committees, and boards. The General Assembly Nominating Committee is limited in its task when persons with disabilities are not recognized because applicants have not declared a disability on their application form.

In training sessions, conversations, and consultations with middle governing bodies—presbytery and synod nominating committees and committees on representation—the General Assembly Nominating Committee has encouraged that persons living with disabilities be identified and solicited to apply within the General Assembly nominations process so that they may be full participants in the decision-making of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

4. *2006 Referral: Item 14. ACWC R. Report on the Review of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, Recommendation 2. That the Desirability of Theological Diversity in the Membership Composition of the ACWC Be Referred to the GANC. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 17, 1164).*

The *Book of Order* mandates that, "The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church" (G-4.0403).

The General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) gives close attention to this provision of the church's Constitution, working carefully to ensure the broadest representation on all entities to which the GANC makes nominations. Of the constitutional categories of inclusiveness, "different theological positions consistent with the Reformed traditions" is the most difficult to determine. The GANC relies upon a careful reading of applications and appraisal forms to assess theological convictions and commitments. The committee continues to encourage persons from a broad range of theological positions to make themselves available for service on General Assembly entities.

In its nominations to service on the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, the GANC has given particular attention to theological diversity, and will continue to monitor the diversity of the ACWC with regard to all aspects of G-4.0403.

## **H. Office of the General Assembly**

1. *2000 Referral: Paragraph 12.049. Recommendation H. Encourage Use of Standards of Ethical Conduct in Leadership Training; Request OGA Include a Summary of Uses Made in Seminaries, Churches, Presbyteries, and Synods in a Report to the 215th General Assembly (2003) (Minutes, 2000, Part I, pp. 54, 83).*

*Response:* A letter was sent to the clerks and executives of all governing bodies, as well as to deans and presidents of all PC(USA) seminaries, asking if the *Standards of Ethical Conduct (Standards)* approved by the PC(USA) in 1998 is being

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used in their particular areas of ministry and, if so, how. Responses were received from forty-eight presbyteries, five synods, and three seminaries.

A large majority of presbyteries (38 of 48) indicated that they are familiar with the *Standards of Ethical Conduct* and use them to at least some extent in their work with clergy, committees, and congregations. Only three presbyteries indicated that they were not familiar with the “Standards,” and eleven presbyteries indicated that the document is not used on a regular basis. Four presbyteries requested that copies of the *Standards* be sent to them so that they might study and distribute the document as appropriate.

Four of the five synods that responded indicated that they use the *Standards* to some extent; the response from one synod questioned whether clergy should be asked to sign the *Standards* each year. Of the seminaries that responded, one requested copies of the document to share with faculty, and the other two suggested that the use of the *Standards* be discussed at a future meeting of the Committee on Theological Education.

Middle governing bodies use the *Standards* in a variety of ways. The most common uses were for training committees on ministry, orienting new clergy and newly ordained clergy within presbyteries, and providing educational opportunities for presbyteries and congregations. A large number of presbyteries have used the *Standards* to train session and other church officers, and have found the document helpful in dealing with conflict between pastors and churches. Many presbyteries have incorporated part or all of the *Standards* into their manuals of operation (presbytery and COM manuals) or handbooks. In addition, the *Standards* has been used to provide training for investigative committees, interim pastors, clerks of session, and workshops on sexual misconduct. Some presbyteries have the *Standards* to be particularly helpful as a tool for working with boundary issues, especially with interim pastors and with pastors who have completed service in their churches and continue to live in the surrounding community. One of the presbytery stated clerks has used the *standards* as part of the curriculum for polity classes.

Five presbyteries have adopted the *Standards* as policy. Four presbyteries that use the *Standards* for training reported that there have been no instances of sexual misconduct within their bounds since the document had been approved or widely interpreted by the presbytery. One presbytery was honest enough to admit that copies of the *Standards* had laid undisturbed in a box for five years, but had since been found helpful for training on sexual ethics.

It appears as though the *Standards of Ethical Conduct* are used more in the life of presbyteries than in synods, but several synods reported that they use the document for training church officers, sessions, investigating committees, and interim pastor.

In summary, a small percentage of respondents indicated that they were either unfamiliar with the *Standards of Ethical Conduct* or had found little use for them. A large majority of presbyteries use the *Standards* on a regular basis and in a variety of ways. Those who find the document helpful believe that it has not been well promoted in the life of the church and might be helpful to others as well.

2. *2006 Referral: Item 05-20. On Amending D-10.0102, Accusation of Another—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 38, 40, 427–9).*

For the final response to this referral, see Item 04-27, p. 282.

### **I. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**

*2006 Referral: Item 08-01. On Clarifying the Practice of Our Theology of Call for Those Serving General Assembly Entities—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36, 623–26).*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved Item 08-01 and in so doing instructed the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation and other General Assembly level entities to review their policies and practices and to effect any needed changes to bring them into full compliance with the *Book of Order* (G-11.0410) and General Assembly policies so that every minister of the Word and Sacrament employed by them in any relationship shall have a call as defined by the Constitution of the church with full constitutional participation by the appropriate presbytery. This action also required changes in terms of call be shared with the presbytery of membership for their approval and the Board of Pensions; termination or settlement agreements be accessible to the presbytery’s COM; the entity present certification of full compliance to the 218th General Assembly (2008); and each entity provide a report to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly listing called positions together with full terms of call.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation is abiding by the requirements of the Book of Order. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation has updated the Employee Handbook (February 2008) for its employees. The handbook contains

an expanded section on ministers of Word and Sacrament, making explicit the policies and procedures included in this overture.

The Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation reviewed the policy presented in the Employee Handbook (February 2008) and adopted those changes. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation employs six ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Of those six, five are employed as development officers and one is employed as associate for Church Relations.

This policy will be thoroughly communicated to all employees. Current ministers of the Word and Sacrament will be requested to affirm the existence of a current call or complete the process outlined to establish a call within thirty days of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation Board's adoption.

#### **J. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment & Loan Program, Inc.***

*2006 Referral: Item 08-01. On Clarifying the Practice of Our Theology of Call for Those Serving General Assembly Entities—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36, 623–26).*

*Response:* The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved Item 08-01 and in so doing instructed the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and other General Assembly level entities to review their policies and practices and to effect any needed changes to bring them into full compliance with the *Book of Order* (G-11.0410) and General Assembly policies so that every minister of the Word and Sacrament employed by them in any relationship shall have a call as defined by the Constitution of the church with full constitutional participation by the appropriate presbytery. This action also required changes in terms of call be shared with the presbytery of membership for their approval and the Board of Pensions; termination or settlement agreements be accessible to the presbytery's COM; the entity present certification of full compliance to the 218th General Assembly (2008); and each entity provide a report to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly listing called positions and together with full terms of call.

In practice, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., is abiding by the requirements of the *Book of Order*. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., contracts with the General Assembly Council to provide Human Resource Services for our employees. The General Assembly Council has rewritten the Staff Handbook (September 2007) for General Assembly Council employees. It includes an expanded section on ministers of Word and Sacrament, making explicit the policies and procedures included in this overture.

The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., has reviewed the policies presented in the Employee Handbook (August 2004). The statements of policy regarding ministers of Word and Sacrament are:

##### 3.05 Ministers of Word and Sacrament

The nature of the relationship between persons ordained to Ministry of Word and Sacrament and their presbyteries is governed by the *Book of Order*. They are covered by all Personnel Policies except where specifically excluded by federal, state or local laws.

##### 6.03 Manse/Housing Allowance

The Internal Revenue Code allows exempt level, ordained ministers to exclude from gross income for tax purposes, if designated in advance by the Employer, any housing allowance paid as part of compensation when that allowance is used for specified purposes. The responsibility for accurate estimates of the housing allowance and payment of applicable taxes rests solely with the employee.

For purposes of this policy, "housing" means housing and furnishings.

Housing allowances are to be used for expenses such as:

- a. rental of a home;
- b. purchase of a home, including down payment, mortgage, legal fees, fees for title search, installment payments, interest, taxes, fire and home liability insurance premiums, repairs, etc.;
- c. operating expenses of a home, other than costs for food or domestic help, such as utilities, house furnishings, attached garage, sidewalks, front and back yards.
- d. homeowner association dues.

Due to Internal Revenue Service requirements, the manse allowance must be designated by the Employer prior to the employee receiving the allowance (generally, before employment begins). The manse/housing allowance form is available from the Human Resources Department.

##### 7.02 Credited Service

It is the policy of the Employer to credit years of service as an employee toward certain benefits eligibility.

Credited service includes all regular full-time and (pro-rated) part-time service on the staff of any Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) governing body (i.e., local Presbyterian church, middle governing body, General Assembly entity or its predecessor) or service with a partner church or ecumenical body in

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which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds membership (i.e., Special Committee on Consultation on Church Union, National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches, World Alliance of Reformed Churches) and Presbyterian-related theological and educational institutions.

“Total credited service” is defined as the sum of all regular full-time service and pro-rated part-time service. Total credited service is used to determine the amount of personal leave to which the employee is entitled.

“Continuous credited service” is defined as the sum of all regular full-time service and pro-rated part-time service without a break in service. Continuous credited service is used to determine the amount of severance to which the employee is entitled.

“Break in service” is defined as a period of time during which the employee does not appear on the payroll of any Presbyterian Church (USA) governing body or entity. If the period of time during which the employee does not appear on the payroll is one year or less and there has been no intervening employer, service will be considered continuous.

Leave without pay will not count toward credited service.

The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program approved the addition of the following three sections to the Employee Handbook of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., to make explicit our commitment to a reformed theology of the call of ministers of Word and Sacrament.

### 3.05a. Terms of Call/Notification and Consultation with Presbytery

All Ministers of the Word and Sacrament of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), (“Minister,”) must have a written call before starting work, ordinarily in a form that includes:

- Description of goals and working relationships;
- Financial terms;
- Signature of the Minister;
- Signature of the presbytery of membership (“presbytery”); and
- Signature of the Employer.

Since ordination is not a qualification for any position, the terms of call and benefits for ministers employed will be established by the Employer and may or may not meet the presbytery minimums, but will be comparable to those offered to other staff in similar positions with the Employer.

Prior to the offer of employment, the Human Resources Department will contact the Minister candidate’s Committee on Ministry (COM) of the presbytery. Contact will be made through its stated clerk or executive presbyter to afford the presbytery the opportunity to communicate concerns about the candidate.

Prior to starting work, a Minister must consult with his or her COM and will be reminded by the Human Resources Department about the Minister’s obligation to request and obtain the presbytery’s approval of the terms of call.

The Human Resources Department will:

- Provide the Minister with an offer letter that includes the written call (see above-listed requirements);
- Copy the presbytery COM through the stated clerk or executive presbyter on the offer letter; and
- Ask the stated clerk or executive presbyter to notify the Human Resources Department of approval, making clear that the employment relationship will not start without receipt of approval from the presbytery.

Written calls will be prepared for existing Minister staff members and submitted with an updated position description when the annual performance review is submitted to the Human Resources Department.

During employment, the Human Resources Department will provide timely notification to the presbytery and the Board of Pensions (BOP) of any changes in the terms of call.

If during employment, the Employer becomes aware of any circumstances that might occasion discipline of a Minister under the *Book of Order*, the Human Resources Department will be informed and will notify and provide full information and cooperation to the presbytery’s COM, unless prohibited by applicable law.

Upon termination of employment of a Minister, the Human Resources Department will provide timely notice of the dissolution of the call to the presbytery. If the dissolution was disciplinary in nature, then the notice will include the cause of dissolution. Financial provisions related to termination or settlement agreements are changes in terms of call that the Human Resources Department will share with the presbytery and with the BOP on a timely basis. Upon request of the presbytery’s COM, the COM will be given access to all information contained in the Minister’s termination (separation) or settlement agreement, regardless of whether the agreement contains a confidentiality clause, unless prohibited by applicable law. The Director of Human Resources and/or a representative of the Legal Services Office will respond to inquiries of appropriate officers of the presbytery.

The Human Resources Department will submit salary information to the General Assembly for publication in the minutes.

Employment of a Minister remains at-will and may be terminated at any time with or without cause and with or without notice.

### 3.05b. Withholding

The Internal Revenue Code exempts exempt-level, ordained Minister staff members from mandatory withholding. Such Minister staff members may pay their income and self-employment taxes via quarterly installments sent directly to the Internal Revenue Service or via voluntary withholding which may be arranged with the Human Resources Department and the Payroll Department by completing Internal Revenue Service Form W-4 (Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate). It is the Minister staff member’s sole responsibility to complete Form W-4 if voluntary withholding is desired. If no such completed form is submitted to the Human Resources Department, no withholding will take place and the Minister staff member will be responsible to make any and all tax payments to the Internal Revenue Service directly. As with the manse/housing allowance form, the responsibility for accurate estimates and completion of Internal Revenue Service Form W-4 rests solely with the Minister staff member.

## 3.05c. Reporting of Disciplinary Matters

The Human Resources Department will report to the respective Minister's COM of presbytery through its stated clerk or executive presbyter any disciplinary actions for violation of the Employer's Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policies, Sexual Misconduct Policy or Ethics Policy for Employees of the General Assembly Council.

**K. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation**

1. *2006 Referral: Item 08-01. On Clarifying the Practice of Our Theology of Call for Those Serving General Assembly Entities—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36, 623–26).*

*Response:* The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation shall amend the Personnel Policies of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Section: Compensation, Ministers/Change in Call. to read as follows. All other instructions contained in Item 08-01 are currently in effect in the personnel policy.

Ministers:

**Nature.** The nature of the relationship between persons ordained to Ministry of the Word and Sacrament and their presbyteries is governed by the *Book of Order*. They are generally covered by all provisions of this Personnel Policy except where excluded by federal, state, or local laws, including the ministerial exception.

**Terms of Call/Notification and Consultation with Presbytery.** All Ministers of the Word and Sacrament of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ("Ministers") must have a written call before starting work, ordinarily in a form that includes:

- Description of goals and working relationships;
- Financial terms;
- Signature of the Minister;
- Signature of the presbytery of membership ("presbytery"); and
- Signature of the Employer

Since ordination is not a qualification for any position, the terms of call and benefits for ministers employed will be established by the Employer and may or may not meet the presbytery minimums, but will be comparable to those offered to other staff in similar positions with the Employer.

Prior to the offer of employment, the Associate for Administration will contact the Minister candidate's Committee on Ministry (COM) of the presbytery. Contact will be made through its stated clerk or executive presbyter to afford the presbytery the opportunity to communicate concerns about the candidate.

Prior to starting work, a Minister must consult his or her COM and will be reminded by the Associate for Administration about the Minister's obligation to request and obtain the presbytery's approval of the terms of call.

The Associate for Administration will:

- Provide the Minister with an offer letter that includes the written call (see above-listed requirements);
- Copy the presbytery COM through the stated clerk or executive presbyter on the offer letter; and
- Ask the stated clerk or executive presbyter to notify the Associate for Administration of approval, making clear that the employment relationship will not start without receipt of approval from the presbytery.

Written calls will be prepared for existing Minister staff members and submitted with an updated position description when the annual performance review is submitted to the Associate for Administration.

During employment, the Associate for Administration will provide timely notification to the presbytery and the Board of Pensions (BOP) of any changes in the terms of call.

If during employment, the Employer becomes aware of any circumstances that might occasion discipline of a Minister under the *Book of Order*, the Associate for Administration will be informed and will notify and provide full information and cooperation to the presbytery's COM, unless prohibited by applicable law.

Upon termination of employment of a Minister, the Associate for Administration will provide timely notice of the dissolution of the call to the presbytery. If the dissolution was disciplinary in nature, then the notice will include the cause of dissolution. Financial provisions related to termination or settlement agreements are changes in terms of call that the Associate for Administration will share with the presbytery and the BOP on a timely basis. Upon request of the presbytery's COM, the COM will be given access to all information contained in the Minister's termination (separation) or settlement agreement, regardless of whether the agreement contains a confidentiality clause, unless prohibited by applicable law.

The Associate for Administration will submit salary information to the General Assembly for publication in the minutes.

Employment of a Minister remains at-will and may be terminated at any time with or without cause and with or without notice.

**Reporting of Disciplinary Matters.** The Associate for Administration will report to the respective Minister's COM of presbytery through its stated clerk or executive presbyter any disciplinary actions for violation of the Employer's Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policies, Sexual Misconduct Policy or Ethics Policy contained in the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Personnel Policy.

2. *2006 Referral: Item 09-08. Recommendation 3.c. Encouraging the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation and the General Assembly Council (Congregational Ministries Division) to Develop Curricular Resources to Help Members Understand Their Christian Responsibilities with Respect to Lending Practices (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 804ff).*

*Response:* While the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) does not have a publication that directly addresses this concern, PPC is concerned with financial stewardship and has published the following resources: *Help! I'm a Pastor: A Guide to Parish Ministry* by Richard Stoll Armstrong and Kirk Walker Morledge; *The Price of Faith: Exploring Our Choices*

*About Money and Wealth* by Marie T. Cross; and *The Big Book of Presbyterian Stewardship* by Elaine W. Barnett, Laura S. Gordon and Margaret A. Hendrix.

3. 2006 Referral: Item 09-09. Recommendation 11. Encourage the General Assembly Council (through Congregational Ministries Publishing), and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to Develop Study Guides to Assist Presbyterians of All Ages to Better Understand the Aging Process and Ways to Achieve a Long, Healthy, and Secure Life (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 813ff).

*Response:* The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation has published *Caring for Mother: A Daughter's Long Goodbye; God Never Forgets: Faith, Hope, and Alzheimer's Disease* edited by Donald K. McKim; *Graying Gracefully* edited by William J. Carl Jr.; and *A Very Present Help: Psalm Studies for Older Adults* by Miriam Dunson.

The Web-based resource site of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, *TheThoughtfulChristian.com* contains the following studies: *Is There Life After Death?*; *Gilead*; *Older Adult Spirituality*; *Midlife Spirituality*; *Preparing for End of Life Matters*; *Family Spirituality*; *Gratitude as a Spiritual Discipline*; and *Caring for Someone with Alzheimer's*.

4. 2006 Referral: Item 09-10. Recommendation F.5.h.(4) Curriculum Development and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Cooperate with ACSWP in the Preparation of Study and Advocacy Materials for All Ages on the Issues of Globalization and Trade Highlighted in This Paper (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 825ff).

*Response:* The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation stands ready to work in consultation with Curriculum Development and ACSWP on advocacy materials. Recently, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation has published *Justice in a Global Economy: Strategies for Home, Community, and World* by Pamela K. Brubaker, Laura A. Stivers, and Rebecca Todd Peters. *TheThoughtfulChristian.com* has studies entitled *Sweatshop Ethics*; *Sex Trafficking* (a four-session study that is about globalization, immigration, and forced labor); *Give Me Your Tired and Poor: U.S. Immigration Policy*; and *Christian Mission Impossible? The Global Role of U.S. Denominations*.

5. 2006 Referral: Item 10-06. Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Recommendation 2.b. Encourage Authors to Be Inclusive by Language and Examples of Persons Living with Disabilities (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 919ff).

*Response:* The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) endeavors to be inclusive to all persons and groups. The PPC will view publications with the sensitivity recommendations contained in Item 10-06. Additionally, PPC will seek to include more inclusive language for persons living with disabilities.

## Item 01-03

[The assembly approved Item 01-03 as amended. See p. 5.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following list of referrals of business:

### 00 PLENARY

- 00-01 GANC Nominations
- 00-02 Approval of Committee Structure [OGA]
- 00-03 Stated Clerk Nomination Committee Report
- 00-04 Moderator Nominations for GANC Membership

### 01 BUSINESS REFERRALS

- 01-01 Recommendation to Approve the Docket of the General Assembly. [COGA]
- 01-02 Recommendation to Approve the Plenary Consent Agenda. [COGA]
- 01-03 Recommendation to Approve the List of Referrals of Business to Assembly Committees. [COGA]
- 01-04 Suspend Standing Rules A.2.a. for Late Business

### 02 BILLS AND OVERTURES

Docket of the assembly after commencement of General Assembly (Standing Rules B.1.; C.6.a.); referrals of business to assembly committees after commencement of General Assembly (Standing Rules B.6; C.6.a.); review and recommend approval of General Assembly *Minutes* (Standing Rule C.6.c.); recommend approval of time limits on debate (Standing Rule B.1.); requests for presentations to the assembly (Standing Rule C.6.e.); review requests from agencies to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings during assembly meeting (Standing Rule C.6.f.); review protests, determine if en-



tered in the *Minutes*, prepare response if needed (Standing Rule C.6.g.); review requests for distribution of material to commissioners (Standing Rule C.6.d.); report on assembly committee requests for establishment of special committees or commissions (Standing Rule B.8.); appeal of persons denied the right to speak at a public hearing (Standing Rule C.4.g.).

### 03 GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

#### For Plenary Action

#### Presbyterian Historical Society:

- 03-01 Confirm PHS Bylaw Change [COGA]
- 03-02 Confirm Election of Persons to the Board of PHS [COGA]

#### General Assembly:

- 03-03 On Amending Standing Rules L.2. and 3., Amending and Suspending the Standing Rules—From the Presbytery of Flint River.
- 03-04 Invitation to Hold the 221st General Assembly (2014) in Detroit, Michigan [COGA]
- 03-15 Interpretation of G-18.0301 and G-13.0112c, Deadlines for Overtures that Support/Oppose Other Overtures to Amend/Interpret the *Book of Order*—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

#### Presbytery/Synod Issues:

- 03-05 On Amending the *Book of Order* to Provide Flexibility in Presbytery and Synod Membership—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.
- 03-06 On Examining Our Current Synod Structure—From the Presbytery of Central Washington.
- 03-07 Amending G-11.0102 and G-12.0102k Regarding Non-Geographic Presbyteries [COGA]
- 03-18 On the Continuation of the Presbytery of Hanmi—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

#### Per Capita Budgets:

- 03-08 On Transferring Funding of Items from the Per Capita Budget to the Mission Budget—From the Presbytery of Indian Nations.
- 03-09 On Eliminating the General Assembly Per Capita as Part of the Mission Funding System by 2010—From the Presbytery of Grace.
- 03-10 On Transferring Funding of Items From the Per Capita Budget to the General Mission Budget—From the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca.
- 03-11 On Amending G-9.0404d to Delineate the Use of Per Capita Funds—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.
- 03-16 Per Capita budget items [COGA/GAC]

#### Other:

- 03-12 On Honoring the Life and Work of the Reverend Clifton Kirkpatrick—From the Presbytery of Western Reserve.
- 03-13 Amending the Open Meeting policy [COGA]
- 03-14 Elect Jill Hudson and Marcia Myers as Associate Stated Clerk [COGA]
- 03-17 Changes to Session Annual Statistics Report [OGA]
- 03-19 Amend Standing Rule F.6.c.(2). [GANC]
- 03-20 On Creating a Presbyterian Office for the Prevention and Healing of Minister of Word and Sacrament Misconduct and Abuse—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.]

#### Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary (03-Alpha)

- 03-A Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society.
- 03-B Review of OGA Report [CoR-OGA]
- 03-C Minutes, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly]

#### Information

- 03 Agency Summaries:
  - Committee on the Office of the General Assembly
  - Office of the General Assembly
  - Advisory Committee on Litigation
  - General Assembly Nominating Committee
- 03 Moderator's Report
- 03 Per Capita Payments by Presbytery
- 03 Office of the General Assembly Report on Compliance
- 03 General Assembly Agency Ministry Salary Report

**04 CHURCH POLITY**  
**For Plenary Action**

**Form of Government:**

- 04-01** On Amending G-6.0401 by Replacing the Word “Sympathy” with the Word “Empathy”—From the Presbytery of Albany.
- 04-02** On Amending G-5.0200 to Add the Vows of Membership to the Book of Order—From the Presbytery of Mission.
- 04-03** On Amending G-10.0101, G-10.0401, and D-10.0401b Regarding Accounting Practices of the Church—From the Presbytery of the Pacific.
- 04-04** On Amending G-7.0301, “Meetings of the Congregation”—From the Presbytery of Denver

**Rules of Discipline:**

- 04-05** WITHDRAWN
- 04-06** On Amending D-7.0402c and D-8.0404c. Regarding Permanent Judicial Commission Written Decisions—From the Presbytery of Stockton.
- 04-07** On Adding a New Section D-1.0104 to Limit the Abuse in Disciplinary Process by the Filing of Multiple Complaints and/or Allegations—From the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.
- 04-27** Response to Study of Inappropriate Use of Judicial Process [OGA]

**Directory for Worship**

- 04-08** On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding the Definition of Marriage—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.

**Transfer/Union:**

- 04-09** On Establishing the Star Valley United Church in Thayne, Wyoming as a Union Church—From the Presbytery of Wyoming.
- 04-10** On Establishing Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh, NY, as a Union Church—From the Presbytery of Albany.
- 04-11** On Establishing Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church as an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Union Church—From Nevada Presbytery.
- 04-25** On Transferring Shalom Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of Riverside—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.
- 04-26** On Transferring Faith Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of the Pacific—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

**ACC Requests:**

- 04-14** Moderator Discretion in Determining Suitability for Membership and Ordination [ACC]
- 04-15** Request for Interpretation of D-2.0103, D-10.0202, Alternate Forms of Resolution (AFR) [ACC]
- 04-16** Interpretation of the Rules of Discipline: Status of Negotiated Settlements—From the Stated Clerk, Synod of the Trinity.[ACC]
- 04-17** Possible Conflict between 14.0730b and G-11.0407, Certification of Christian Educator. [ACC]
- 04-18** G-13.0107, Synod Participation on Permanent Committees and GANC. [ACC]
- 04-19** W-4.4003, “Minister” or “Moderator” [ACC]
- 04-20** G-7.0304, Presbytery and Quorum for Congregational Meeting. [ACC]
- 04-21** Member/Church Officer Renounces Jurisdiction. [ACC]
- 04-22** D-10.0202h(3), Settlement Agreement. [ACC]
- 04-23** Clarification regarding Certification of Christian Educators. [ACC]
- 04-24** Discretionary Powers of Presbytery Regarding Formula of Agreement and Orderly Exchange. [ACC]

**Other**

- 04-12** On Equal Rights for Families of Same-Gender Partners—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick.
- 04-13** On Equal Rights for Families of Same-Gender Partners—From the Presbytery of Denver.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 04-A thru P** Synod Minutes

**Information**

- 04 Agency Summary, Advisory Committee on the Constitution
- 04 Roster and Decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission
- 04 Governing Body Statements of Compliance
- 04 Votes of Presbyteries

**05 CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY****For Plenary Action****Re Actions of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity:**

- 05-01** On Rescinding the Action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on Recommendation Five of the Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana.
- 05-02** On Requesting that All Actions of the 217th General Assembly Related to the Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity be Fully Rescinded—From the Presbytery of Central Washington.
- 05-03** On Directing the Stated Clerk to Collect and/or Develop Models of Examination Procedures—From the Presbytery of Scioto Valley.
- 05-04** On Rescinding Recommendation 5 of the Theological Task Force Report, and Adopting a New Authoritative Interpretation Regarding Ordination Standards—From the Presbytery of Huntingdon.
- 05-18** On Directing the Stated Clerk to Collect and/or Develop Models of Examination Procedures—From the Presbytery of Heartland.

**Amending G-6; Issue a New Authoritative Interpretation**

- 05-05** On Approving an Authoritative Interpretation to G-6.0108, “Freedom of Conscience—Interpretation of Scriptures”—From the Presbytery of Cherokee.
- 05-06** On Deleting G-6.0106b, and on Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.
- 05-07** On Amending G-6.0106b and G-6.0108b to Clarify the Requirement that Mandatory Provisions of the *Book of Order* Be Enforced by Ordaining Bodies—From the Presbytery of St. Andrew.
- 05-08** On Deleting G-6.0106b and Approving an Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.
- 05-09** On Deleting G-6.0106b and Substituting a new Paragraph in Its Place; on Amending G14.0240 and G-14.0450; and on Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Boston.
- 05-10** On Amending G-6.0108b, “Freedom of Conscience within Certain Bounds,” to Include a Freedom of Ordaining Bodies within Certain Bounds—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.
- 05-11** On Amending G-6.0106b and Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Cincinnati.
- 05-12** On Adopting an Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 to Ensure Proper Application of Ordination Standards—From the Presbytery of John Knox.
- 05-13** On Replacing G-6.0106b With a New Paragraph, and Providing A New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of New Hope.

**ACC Requests**

- 05-14** G-14.0482, Ordaining to Non-Called Positions. [ACC]
- 05-15** G-14.0550, Non-Ministers are Temporary Supplies [ACC]
- 05-16** Interpretation of PUP. [ACC]
- 05-17** Omission of Reference to Directory of Worship from G-6.0108a. [ACC]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items]

**Information**

[No items]

**06 FORM OF GOVERNMENT REVISION****For Plenary Action****FOG Task Force**

- 06-01** Revision of the Form of Government (FOG Task Force)

**Delay FOG:**

- 06-02** On Entrusting the Proposed FOG Revision to the Church for at Least Two Years—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.
- 06-03** On Entrusting the Proposed FOG Revision to the Church for at Least Two Years, and Dismissing the Task Force with Gratitude—From the Presbytery of Sacramento.

- 06-04 On Commending the FOG Task Force and Submitting the Work of the Task Force to the Church for Study—From the Presbytery of Donegal.
- 06-05 On Postponing Final Consideration of a Substitute FOG Until Such Time as a Revision May be Submitted by a Presbytery to a Subsequent Assembly—From the Presbytery of Southern New England.
- 06-06 On Instructing the FOG Task Force to Solicit Feedback and Bring a Revised Version of the Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.
- 06-07 On Instructing the FOG Task Force to Develop a Plan for the Development and Approval of its Work no Later Than January 1, 2009—From the Presbytery of East Tennessee.
- 06-08 On Referring the Report of the Form of Government Task Force to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.
- 06-09 On Receiving the Report of the FOG Task Force, Providing a Two Year Study with Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010); and Commending the Task Force for its Work—From Foothills Presbytery.
- 06-10 On Instructing Officers and Governing Bodies to Study the FOG Report, Sending Findings to the Stated Clerk by January 1, 2010—From the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

**Amend FOG:**

- 06-11 On Amending the Procedure by Which the Recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force Report Be Approved—From the Presbytery of Northumberland.
- 06-12 On Amending the Procedure by Which the Recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force Report Be Approved—From the Presbytery of Huntingdon.
- 06-13 On Amending the Revised Form of Government Proposed by the FOG Task Force—From the Presbytery of Foothills.
- 06-14 On Allowing Provisional Amendments to the *Book of Order*—From the Presbytery of Detroit.
- 06-15 On Revising the FOG Report's G-2.0303b Regarding Temporary Pastoral Relationships—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.
- 06-16 On Amending the FOG Report by Retaining All References to the Committee on Representation—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items]

**Information**

[No items]

**07 ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS****For Plenary Action****Christian and Muslim Communities**

- 07-01 On Calling for Tolerance and Peaceful Relations Between the Christian and Muslim Communities—From the Presbytery of Newton.
- 07-07 On Peaceful Relations Between the Christian and Muslim Communities—From the Presbytery of Chicago.

**Agreements**

- 07-04 Covenant Relationship with the Korean PC in America. [CER]
- 07-05 Ecumenical Policy Statement. [CER]
- 07-10 Covenant Agreement with Moravian Church. [CER]
- 07-11 Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement. [CER]

**Other**

- 07-02 On Response to an Invitation to Interfaith Dialogue—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.
- 07-03 On Investigating the Actions and Conduct of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church—From the Presbytery of Peace River.
- 07-06 Invite Ecumenical Advisory Delegates to the 219th GA. [CER]
- 07-08 Mutual Recognition of Baptism with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. [CER]
- 07-09 PCUSA Delegation to National Council of Churches of Christ. [CER]
- 07-12 WARC Gender, Leadership and Power Consultation. [CER]
- 07-13 Transfer of Ministers/Congregations to a “Transitional Presbytery” [ACC]
- 07-14 Elect Delegates to the WARC meeting June, 2010.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 07-A Minutes, Committee on Ecumenical Relations

**Information**

- 07 Agency Summary, Committee on Ecumenical Relations
- 07 Corresponding Bodies reports
  - NCC Delegation Report
  - WARC Report*
  - WCC Report

**08 MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS****For Plenary Action****Offerings**

- 08-01** On Reinstating the Annual Mission Season Offering—From the Presbytery of Shenandoah.
- 08-02** Institutional Standards for Participating in Christmas Joy Offering. [GAC]
- 08-03** Special Offering Task Force report. [GAC]

**General Assembly Council**

- 08-04** On Adding to the General Assembly Council a Representative from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc.—From the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia.
- 08-05** Name change for GAC with B/O, manual, and Org. for Miss. amendments. [GAC]

**Manual of Operations/Organization for Mission/Deliverance**

- 08-06** WITHDRAWN.
- 08-07** Approve Revised GAC *Manual of Operations*. [GAC]
- 08-08** Approve Revised *Organization for Mission* [GAC]
- 08-09** Approve Revised Appendix A for the *Organization for Mission*. [GAC]
- 08-18** Amendment to *Organization for Mission* [COGA/GAC]

**Office of Environmental Justice**

- 08-10** On Reinstating the Office of Environmental Justice as an Integral Part of the Mission of the Church—From the Presbytery of Heartland.
- 08-11** On Reinstating the Office For Environmental Justice as a Priority as Resources Allow—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.

**Funding of Mission**

- 08-12** Approve “Funding Christ’s Mission Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” [GAC]
- 08-13** Set Aside a Season of Interpretation [GAC]
- 08-14** Approve Mission Work Plan for 2009-2012. [GAC]
- 08-15** Ratify Church Extension Funds revision. [GAC]
- 08-24** Mission Budget

**Review Committees**

- 08-16** Review Committee for GAC’s Advocacy and Advisory Committees
- 08-22** Recommendation for Six-Agency Review [CoR-GAC]
- 08-23** On Evaluating the “Standards of Review” and the Manual before the Next Cycle of Review Commences. [CoR-OGA]

**Other**

- 08-17** On Responsible Purchasing—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.  
[08-19 became 03-20]
- 08-20** Stated Clerk/Moderator Invite Areas to Adopt “An Invitation to Expanding Partnership in God’s Mission” . [GAC]
- 08-21** Request 08-19. GAC/Foundation. [ACC]
- 08-25** On Investigating Opportunities for Group Wind and Hail Insurance Policies for Presbyteries Located on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 08-A Minutes, GAC
- 08-B Minutes, PC(USA), A Corporation
- 08-C Audit
- 08-D Review of GAC Report [CoR-GAC]

**Information**

- 08 Agency Summaries:  
General Assembly Council
- 08 Reports:  
Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel [GAC]  
General Assembly Council on Current Task Forces, Work Groups, and Ad Hoc Committees.  
Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Progress.  
Changes to Appendixes of GAC Manual of Operations  
Parameters for Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands Gifts [GAC]

**09 SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES****For Plenary Action**

- 09-01** On the Church Addressing Intergenerational Injustice in America—From the Presbytery of New Covenant.
- 09-02** On the Use of Non-Disposable Food Service Items—From the Presbytery of Heartland.
- 09-03** On Requesting that the 218th General Assembly Celebrate the Mission “Living Waters for the World” and View a Video Describing that Ministry—From the Presbytery of Holston.
- 09-04** On Instructing PDA to Continue to Work on Nurturing Partnerships with Presbyteries Affected by the Storms of 2005—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana.
- 09-05** On Addressing the Tragedy of America’s Gun Violence—From the Presbytery of National Capital.
- 09-06** Public Education in the 21st Century. [ACREC]
- 09-07** Homelessness to Hope: Just, Sustainable Communities for All People. [ACSWP]
- 09-08** God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation. [ACSWP]
- 09-09** Social Creed for the 21st Century. [ACSWP]
- 09-10** U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming. [ACSWP]
- 09-11** Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the U.S. [ACWC]
- 09-12** Resolution to Study Status of Women in PCUSA [ACWC]
- 09-13** Declare a decade of “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God” (WoCC task force)
- 09-14** Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform [ACREC & ACSWP]
- 09-15** Hurricane Katrina. [ACSWP]
- 09-16** Creating a Climate of Change (written plan, task force) . [ACREC]
- 09-17** On the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Their Contributions in Recovery Work—From the Synod of the Sun.
- 09-18** On the Incorporation of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance—From the Presbytery of Peace River.
- 09-19** Response to Smithfield Food Labor Situation [ACSWP]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 09-A** Minutes, ACSWP
- 09-B** Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Representation.

**Information**

- 09 Agency Summaries:  
Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns [ACWC]  
Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy [ACSWP]  
General Assembly Committee on Representation

**10 HEALTH ISSUES****For Plenary Action**

- 10-01** On Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to Develop a New Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Policy for the Church—From the Presbytery of New Castle.
- 10-02** On Directing the General Assembly Council to Develop and Fund a Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Policy for the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of the Pacific.
- 10-03** On Directing PC(USA) Entities to Reflect Balance in Advocating Both Sides of the Abortion Issue—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.
- 10-04** On Advocating and Funding Either Both Sides of the Abortion Issue or Neither—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.
- 10-05** Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness. [ACSWP]
- 10-06** On Supporting Single Payer Universal Healthcare Reform—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

10-A Cameron House Presentation

**Information**

[No items]

**11 PEACEMAKING AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES****For Assembly Action****Israel/Palestine**

- 11-01 On Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- 11-02 On Pursuing a Culture of a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine—From the Presbytery of Chicago.
- 11-03 On Endorsing the “Amman Call” Regarding Arab-Israeli Peace—From the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley.
- 11-04 On Travel to Israel and Palestine—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.
- 11-05 WITHDRAWN
- 11-06 On the 218th GA Being a Voice for the Victims of Violence in Israel and Palestine—From the Presbytery of National Capital.
- 11-07 On Supporting Israel’s Right to Exist but Calling for Temporary Suspension of Military Aid to the State of Israel—From the Presbytery of Newark.
- 11-28 Prepare Study on Israel/Palestine within the context of the Middle East [GAC]

**Iraq**

- 11-08 On the Withdrawal of US Troops From Iraq—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- 11-09 Regarding Assistance for Iraqi Refugees—From the Presbytery of Lake Huron.
- 11-10 On Building Peace in Iraq—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.
- 11-11 On Addressing the Violence and Suffering Inflicted on Iraqi Women During the Current Prolonged War—From the Presbytery of Providence.
- 11-20 On Ending the War in Iraq—From the Presbytery of Heartland.
- 11-24 Costly Lessons of the Iraq War [ACSWP]

**Trafficking**

- 11-12 On Preventing the Trafficking of Women, Internationally and Nationally—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.
- 11-13 Resolution to Expand Ministry: Human Trafficking. [ACWC]

**Peacemaking**

- 11-16 On Peacemaking and the Pursuit of Justice and Fairness of Shalom—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.
- 11-19 Commitment to Peacemaking. [GAC]
- 11-21 On Peacemaking in Colombia—From the Presbytery of Chicago.
- 11-25 On Becoming Non-Partisan Advocates for Peace—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.
- 11-26 On Middle East Peacemaking—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.

**Other**

- 11-14 On Endorsing the “Publish What You Pay” Campaign—From the Presbytery of Chicago.
- 11-15 On Support for the Presbyterian Church in Zimbabwe—From the Presbytery of Denver
- 11-17 Overture on War, Mercenaries, and Profiteering—From the Presbytery of Scioto Valley.
- 11-18 Human Rights in Colombia. [ACSWP]
- 11-22 On Supporting Those Who Feel Called to Seek Status as Conscientious Objectors—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.
- 11-23 On Divestment from Caterpillar, Inc. and Motorola, Inc. for Profiting from the Israeli Military Occupation of Palestine Territories.
- 11-27 Report from MRTI of Corporate Engagements in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank. [GAC]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No Items]

**Information**

[No Items]

**12 CHURCH GROWTH AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION****For Plenary Action****Church Growth**

- 12-01 Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations. [GAC]
- 12-02 Grow God's Church – Deep and Wide. [GAC]

**PILP**

- 12-03 Confirm election of PILP Board Members. [GAC]
- 12-04 Confirm Jay Hudson—PILP
- 12-05 Revisions to PILP Deliverance—PILP

**Other**

- 12-06 List of Colleges and Universities. [GAC]
- 12-07 On Encouraging the Observation of Children's Day on the Second Sunday in June—From the Presbytery of Blackhawk.
- 12-08 On Directing the GAC to Produce Adolescent Human Development Resources—From the Presbytery of Grace.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 12-A Minutes, PILP
- 12-B Sam and Helen Walton Awards [GAC]
- 12-C Women of Faith Awards [GAC]

**Information**

- 12- Agency Summary, PILP

**13 THEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND INSTITUTIONS****For Plenary Action****Re Theological Institutions**

- 13-01 Theological Institutions Trustees. [COTE]
- 13-02 Brian Blount as Union President. [COTE]
- 13-03 Lord's Supper at Theological Institutions. [COTE]

**Catechisms/Confessions**

- 13-04 On Restoring the Heidelberg Catechism to Its Historic Form—From the Presbytery of Northern Kansas.
- 13-05 On Restoring the Heidelberg Catechism to its Historic Form—From the Presbytery of Boston.
- 13-06 On Correcting Translation Problems of the Heidelberg Catechism—From the Presbytery of Newark.
- 13-07 Study Belhar Confession. [ACREC]
- 13-10 Request 08-15. Changes to Translated Documents in the Book of Confessions. [ACC]

[13-08 became 12-07]

[13-09 became 12-08]

**Other**

- 13-11 500th Anniversary of the Birth of John Calvin [COGA]
- 13-12 Approve Mountain Retreat Association Board of Directors Nominees. [GAC]
- 13-13 Commend for Study in Congregations a Study Guide for "The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing." [GAC]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 13-A Minutes, COTE

**Information**

- 13 Agency Summary, COTE



**14 REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES****For Plenary Action**

- 14-01** Approve descriptions of ordination exams; Amend G-14.0430 [PCCEC]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items]

**Information**

- 14-Self Study, ACREC  
14-Self Study, PJC  
14-Self Study, PCCEC

**Agency Summaries:**

- 14 Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns

**15 BOARD OF PENSIONS, PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION AND PRESBYTERIAN PUBLISHING****For Plenary Action****Board of Pensions**

- 15-01** On Urging the Board of Pensions to Expand the Definition of Medical Necessity to Include Habilitative Services for Children with Congenital Developmental Disabilities—From the Presbytery of Central Nebraska.  
**15-02** On Directing the Board of Pensions to Provide a Relief of Conscience Plan Report Annually—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.

**Foundation**

- 15-03** Continue Churchwide Grants/Promoting Appropriate Investments in New Covenant Funds. [FDN]  
**15-04** Accept Amended Bylaws [FDN]  
**15-05** Confirm Robert E. Leech as President and CEO [FDN]  
**15-06** Confirm Director of New Covenant Trust Company [FDN]

**PPC**

- 15-07** Confirm Marc Lewis—PPC

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 15-A Minutes, Board of Pensions  
15-B Minutes, Foundation  
15-C Minutes, PPC  
15-D Certain Amendments to Bylaws [BOP]  
15-E Amendment to the Benefits Plan

**Information**

- 15 Agency Summaries:  
Board of Pensions  
Reports:  
New Covenant Trust Company Report [FDN]  
Report of the first Dividend [FDN]

**16 WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL RENEWAL**

- 16-01** On Reaffirming Our Common Faith in Jesus Christ—From the Presbytery of East Tennessee. (recite before voting at the assembly)  
**16-02** A Call to Seek God for Spiritual Renewal of the Church—From the Presbytery of San Joaquin.

**17 YOUTH**

Resources regarding Youth and Youth Ministry

## Item 01-04

[The assembly approved Item 01-04 as amended. See p. 5.]

The Assembly Committee on Business Referrals recommends that Standing Rule A.2.a. be suspended in order to receive late business.

- Item 00-04 Moderator's Nominations]
- Item 03-01 Confirm PHS Bylaw Change [COGA] 2/28
- Item 03-02 Confirm Election of Persons to the Board of PHS [COGA] 2/28
- Item 03-04 Invitation to Hold the 221st GA (2014) in Detroit, Michigan [COGA] 2/28
- ~~Item 03-07 Amending G-11.0102 and G-12.0102k Regarding Non-Geographic Presbyteries [COGA] 2/28]~~
- Item 03-13 Amending the Open Meeting policy [COGA] 2/28
- Item 03-14 Elect Jill Hudson and Marcia Myers as Associate Stated Clerk [COGA] 2/28
- Item 03-16 Per Capita Budget [COGA] 5/1
- Item 03-17 Changes to Session Annual Statistics Report [OGA] 4/25
- Item 03-Info COGA Agency Summary 5/6  
Advisory Committee on Litigation Agency Summary 4/7  
Per Capita Payments by Presbytery 5/6  
Office of the General Assembly Report on Compliance 4/25  
[General Assembly Agency Ministers Salary Report]
- Item 04-27 Response to Study of Inappropriate Use of Judicial Process [OGA] 5/13
- Item 07-Info Agency Summary, Committee on Ecumenical Relations 2/29  
Corresponding Bodies reports 2/29  
NCC Delegation Report  
WARC Report  
WCC Report  
World Alliance of Reformed Churches delegation report 5/2
- Item 08-18 Amendment to Organization for Mission, COGA/GAC 3/18
- Item 08-24 GAC Mission Budget 4/25
- Item 08-C Audit 5/6
- Item 09-19 Response to Smithfield Food Labor Situation [ACSWP] 5/8
- Item 09-Info Committee on Representation Narrative Report 4/20
- Item 10-A Cameron House Presentation [GAC]5/8
- Item 11-27 Report from MRTI of Corporate Engagements in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank. [GAC]
- Item 11-28 Prepare Study on Israel/Palestine within the context of the Middle East [GAC]
- Item 12-Info PILP Agency Summary 5/2
- Item 13-11 500th Anniversary of the Birth of John Calvin [COGA] 2/28
- Item 14-Self-Study PJC Self-Study 3/3
- Item 15-D, E Board of Pensions Report 3/17
- Items 15-3 to 15-6, Presbyterian Church Foundation, plus Reports 3/7
- Item 15-07 PPC Election of President 5/1

## Item 02-01

[The assembly approved Item 02-01. See p. 7.]

The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures reported that the minutes of the 218th General Assembly (2008) for Saturday, June 21, 2008, and Sunday, June 22, 2008, had been approved and found that all had been done in compliance with Standing Rules. (A copy of these minutes was posted on the website and two printed copies were posted on bulletin boards outside the meeting hall.)

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## Item 02-02

[The assembly approved Item 02-02. See pp. 7, 41.]

The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures reported that the minutes of the 218th General Assembly (2008) for Wednesday, June 25, 2008, had been approved and found that all had been done in compliance with Standing Rules. (A copy of these minutes was posted on the website and two printed copies were posted on bulletin boards outside the meeting hall.)

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## Item 02-03

[The assembly approved Item 02-03. See pp. 7, 8.]

The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures has considered the flow of business for the remainder of the assembly and recommends approval of the docket. (See page \_\_\_.)

### Wednesday, June 25

2:30pm

Opening Prayer

#### **Business Meeting 5**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Stated Clerk's Orientation II
- General Assembly Nominating Committee
- Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing (15)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education (12)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

6:00pm

Dinner Break

7:30pm

Opening Prayer

#### **Business Meeting 6**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Report of the Assembly Committee Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (7)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Youth (17)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

**Thursday, June 26**

8:30am

Opening Prayer

**Business Meeting 7**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3) (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (8) (Financial Implications)
- General Assembly Nominating Committee
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (8)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions (13)
- Memorial Minutes for Former Moderator Ben Rose

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

12:00pm

Group Lunch

1:30pm

Worship (In Plenary)

2:30pm

**Business Meeting 8**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revision (6)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Worship and Spiritual Renewal (16)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

6:00pm

Dinner on own

7:30pm

Opening Prayer

**Business Meeting 9**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees (14)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (4)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues (10)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

**Friday, June 27**

8:30am

Opening Prayer

**Business Meeting 10**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3) (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (8) (Financial Implications)
- Stated Clerk's Election
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (9)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

12:00pm

Lunch on own

1:30pm

Worship (in Plenary)

2:30pm

**Business Meeting 11**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry (5)
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues – Continued (9)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

6:00pm

Group Dinner

7:30pm

**Business Meeting 12**

- Speakout
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (2)
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Report of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11)

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

**Saturday, June 28**

8:30am

Morning Worship (in Plenary)

**Business Meeting 13**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Introduction of Presbytery of Twin Cities Area Committee on Local Arrangements

Closing Prayer

Noon

ADJOURN

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## Item 02-04

[The assembly approved Item 02-04. See p. 41.]

The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures recommends the following order of committee reports for Friday, June 27, 2008, following the Stated Clerk election:

Church Orders and Ministry  
Peacemaking and International Issues  
Church Polity  
Social Justice Issues  
Health Issues

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## Item 02-05

[The assembly approved Item 02-05. See p. 60.]

The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures has examined the *Minutes* of the 218th General Assembly (2008) for Thursday, June 26, 2008, and found that all has been done in compliance with Standing Rules. A copy of these minutes has been posted on the website and two printed copies have been posted on bulletin boards outside the meeting hall. The committee recommends approval of these minutes.



**\*Item 03-01**

[The assembly approved Item 03-01. See p. 34.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the following change in Section IV.C.6. of the *Organization for Mission* regarding the membership of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Historical Society from a maximum of “twelve” members to a maximum of “twenty-four” members:

**“6. Board of Directors for the Presbyterian Historical Society**

**“b. The board of directors shall be composed of a minimum of eight and a maximum of ~~twelve~~ twenty-four persons. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall elect and the General Assembly shall confirm the board. The members of the board of directors shall serve a four-year term and shall be eligible to serve one additional full or partial term.”**

*Rationale*

The current Bylaws of the Presbyterian Historical Society indicate a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve people to serve on the PHS board. The PHS board voted at its February 2008 meeting to recommend to the COGA that the maximum number of board members be changed to twenty-four in order to better serve the needs of the PHS. This action needs to be confirmed by the 218th General Assembly (2008).

**\*Item 03-02**

[The assembly approved Item 03-02. See p. 34.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the election of the following persons as members of the Board of the Presbyterian Historical Society:

*Class of 2009*

D’Agostino, Diane (Houston, Texas)—1st term  
 Ellis, Margaret Holben (New York, New York)—1st term  
 Schaefer, Joyce (Macon, Georgia)—1st term  
 Kuykendall, John (Davidson, North Carolina)—2nd term of 1 year.  
 Tobin, Myra (New York, New York)—1st term

*Class of 2012*

Allerton, Donald (Chicago, Illinois)—1st term  
 Bay, Eugene (Vero Beach, Florida)—2nd term  
 Callantine, Douglas S. (Abington, Pennsylvania)—2nd term  
 Weeks, Louis (Williamsburg, Virginia)—1st term  
 Ervin, Elizabeth (Morganton, North Carolina)—1st term  
 Watermulder, Paul (Burlingame, California)—1st term

**Item 03-03**

[The assembly approved Item 03-03 with amendment. See p. 34.]

*On Amending Standing Rules L.2. and 3., Amending and Suspending the Standing Rules—From the Presbytery of Flint River.*

The Presbytery of Flint River overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA) to

1. Amend Standing Rule L.2. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

**“2. The Standing Rules of the General Assembly may be amended by a ~~two-thirds vote of the total enrollment majority vote of the commissioners present and voting.~~”**

[~~2. Amend Standing Rule L.3. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]~~

[~~“3. A motion to suspend the standing rules is not debatable and shall require a two-thirds vote of the total enrollment majority vote of the commissioners present and voting.”~~]

#### *Rationale*

Changes to standing rules currently require a 2/3 majority of the total commissioners enrolled, thus imposing an unrealistic constraint on the will of commissioners present at a given session.

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#### **OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-03**

*Comment on Item 03-03—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).*

The overture recommends that the process for amending the Standing Rules be changed from a two-thirds vote to a simple majority. The Office of the General Assembly takes no position on that part of the overture. The overture also recommends that the process for suspending the Standing Rules be changed from a two-thirds vote to a simple majority. The OGA advises against this part of the overture. Suspending the Standing Rules of an assembly already in process should require a higher threshold than amendment. Request for suspension is not debatable and therefore does not allow a more informed deliberation that would be allowed in the amendment process.

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### **\*Item 03-04**

[The assembly approved Item 03-04. See p. 34.]

**The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) accept the invitation of the Presbytery of Detroit for the 221st General Assembly (2014) to meet in Detroit, Michigan, June 14–21, 2014.**

#### *Rationale*

In accordance with the rotation specified in Standing Rule I.1.d., a presbytery in Region C (the Synods of Lincoln Trails, Covenant, and Living Waters) will host the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Staff of the Office of the General Assembly researched several cities in that area as potential sites for that assembly. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed those findings and recommends Detroit as the best location for the assembly.

Detroit is the most economical of the cities we considered, with facilities and hotels that are well-suited to our needs. Detroit’s large convention center has more-than-ample space for the assembly plenary sessions, exhibit hall, committee meetings offices, group meals, worship services, etc. Downtown hotels can accommodate most assembly attendees at competitive rates.

The assembly last met in Detroit in 1980, and the Presbytery of Detroit is enthusiastic about the opportunity to host the assembly.

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### **Item 03-05**

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-05. See p. 34.]

*On Amending the Book of Order to Provide Flexibility in Presbytery and Synod Membership—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.*

The Presbytery of Beaver-Butler overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:



1. Amend the first sentence of G-11.0101 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

*“Presbytery is a corporate expression of the church consisting of ~~all the~~ churches and ministers of the Word and Sacrament ~~within a certain district~~ who have chosen to affiliate based on geographic, theological, missional or other considerations of importance to those congregations.”*

2. Strike G-11.0103j and re-letter “k.” through “aa.” as “j.” through “z.” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

*~~“j. to control the location of new churches and of churches desiring to move;”~~*

3. Add new section G-11.0600, Changes in Membership, to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

*“G-11.0600 Changes in Membership*

*“a. Congregations may choose membership in a particular presbytery based on geographic, theological, missional, or other considerations of importance to those congregations.*

*“b. A congregation may seek to change presbytery membership by a two-thirds vote at a properly called congregational meeting.*

*“c. The receiving presbytery will accept the congregation’s request for membership by a majority vote at a properly called presbytery meeting.*

*“d. The minister(s) of Word and Sacrament of the joining congregation become members of the receiving presbytery when it is determined by the committee on ministry of the receiving presbytery that their call is in order (G-14.0533–0534).”*

4. Amend the first sentence of G-12.0101 to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

*“Synod is the unit of the church’s life ~~and mission~~ which consists of not fewer than three presbyteries ~~within a specific geographic region~~ who choose to affiliate based on geographic, theological, missional, or other considerations of importance to those presbyteries.”*

5. Amend the first sentence of G-12.0102k by striking the current text and inserting new text as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

*“~~k. to organize new presbyteries, to divide, unite, or otherwise combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, to create non geographic presbyteries in order to meet the mission needs (G 11.0103a; G 12.0102a) of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations; subject to the approval of the General Assembly. To vote to receive, by majority vote, existing and new presbyteries that have petitioned for synod membership.~~ Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-7.0201 and G-11.0102 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created.”*

6. Add a new section “G-12.0400, Changes in Membership” to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

*“G-12.0400 Changes in Membership*

*“a. A presbytery may seek membership in a particular synod based on geographic, theological, missional, or other considerations of importance to that presbytery.*

*“b. A presbytery may seek to change synod membership by a two-thirds vote at a properly called presbytery meeting.*

*“c. The receiving synod will accept the presbytery request for membership by a majority vote at a properly called synod meeting.*

*“d. New presbyteries shall be formed when not fewer than twelve congregations petition a synod for the creation of a presbytery of which they will become member congregations. New presbyteries shall be created by a two-thirds vote of the synod at a properly called meeting.”*

7. Strike the text of G-13.0103m and insert new text to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“m. to organize new synods and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine synods or portions of synods previously existing; to provide for the creation of new synods. New synods shall be formed when not fewer than three presbyteries petition the General Assembly for the creation of a synod of which they will become member presbyteries. New synods shall be created by a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly at a regularly called meeting.”~~

8. Strike G-13.0103n and re-letter “o.” through “x” as “n.” through “w.”

9. Amend current G-13.0103v as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]

~~“v. to authorize synods to exercise similar power in receiving ecclesiastical bodies suited to become constituents of those governing bodies and lying within their geographic bounds;”~~

10. Amend G-8.0401 by adding the following new sections “a.” through “b.”: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

*“a. Any presbytery that chooses to withdraw from the denomination shall forfeit all real property to synod.*

*“b. Any synod that chooses to withdraw from the denomination shall forfeit all real property to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”*

### *Rationale*

These changes to the Form of Government will honor the spirit of the Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church. These changes will accommodate the diverse belief systems, theological positions, and mission designs that currently exist within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and will encourage the kind of “flexible equilibrium” to which the task force calls the church (lines 807–808, The Final Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church).

The 213th General Assembly (2001) directed the Moderators of the 213th, 212th, and 211th General Assemblies (2001, 2000, 1999) to appoint a theological task force reflecting the theological and cultural diversity of the church to “lead the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in spiritual discernment of our Christian identity, in and for the 21st century ... . This discernment shall include but not be limited to issues of Christology, biblical authority and interpretation, ordination standards, and power” (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 29). One significant outcome from the task force involves allowing presbyteries and synods a certain amount of latitude (what the report calls flexible equilibrium [lines 807–808, The Final Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church]) in matters of polity.

“Our faith is in the God of Israel who raised Jesus Christ bodily from the dead. This is the one faith confessed by the people of God: ‘one Lord, one faith, ... one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.’ (Ephesians 4:5–6)” (lines 51–53, The Final Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church)

“It is by following Jesus Christ, as attested for us in Scripture, that the unity of our faith will be made visible today as it has in the past” (lines 58–60, The Final Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church).

Jesus Christ alone is head of the church. Jesus alone is the source of the church’s unity.

The *Book of Order*, G-1.0100c, affirms that: “Christ gives to his Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its officers and ordinances.” The task force report reminds us that our unity is rooted in Christ and that the church’s purity does not spring from “technical or legal means,” but from Jesus Christ. Attempting to keep the Church unified and pure without providing freedom for Christ’s Spirit to move is not helpful.

Section G-1.0301(1)(a) affirms that: “‘God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.’” Flexibility in presbytery and synod membership provides options for theological and missional partnerships not possible under the rigid geographical criteria that worked well in other times.

Section G-3.0401d affirms that God is calling us “... to a new openness to God’s continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be a more effective instrument of mission in the world.” The task force points out that “there are many signs that, on a changing cultural landscape, old models are breaking down and new forms of denominationalism in the United States are developing at local, regional, and national levels” (lines 907–908, The Final Report of the Task Force on

Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church). These new forms cannot emerge from strict adherence to existing structures; they must be permitted and nurtured by a denomination willing to seek flexibility and equilibrium.

The intended purpose of flexible equilibrium in presbytery and synod membership is to provide safe opportunity for congregations and judicatories to express shared, deeply held convictions. To seek flexibility regarding essential belief, as the task force does, without providing a corresponding freedom of association based on those very convictions is contradictory and ultimately self-defeating.

Under a more flexible system of presbytery and synod membership, the power of the upper judicatories is diminished (for example, in discipline and enforcement) and that of lower judicatories (congregations and presbyteries) increases.

A flexible plan of presbytery and synod membership provides an affirmation of the missional church's understanding of non-hierarchical structures and ministries. It affirms the congregation as the primary agent of mission and ministry and the presbytery as secondary agent for the support, encouragement, and accountability of congregations and pastors. Any other judicatories are tertiary agents for the support, encouragement, and accountability of the presbytery.

Allowing congregation's flexibility in their presbytery membership, and presbyteries in their synods membership, provides the basis for mission and ministry under a generous and broad orthodox creedal Reformed Christianity. Membership flexibility acknowledges the current era of diverse styles and forms while maintaining the historic unity of the church.

Competing factions within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) appeal to "Historic Presbyterianism." Flexible equilibrium is, by contrast, future-oriented while at the same time providing an affirmation of "Presbyterianism" in its connectional-accountable sense. It acknowledges the need for one another while rejecting both institutional coercion and radical ecclesiastical autonomy.

A flexible plan for presbytery and synod membership allows congregations and judicatories to work for reformation and renewal in local congregations and in presbyteries only as they serve the local congregation. This flexibility allows the denomination to focus on positive change rather than defensive battles.

For these reasons, we urge the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve this overture.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-05

*Advice on Item 03-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 03-05.

#### *Rationale*

[The present overture is substantially similar to Item 05-23 submitted to the 217th General Assembly (2006) by the Presbytery of Beaver Butler. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised, and the General Assembly at that time disapproved, that item (see *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 38, 40). The committee refers to that advice in response to the present overture (see *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 433–37).]

The overture proposes to redefine a presbytery as "all the churches and ministers of the Word and Sacrament *who have chosen to affiliate based on geographic, theological, missional, or other considerations of importance to those congregations.*" Similarly, it redefines a synod as not fewer than three presbyteries "*who have chosen to affiliate based on geographic, theological, missional, or other considerations of importance to those presbyteries*" [emphasis added]. The overture would delete the specific provisions of G-11.0103j and G-12.0102k empowering presbyteries and synods to locate, organize, unite, and divide congregations and presbyteries. It would replace those provisions with new sections empowering congregations and presbyteries to select affiliation based on these same considerations. Finally, two new sections are proposed for addition to G-8.0401 that would require presbyteries or synods seeking to withdraw from the denomination to forfeit all real property to the next higher governing body.

These changes challenge basic assumptions about the relationships between the parts of the church, assumptions that have characterized Presbyterian polity for many generations. First, under the terms of this proposal, congregations could change affiliation with presbyteries, and presbyteries with synods, based on agreement between the affiliating bodies on whatever issues of theology or polity were under controversy at the moment of the decision. Thus the historic relationships between congregations in a presbytery, or presbyteries in a synod, could be replaced by shifting patterns of uncertain allegiances founded on opinion and like-mindedness. If such language is approved, there would be nothing to prevent a congregation or presbytery from realigning itself repeatedly over a period of years as its leadership changes and as controversies in

the church come and go. To the extent that our relations with one another are strained by geographic distance, we weaken the missional connectedness of the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the Constitution poses no impediment to the formation of networks based on shared concerns of theology and mission. Such networks may, and indeed do, share resources and gather for mutual encouragement. They are not geographically bound, and are not subject to the requirements of the Constitution that pertain to governing bodies.

Second, this proposal would reverse the flow of authority for the creation, location, union, and/or dissolution of congregations and presbyteries. Historically and currently, the responsibility for such decisions has rested with presbyteries (for congregations) and synods (for presbyteries). Our polity has arrived at this arrangement because of basic commitments to the notions that “a larger part of the church ... shall govern a smaller” (G-1.0400), and that each governing body is “responsible for the mission and government of the church throughout its geographical district” (G-11.0103, regarding the presbytery; see G-12.0102 for synods, and G-13.0103 for the General Assembly). If the proposed language is approved, it could complicate the ability of presbyteries and synods to structure their work on the basis of their sense of God’s call by allowing congregations and presbyteries to disaffiliate and affiliate at will.

Third, this overture has the effect of greatly expanding the complications posed by the existence of nongeographic presbyteries. Currently, synods may create nongeographic presbyteries “to meet the mission needs of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations” (see G-12.0102k). The power of the synod to form nongeographic presbyteries is thus limited to application in communities of non-majority ethnicity and language. The approval of the proposed language greatly expands the grounds on which nongeographic presbyteries could be organized, thereby significantly increasing the number of congregations whose presbytery membership is disconnected from their physical location and mission context. Such physical disconnection makes it more difficult for the presbytery to fulfill its mandate to “... be responsible for the mission and government of the church throughout its geographical district” (G-11.0103a). It may also create conflicts over mission that do not presently exist, such as competition between geographic and nongeographic presbyteries over the location of new church developments or the relocation of existing congregations.

Fourth, Chapter XIII of the *Book of Order* currently contains no provision permitting the General Assembly to organize nongeographic synods that would equate to the provisions of G-12.0102k. Thus the language of the overture is without clear grounding in the constitutional authority of the General Assembly.

Fifth, the property provisions of the overture are unnecessary, in view of the control of G-8.0201 over the discussion of all church property. Thus these provisions are at best superfluous, and may potentially be confusing in case of legal challenge.

Finally, the overture speaks of “withdrawing” congregations and presbyteries. While this language has become part of common parlance in the church, it is not constitutional. Congregations do not “withdraw”; they are dismissed to other churches “whose organization is conformed to the doctrines and order of this church” (see *Anderson v. Florida*, PJC, *Minutes*, PCUS, 1974, Part I, pp.119–21; and G-11.0103i, G-15.0203b). The Constitution contains no provision for dismissing presbyteries to other churches. The introduction of the language of “withdrawal” shifts the focus of action onto the congregation (or presbytery) seeking to depart the fellowship of the church, and away from the authority of the next higher governing body to dismiss. In so doing, it clouds basic principles of Presbyterian order and government: the authority of the governing body to determine its membership (G-1.0302), the right of the larger part of the church to govern a smaller in matters of controversy (G-1.0400), and the right of a higher governing body to review and control of a lower (G-4.0301f).

As the committee noted in its response to Item 05-23 in 2006:

At stake here is not merely a style of polity but a central ecclesiological question: is the church finally a voluntary association of the like-minded, or is it called into being by the sovereign God through the grace of Jesus Christ, who gathered to himself persons of vastly different persuasions, background, and lifestyle?

The effect of this overture will be to exacerbate the proclivity of the church to dissolve itself into associations based on affinity. This proclivity is antithetical to the call of God to engage Christ’s mission together, to honor the critiques of brothers and sisters of faith who disagree, and to plan and work together to live out our calling to be “the sign in and for the world of the new reality God is making available to people in Jesus Christ” (G-3.0200).

## Item 03-06

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-06. See p. 34.]

*On Examining Our Current Synod Structure—From the Presbytery of Central Washington.*

The Presbytery of Central Washington overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to conduct an examination of our current synod structure with the intention to streamline the current synod structure into fewer synods, covering larger geographic areas.

### *Rationale*

Under the current structure, there exists duplication of various ministries. Fewer synods, covering a larger geographic area, would both reduce the current workforce needed to maintain existing synods and free individuals for other areas of ministry.

Given the budget constraints that our denomination is facing at all levels, streamlining the synods could create an overall cost savings.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-06

*Advice on Item 03-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that, if the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the intent of Item 03-06 is appropriate, the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent. The committee notes, however, that the examination contemplated in this overture does not in itself constitute a change to the current synod structure of the church, and that any changes in that structure must be approved by the General Assembly (G-13.0103m).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further advises the General Assembly that there is a history of study of the question of the structure and viability of synods.

In 1993, *Overture 93-2* from the Presbytery of Southern New England proposed the creation of a special committee to

1. create a plan to eliminate synods and to divide synod property between presbyteries and the General Assembly;
2. design a process by which presbyteries might reevaluate their boundaries and mission responsibilities;
3. design a plan for regional judicial commissions to hear appeals from presbyteries; and
4. recommend necessary changes to the *Book of Order*. (See *Minutes*, 1993, Part I, p.857.)

The overture was not approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993) (*Ibid*, p. 97).

The 208th General Assembly (1996) appointed a nine-member Special Committee on Middle Governing Bodies to

examine the relationships between and among the national offices, synods, and presbyteries; develop and review studies of middle governing bodies for effectiveness; and seek new paradigms for prioritizing, evaluating, visioning, resourcing, and partnering. (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p. 200)

The special committee offered several recommendations to the 211th General Assembly (1999) including that

the PC(USA) move to a three-governing-body system. The committee is convinced that a flexible and simplified three-governing-body system will offer more opportunities and incentives for direct linkage between and among General Assembly, presbyteries, and congregations. (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 526)

The General Assembly took action on some aspects of the special committee's report, but did not act to move in the direction of eliminating synods, opting instead to receive and commend the report for study.

Should the 218th General Assembly (2008) find the present overture an acceptable course of action, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution commends to the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council the full report of the Special Committee on Middle Governing Bodies for study.

## Item 03-07

[The assembly approved Item 03-07 with amendment. See p. 34.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Amend G-12.0102k as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“k. to organize new presbyteries, to divide, unite, or otherwise combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, to create nongeographic presbyteries in order to meet the mission needs (G-12.0102a; G-11.0103a) of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations; subject to the approval of the General Assembly. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-7.0201 and G-11.0102 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created. *When such mission needs arise inside a congregation that lies within a synod lacking such a nongeographic presbytery, that synod may permit, with the approval of the General Assembly and unless some legal or ecclesiastical issue would prohibit, that congregation to join a nongeographic presbytery inside the bounds of another synod with the consent of that other synod, the geographic presbytery, and the nongeographic presbytery;* The creation of such presbyteries should be formed where there is a need on the basis of language only, and that there be a sunset clause (end date) added to each formation of a nongeographic presbytery.”

2. Amend G-11.0102 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“In each presbytery the minimum number of ministers shall be ~~twelve~~ *ten* and the minimum number of churches with duly constituted sessions (G-7.0202a) shall likewise be ~~twelve~~ *ten*. In an isolated area, upon recommendation of the synod, the General Assembly may permit a presbytery to be organized with fewer than these minimums, provided that there shall be at least five ministers in each presbytery.”

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following: *2006 Referral: Item 05-22. On Establishing a Committee or Task Force to Conduct a Feasibility Study for Creating a Nongeographic Korean American Synod—From the Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 430–33).*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) believes that the PC(USA) is at a “tipping point” in relation to whether new immigrant communities will be welcomed into the life and ministry of our denomination or go the route of creating separate denominations based on ethnic affiliation. How we respond to this challenge over the next decade will determine whether there is one major Presbyterian church inclusive of the multicultural diversity of this nation or many different Presbyterian churches, each organized along different racial and ethnic lines.

The COGA believes God is calling us to the option of being a truly united, multicultural church and that these amendments to our *Book of Order* can make a significant contribution to that reality. It would be a tragic mistake for the PC(USA) not to allow the flexibility in our polity at this point in history to enable various new immigrant communities to make the transition into the life and ministry of the PC(USA).

This denomination has a long history of using nongeographic, language-based presbyteries as a way to welcome new immigrant communities and to achieve long-term unity in the church. In the nineteenth century, German and Czech language nongeographic presbyteries made this transition possible for immigrants from parts of the world where English was not the language and Anglo-Saxon culture was unfamiliar. The same is proving true in the 20th and 21st centuries relative to Korean-language presbyteries. To make these nongeographic, language presbyteries more effective, the 217th General Assembly (2006) asked COGA, in consultation with the leaders of those presbyteries and the National Korean Presbyterian Council, to consult and bring proposals to the 218th General Assembly (2008) as to whether a Korean-language synod or other adjustments to our polity related to nongeographic presbyteries might make this approach more effective.

A very helpful gathering among these parties was held in December 2006, and it was agreed that the move to a Korean-language, nongeographic synod was probably not the best way to achieve this goal. Instead, it was felt that the best way forward would be to amend the current Form of Government to reduce the number of congregations required to constitute a language-based presbytery from twelve to ten and to add a provision that would allow congregations in synods where no such

presbytery exists to affiliate with a language-based presbytery in an adjacent synod, with concurrence of the geographic presbytery involved and both synods.

These minor adjustments to our polity would go a long way toward making it easier and providing options for congregations that believe a nongeographic, language presbytery would strengthen their mission and ministry. It would also help to assure that Korean congregations could find a welcome home in the PC(USA). Further, it would remove the current irregular status of a number of congregations who are members of nongeographic presbyteries but are located outside the bounds of the synod of which that presbytery is a part.

We are in a time when a growing number of Korean American congregations are finding a welcome home in our geographic presbyteries and many are establishing English language, multicultural congregations. At the same time, there is also continuing immigration from Korea and a large number of Korean Americans who find Korean-language congregations and presbyteries helpful to their faithful ministry and to their long-term relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Both of these groups represent numerical and spiritual growing edges of the PC(USA).

Especially at the 218th General Assembly (2008), when we will be taking action on a covenant agreement with the Korean Presbyterian Church in America, it is important that we show flexibility and welcome to Korean American congregations that seek a home in the PC(USA), one that also welcomes and honors the language and culture of these congregations. These amendments to our Form of Government will do just that without making any significant deviation in the patterns already enshrined in our Constitution.

The PC(USA) will be a stronger and more faithful church if we take the risks to welcome Korean Americans and other immigrant groups fully into the life of our church, even if it requires flexibility in our polity. We believe these changes will both make us a stronger and more faithful church and allow us to reach out and enlarge our church by welcoming more Korean Americans into our ministry. We urge the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve these amendments and recommend them to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-07

*Advice on Item 03-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Item 03-07 is in response to the following referral: *2006 Referral: Item 05-22: On Establishing a Committee or Task Force to Conduct a Feasibility Study for Creating a Non-Geographic Korean American Synod—Midwest Hanmi (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 430).*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Item 03-07 presents issues of constitutional amendment that the assembly should consider.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends two constitutional amendments to enhance the effectiveness of Korean-speaking nongeographic presbyteries. The first proposed amendment would regularize, and provide certain protections for, some existing situations where congregations belong to non-geographic presbyteries in other synods than the ones in which they reside. The second proposed amendment would decrease the minimum number of ministers and churches needed to form a presbytery.

The PC(USA) and its predecessors employed nongeographic presbyteries since early in the 20th century without the clear constitutional authority for creating them until 2002 when the church approved a constitutional amendment to do so.

The first proposed amendment by Item 03-07 raises a constitutional issue by its silence on the necessity of obtaining General Assembly concurrence in the transfer of the congregation. Two constitutional provisions apply to the transfer of congregations.

Section G-13.0103m gives the General Assembly the responsibility “to organize new synods and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine synods or portions of synods previously existing.”

Section G-13.0103n gives the General Assembly the responsibility “to approve the organization, division, uniting, or combining of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries by synods.”

Because of these responsibilities, the General Assembly’s approval is necessary whenever a congregation is transferred from one presbytery to another across synod boundaries.

When a congregation that is located within the bounds of one synod joins a presbytery that is within the bounds of another synod, there are serious implications for each synod and for the geographic presbytery involved. Such a transfer would enlarge the district of the nongeographic presbytery, increasing the overlap with the districts of the geographic presbyteries. Because presbyteries are responsible for the mission and government of the church throughout their geographical districts, the overlapping of districts raises the potential for conflict.

The absence of a stated time limitation on the cross-boundary membership, and the absence of a requirement that the cross-boundary relationship be periodically renewed, each suggest that the cross-boundary relationship is intended to continue for the life of the nongeographic presbytery or until the congregation seeks to be transferred to a geographic presbytery. The lack of a clear end date for the relationship necessitates that all governing bodies involved should give their assent at the beginning of the cross-boundary relationship.

The proposed amendment would make the synod where the congregation is located the key governing body to permit the cross-boundary relationship of the congregation to the nongeographic presbytery. That synod would be required to verify that the geographic presbytery where the congregation is located, the nongeographic presbytery, and the synod where the nongeographic presbytery is located all agree to the relationship across boundaries.

In order to clarify the necessity of General Assembly involvement in such a transfer across synod boundaries, the proposed amendment would be strengthened by inserting the phrase “, with the approval of the General Assembly and” after the phrase “that synod may permit.” The first proposed amendment would then read:

“1. Amend G-12.0102k as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“k. to organize new presbyteries, to divide, unite, or otherwise combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, to create nongeographic presbyteries in order to meet the mission needs (G-12.0102a; G-11.0103a) of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations; subject to the approval of the General Assembly. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-7.0201 and G-11.0102 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created. *When such mission needs arise inside a congregation that lies within a synod lacking such a nongeographic presbytery, that synod may permit*, *with the approval of the General Assembly and*] unless some legal or ecclesiastical issue would prohibit, that congregation to join a nongeographic presbytery inside the bounds of another synod with the consent of that other synod, the geographic presbytery, and the nongeographic presbytery;”

Such an amendment would additionally require the synod of the nongeographic presbytery to obtain the approval of the General Assembly in order to establish the cross-boundary relationship.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has concerns about the potential for conflicts across multiple boundaries implicit in a proposed amendment such as the one above. The proposed amendment implicitly requires the governing bodies to reach agreements on those areas of potential conflict they can anticipate before establishing the cross-boundary relationship.

Although nongeographic presbyteries are not the normative way in which presbyteries are constituted within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the proposal from COGA, with the amendment suggested herein, would ensure that such presbyteries are approved when there is a valid mission purpose that has the approval of the General Assembly, two synods, and two presbyteries.

The proposal from COGA is an alternative to the prospect of a constitutional amendment that would authorize nongeographic synods, and do not expand the grounds on which nongeographic presbyteries could be organized.

The second proposal would amend G-11.0102 to reduce the minimum numbers of ministers and churches with duly constituted sessions in a presbytery from twelve to ten.

The only time that the ACC has commented on G-11.0102 was in 2001 when it advised the assembly to insert the words “with duly constituted sessions” after “churches.” At that time, the ACC did not comment on the number twelve, and does not appear to have reviewed whether the number should be changed.

The second sentence of G-11.0102 provides that: “In an isolated area, upon recommendation of the synod, the General Assembly may permit a presbytery to be organized with fewer than these minimums, provided that there shall be at least five ministers in each presbytery.” It is evident that even before the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) constitutionally regularized the formation of nongeographic presbyteries, the PC(USA) granted its General Assembly the power to permit flexibility in the minimum number of churches and ministers in a presbytery; the minimum below which not even the General Assembly could permit a presbytery to be formed was five ministers.

The ACC finds that the Form of Government should and does state a minimum number of ministers and churches with duly constituted sessions in a presbytery. The amendment proposed by COGA does not change the actual lower limit, and ensures that there would be at least five ministers in a presbytery.



If the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the intent of Item 03-07 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the first proposed constitutional amendment should be altered to conform to this advice, and that the language proposed for the second proposed constitutional amendment is clear and consistent with that intent.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-07**

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

*Item 03-07. On Amendment of G-11.0102 and G-12.0102k Regarding Non-Geographic Presbyteries.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that this item be approved, with the following proposed amendment:

Add a sentence to the proposed amendment from the Committee of the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) to G-12.0102k as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“k. to organize new presbyteries, to divide, unite, or otherwise combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, to create nongeographic presbyteries in order to meet the mission needs (G-12.0102a; G-11.0103a) of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations; subject to the approval of the General Assembly. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-7.0201 and G-11.0102 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created. *When such mission needs arise inside a congregation that lies within a synod lacking such a nongeographic presbytery, that synod may permit, unless some legal or ecclesiastical issue would prohibit, that congregation to join a nongeographic presbytery inside the bounds of another synod with the consent of that other synod, the geographic presbytery, and the nongeographic presbytery[;]* [*The creation of such presbyteries should be formed where there is a need on the basis of language only, and that there be a sunset clause (end date) added to each formation of a nongeographic presbytery.*]

*Rationale*

The ACREC believes that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to be a multiracial, multicultural community of faith, reflecting the vast diversity of God’s human family. While we recognize that the diversity of language and culture bring challenges that the church is not always prepared to address, we believe the church should always be striving to live into this vision. The creation of nongeographic presbyteries on the basis of language is acknowledged as a compromise. It facilitates the life of immigrant congregations, but creates an institutional barrier to the inclusive welcome of all people in the life of geographic presbyteries. It is our fervent hope that this request from Korean congregations serves to remind the larger church that living into our vision of becoming a more diverse community of faith will require the larger church to change in ways that will enable greater participation of diverse communities in the life of the church as a whole.

The proposed amendment offered by ACREC are offered to underscore the transitional nature of language-specific, non-geographic presbyteries. The nongeographic, Korean language-specific presbyteries serve to facilitate the greater participation of immigrant congregations in the larger, connectional life of the church.

However, nongeographic presbyteries pose certain challenges to living into the vision of becoming a multiracial, multicultural church.

In the life of every immigrant congregation, there is a generation whose first language is English. Both the non-geographic presbytery and the geographic presbyteries must be intentional about supporting and nurturing the full participation of emerging English-speaking ministries and second and third generation pastors who are English dominant who may be better served by relating to the larger church through geographic presbyteries.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-07**

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

Item 03-07 is a referral on amending G-11.0102 and G-12.0102k regarding non-geographic presbyteries.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)’s advice and counsel.

*Rationale*

Understanding that non-geographic presbyteries are organized primarily for language purposes for a limited time, ACWC concurs with ACREC's comments, and feels it is an appropriate compromise at this time. The ACWC understands this is an active and ongoing effort to transition from specific language presbyteries to becoming fully inclusive geographic presbyteries in the near future. Division is not intended as a permanent solution. Unity in Christ is the goal and enriches our ability to be "the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all of humanity" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0200). Permanent non-geographic presbyteries pose challenges to our becoming an inclusive, multiracial, multicultural church. The vision of the beloved community requires compassion but also reconciling work.

The ordination of women and their leadership in governing bodies at all levels of the church is of particular concern for the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns. The *Book of Order* mandate for the ordination of women needs to be fulfilled when organizing language specific presbyteries. The *Book of Order*, G-14.0221, states, "Every congregation shall elect men and women from among its active members, giving fair representation to persons of all ages and of all racial ethnic backgrounds and to persons with disabilities who are members of that congregation, to the office of elder and to the office of deacon (if used in the congregation)." Korean language congregations and presbyteries do not call many women clergy. Korean women clergy have shared in forums and consultations with ACWC their frustrations and difficulties. Generational differences profoundly influence the needs of these congregations.

**Item 03-08**

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-08. See pp. 34, 35.]

*On Transferring Funding of Items from the Per Capita Budget to the Mission Budget—From the Presbytery of Indian Nations.*

The Presbytery of Indian Nations overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to do the following:

1. Transfer any funding of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s involvement in ecumenical and ecumenical agency relationships from the Per Capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly to the Mission budget of the General Assembly, beginning with budgets for 2009. The per capita apportionment for 2009 shall be adjusted downward accordingly.

2. Instruct the General Assembly Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to initiate a study of the Per Capita budget to determine, prior to the 219th General Assembly (2010), all other items funded by the Per Capita budget that do not constitute "Office of the General Assembly operating expenses," or "General Assembly meeting expenses of commissioners," and thus should be rightly transferred to the Mission budget.

[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$1,560,735; (2010): \$1,571,971 (Mission)]

[Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]

*Rationale*

The *Book of Order* provides for per capita budgets to include funding as follows:

"... The General Assembly shall pay the expenses of commissioners who are elected by the presbyteries to attend the meetings of the General Assembly. Per capita funds may be used by each governing body to pay such expenses" (G-9.0308).

"Each governing body above the session shall prepare a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular churches within its *bounds*" [emphasis added] (G 9.0404d).

Any reasonable reading of the above *Book of Order* references would conclude that contributions to ecumenical bodies, along with ecumenical and ecumenical agency relations expenses, do not properly fall under the category of items to be included in a per capita budget, irregardless of the use that the ecumenical bodies might make of the funds. The *Book of Order* allows a governing body only "its" operating expenses to be funded with a per capita apportionment.

In addition, the original purpose of many of the ecumenical agencies to which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) belongs was to promote unity in Christian doctrine and mutual recognition of ministries. Increasingly, these same ecumenical agencies have changed their primary focus away from building Christian unity toward advocating for policies that may or may

not be consistent with the policy of the PC(USA) or her member churches. In the case of the National Council of Churches of Christ, denominations and other religious groups are no longer even the primary source of funds, yet the NCCC claims to be a “religious” organization. Because these agencies have shifted their focus towards political action, termed “justice advocacy,” it is appropriate that they be funded under the mission budget, where the church normally funds advocacy activities, rather than the per capita budget, which is intended to pay for the administrative costs of the Office of the General Assembly.

Shifting the ecumenical agencies’ funding from the per capita budget will likely strengthen support of that budget by moving it closer to its original purpose and by providing relief of conscience to those not in support of the ecumenical agencies’ political agenda. At the same time, it will afford supporters of those agencies the opportunity to designate mission contributions toward their support.

There are other expenses currently paid from the per capita budget that should be evaluated to determine if they are properly included in that budget. These include, but are not limited to

- Expenses associated with supporting the Presbyterian Historical Society.
- Expenses associated with the General Assembly Council (GAC), which oversees the mission budget.
- Expenses associated with the GAC Administration, including the office of the Executive Director of the GAC, which is related to functions included in the mission budget.

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**Concurrence to Item 03-08 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-08**

*Advice on Item 03-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 03-08 with the following comment.

The overture raises the issue of the appropriate use of funds raised for the per capita budget; it specifically seeks to transfer funding for involvement in ecumenical and ecumenical agency relationships from the General Assembly’s per capita budget to its mission budget by 2009. It further calls for beginning prior to the 219th General Assembly (2010) an inquiry by the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) into other uses of per capita resources.

The funding of certain ecclesiastical expenses of the church through the per capita budget of the General Assembly as an equitable expression of the church’s essential unity has a long history in American Presbyterianism, going back to an apportionment plan approved by the Synod of Philadelphia in the 1730s. A General Assembly “plan of mileage” to cover the expenses of commissioners to the General Assembly by the mid 1800s is an early illustration of the church’s sharing specific costs of functions of the whole church. As the responsibilities of the General Assembly have grown and been developed by the church over the last 250 years, its per capita budget has come to include a wider range of ecclesiastical expenses.

In particular the General Assembly has responsibility for providing for ecumenical expenses as it serves the church in fulfillment of the constitutional statement that “[t]he Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to manifest more visibly the unity of the church of Jesus Christ and will be open to opportunities for conversation, cooperation, and action with other ecclesiastical and secular groups” (G-15.0101). “The General Assembly is the highest governing body of this church and is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (G-13.0101), and it has the power and responsibility “to establish and maintain those ecumenical relations that will enlarge the life and mission of the church” (G-13.0103).

The Form of Government connects this polity understanding of the unity of the church expressed by the General Assembly to a deeper and more theological constitutional awareness of the significance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) living within the whole Body of Christ:

Visible oneness, by which a diversity of persons, gifts, and understandings is brought together, is an important sign of the unity of God’s people. It is also a means by which that unity is achieved. Further, while divisions into different denominations do not destroy this unity, they do obscure it for both the Church and the world. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity and is willing to seek and to maintain communion and community with all other branches of the one, catholic Church. (*Book of Order*, G-4.0203)

It is helpful, then, that General Assembly *Minutes* show that care has been taken to describe how per capita funding of the range of its ecclesiastical expenses is appropriate for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

When Presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly meet, they are conducting the legislative or judicial business of the Church and incur necessary expenses. There are also necessary administrative expenses involved which enable these legislative and judicial functions to be performed. All these expenses should be shared throughout the church because every one who is a [Presbyterian] shares in the benefits of this system of government.... (GAPJC, *Westminster Church v. Presbytery of Detroit, Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1976, Part I, p. 229)

In 1995 the following definition of per capita showing its theological significance for the life of the church was approved:

“Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian Church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians.” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, p. 301)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that regarding General Assembly ecumenical involvements on behalf of the whole church, it has been Presbyterian practice for many years to fund its contributions to the work of ecumenical agencies of which it is a member through the per capita budget:

1. There is an historically recognized difference between defraying the core costs of ecumenical bodies (paying for delegates and core operations) and the mission programs of those agencies. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) the per capita budget has supported those core costs while the General Assembly mission budget has supported ecumenical mission programs.

2. The *Organization for Mission* require that the expenses of the Stated Clerk [as permanent ecumenical representative of the church, IV.B.2.G.], members of the Ecumenical Staff Team, and the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations [IV.C.7.e.] be funded through the per capita budget.

The question of what constitutes appropriate use of per capita funds is not new. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that traditionally the church has been reluctant to define either too broadly or too narrowly ecclesiastical and operating expenses.

In 1952, the General Assembly approved the principle that per capita apportionment be used “only for the necessary ecclesiastical expenses that its organizations may effectively function” (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1952, Part I, p.262). The statement did not, however, delineate what those “necessary ecclesiastical expenses” were or what “organizations” were to be included.

In 1977, the General Assembly Mission Council of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. responded to a referral on the general subject of per capita with a reaffirmation of the 1952 policy, supported by the following comments:

Sometimes judicatories succumb to the temptation to fund some mission program or project by the per capita method because of its reliability. This appears to be a result of the decision to follow a policy other than that adopted by the General Assembly rather than to any lack of clarity as to the meaning of the General Assembly policy.

Questions have been raised from time to time as to the appropriateness of supporting certain expenditures from General Assembly per capita funds. Because there are so few of these, and because there is a continuing arena for review, it appears that even in these cases the clarity and reliability of current policy is affirmed (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1977, pp. 412-415).

In 1989, *Overture 89-28* (Presbytery of Maumee Valley) and *Overture 89-39* (Presbytery of Northern Waters) would have restricted use of per capita funds to administrative costs within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), moving contributions to ecumenical organizations from the per capita budget to the mission budget. In keeping with advice from the General Assembly Council that these overtures would “have a serious detrimental effect in the PC(USA) and its ecumenical relations” first of all by “put[ting] in jeopardy basic responsibilities of membership in ecumenical bodies,” the General Assembly took no action (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 329).

In 1991, *Overture 90-101* (Presbytery of Western Reserve) would have amended G-15.0102 to state clearly that per capita apportionment funds may be used to pay expenses of delegates attending meetings of ecumenical bodies, and that other ecumenical expenses shall be paid from mission funds. The overture was not approved by the assembly. In its advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted that

... it has been the common practice of both former denominations (Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America), and that it is current practice as cited in the Manual of the General Assembly (Standing Rule 32.q.), to use per capita moneys to pay expenses of delegates to meetings of ecumenical bodies. Therefore, it is not necessary to amend the Constitution for this purpose (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, p. 907).

### 03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

The advisory committee further believes that it is unwise for the Form of Government to mandate the payment of “other ecumenical expenses” from any particular funds as would be the effect of *Overture 90-101*.

Persistent questions on the subject of the limits of “ecclesiastical or operating expenses” appropriate to the per capita budget prompted the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to propose an amendment to G-9.0404, subsequently defeated in the presbyteries, that would have clarified the question. The amendment would have inserted new paragraphs, one of which read:

e. Ecclesiastical or operating expenses may include the cost of facilities, equipment, program materials and supplies, communications, travel and other meeting expenses, and the compensation of ordained and non-ordained executive and administrative staff necessary for the functions of the governing body, and may also include the governing body’s contribution to similar expenses of ecumenical and conciliar bodies, and such other costs as the governing body considers necessary to its functions. (*Minutes*, 1997, Part I, p.111)

The church has sought carefully to respond to such overture efforts to restrict the use of per capita funds exclusively to General Assembly meeting and commissioner expenses, reviewing its traditional constitutional means to meet the costs of appropriate responsibilities of the whole church by a per capita apportionment budget communicated to the presbyteries. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes the usefulness of these periodic discussions for the church as they contribute to and enhance the General Assembly’s budgeting process.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 03-08 urges transferring the funding of PC(USA)’s involvement in ecumenical and agency relationships from the Per Capita Budget.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 03-08 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC concurs with the comments from the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), and the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC). Per capita apportionment has theological significance, and has been part of the polity of the Presbyterian church since 1730. Advocating for justice is the responsibility of the whole church, not just those who participate in mission giving. Participation within the ecumenical community is a crucial connection for the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and for the PC(USA) as we work together for justice and peace throughout the world.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

Item 03-08, on transferring funding of the PC(USA)’s involvement in ecumenical and agency relationships from the per capita budget to the mission budget.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)’s advice and counsel.

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#### COGA AND GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 03-08

*Comment on Item 03-08—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council.*

The COGA and the GAC urge disapproval of Item 03-08. The purpose of per capita is to provide a mechanism for all Presbyterians to share equally in core ecclesiastical functions. On several occasions over the past three decades, the support through per capita funds of one of our core ecclesiastical functions, participation in ecumenical bodies, has been challenged through overtures, but consistently rejected by General Assemblies (*Minutes*, 1977, 1989, 1991, as cited in Advice on Item 03-08 from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution).

The overture is based on a fundamental misconception of the role and responsibility of the Office of the General Assembly for seeking and maintaining a strong participation in ecumenical relations and ecumenical witness. Further, it seeks to put forward a very restricted definition of the work of the Office of the General Assembly, thereby misconstruing what may be properly underwritten by “operating expenses” (*Book of Order*, G-9.0404d).

The Constitution manifests a strong historic and continuing commitment to ecumenical relations and witness. Section G-3.0401d asserts that the Church is called “to a new openness to God’s continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be a more effective instrument of mission in the world.”

In G-4.0203, in speaking of “The Unity of the Church,” we find:

Visible oneness, by which a diversity of persons, gifts, and understandings is brought together, is an important sign of the unity of God’s people. It is also a means by which that unity is achieved. Further, while divisions into different denominations do not destroy this unity, they do obscure it for both the Church and the world. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity and is willing to seek and to maintain communion and community with all other branches of the one, catholic Church.

In G-9.0402c we read: “All structures shall be open to the possibility of change and new forms of ecumenical cooperation.”

Our commitment to the unity of Christ’s Church is a core ecclesial responsibility of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and a primary function of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. The Office of the General Assembly is the instrument of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the “structure” within our historic polity that maintains communication and engages in cooperation with the Church ecumenical on behalf of the denomination, seeking to reduce the obscurity that a divided Church presents to the world. Our fundamental commitment to God’s gift of unity in Jesus Christ is an expression of the whole church, and is properly funded by a per capita apportionment as a sign of our covenantal relationships within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and with the Church Universal.

## Item 03-09

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-09. See pp. 34, 35.]

*On Eliminating the General Assembly Per Capita as Part of the Mission Funding System by 2010—From the Presbytery of Grace.*

The Presbytery of Grace overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to eliminate the General Assembly “per capita” as part of its mission funding system by 2010.

[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$13,117,521; (2010): \$12,855,168 (Mission)]

[Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]

### *Rationale*

The current mission funding system of the General Assembly continues to generate less and less giving from the churches.

The funding of the entirety of the church’s work is reflective of the church’s understanding of its mission and that no part of the church’s work should be separated from the church’s review of its mission (including such matters currently being funded by the General Assembly’s per capita as the holding of General Assembly meetings, ecumenical relationships, and the employment of certain administrative staff).

The elimination of the General Assembly per capita would simplify the work of mission funding and the interpretation of the church’s mission.

The “per capita” is inconsistently used throughout the entire church (that is, some presbyteries and synods use the per capita and others do not).

The payment of the General Assembly “per capita” for all church members is an expectation of the presbytery, regardless of the mission gifts received from that congregation; the Presbytery of Grace currently abides by this expectation.

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-09**

*Advice on Item 03-09—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 03-09.

*Rationale*

The stated purpose of the overture is to end the funding of all General Assembly responsibilities through per capita apportionments. As it lifts up one of the church's two established means of budgeting, the overture relates to a view of the Presbyterian Church's mission and mission funding as unified rather than as separable into the areas of administrative, ecclesiastical, and programmatic responsibilities and commitments that traditionally have been supported by annual per capita and mission budgets at the level of the General Assembly.

At the presbytery level, both of these approaches to funding are established practices in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), with some presbyteries depending on their sessions giving to a single or unified mission budget only and others utilizing both per capita and mission budgets. Both kinds of presbytery funding have supported the per capita budgets of synods, and of the General Assembly that for 250 years has apportioned through the presbyteries the costs of certain of its church-wide expenses on the basis of the annually reported active membership of the denomination.

The health of the church is not diminished constitutionally by variations among the presbyteries in their means of funding their per capita apportionment communicated from the General Assembly. The Form of Government provides for flexibility in this, allowing but not requiring presbyteries to "direct per capita apportionments to the sessions of the churches within their bounds" (G-9.0404d). Presbyteries may continue or may begin to depend on unified mission or benevolence budgets to fulfill particular mission pledges as well as to meet the shared obligation to support the administrative and ecclesiastical responsibilities of the whole church through its General Assembly.

Historically, however, the church as a whole also has understood per capita apportionments as the most equitable way to meet certain costs of continuing its overall mission in response to Christ's call, i.e., the expenses to be met by the highest or most inclusive governing body of the church; as early as 1734 the Synod of Philadelphia interpreted an approved per capita funding to its ministers and congregations. Since then and while giving strenuous attention to specific questions about presbyteries' and sessions' obligation and abilities to remit their shares of the General Assembly's per capita budget, the church has continued to understand the constitutionality and theological appropriateness of using the per capita apportionment system for particular aspects of its unified ecclesiastical life, such as expenses for General Assembly meetings and staffing and for the whole church's participation in ecumenical relationships with other communions.

The 207th General Assembly (1995) approved the following definition of per capita:

Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians. (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, 70, 301)

The church understands this per capita apportionment funding to be a special means by which its individual members are able to help create on an equal basis the resources for meeting specific costs of being the church, by a means resonant with the per capita apportionment collected by Moses from "the children of Israel" for the maintaining of the tabernacle (Ex. 30:11–16).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that these constitutional statements indicate that the essential unity of the church is clearly and properly represented by the General Assembly on behalf of the whole church: "The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to manifest more visibly the unity of the church of Jesus Christ and will be open to opportunities for conversation, cooperation, and action with other ecclesiastical bodies and secular groups" (G-15.0101). Further, "[t]he General Assembly is the highest governing body of this church and is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" (G-13.0101).

The orderly sharing of specific expenses of the General Assembly through its per capita budget expresses the unity of the church in a way that has traditionally characterized American Presbyterianism, and it illustrates how the gift of Christian community relates to all of its individual members. Understood in this way, per capita funding is "a high moral obligation, the fulfillment of which visibly demonstrates the covenantal ties that bind us as the one church of Jesus Christ" (GAPJC 217-2, *Johnston, et al. v. Presbytery of Heartland, Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 462).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that if it agrees with the intent of Item 03–09 it should recognize that approval would place in jeopardy the constitutionally mandated functions of the General Assembly now funded by per capita apportionment. Examples of such functions that would be at risk range from holding biennial meetings of the General Assembly as the highest and most inclusive governing body of the church (G-13.0102b) and paying the expenses of the presbyteries' elected commissioners to these meetings (G-4.0308), to establishing and maintaining the Office of the General Assembly itself (G-13.0103g), to serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline through its permanent judicial commission (G-13.0103o). Furthermore, approval of the overture would require that all of the constitutionally mandated General Assembly functions be supported from the mission budget, which would potentially create conflict and dissension for the whole church in its efforts to meet a greatly expanded General Assembly mission budget without diminishing its programmatic mission commitments.

The *Organization for Mission* would also need to be amended by deleting IV.B.2.g. on including in a General Assembly per capita budget the expenses of the General Assembly Stated Clerk as the church's permanent ecumenical representative, and Section IV.C.7.e. lodging in a General Assembly per capita budget the expenses of the General Assembly Staff Team and the Committee on Ecumenical Relations. These functions would then also need to be funded from the General Assembly's mission budget.

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### COGA AND GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 03-09

*Comment on Item 03-09—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council urge disapproval of Item 03-09 because it seeks to eliminate the historic method for funding the essential and mandated functions of the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council as an expression of our covenant community, and it does so without offering a way of underwriting these functions. "Per capita apportionments" are the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s way of making incarnate our foundational theological conviction, found in G-1.0400, a section regarding "The radical principles of Presbyterian Church government and discipline:"

That the several different congregations of believers taken collectively constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies, till they be finally decided by the collective wisdom and united voice of the whole church. ...

This radical connectional principle at the heart of our Presbyterian ecclesiology requires implementation through a participatory system of support in addition to a participatory system of government, and the per capita apportionment has been our historic way of ensuring this covenantal commitment's expression as a form of stewardship of God's gifts to all members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

In addition to theological and constitutional concerns with this overture, its passage would create serious financial problems for the General Assembly. At a time when there is extreme pressure on all funding systems in the church, to eliminate the General Assembly per capita budget would put in great jeopardy such core functions in the PC(USA) as the biennial General Assemblies, our core support of ecumenical bodies, our constitutional and judicial functions, the preservation of our historical records, and the training and support of our governing body system and significant added stress on the mission budget of the GAC because that budget would need to cover these functions.

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## Item 03-10

**[The assembly disapproved Item 03-10. See pp. 34, 35.]**

*On Transferring Funding of Items from the Per Capita Budget to the General Mission Budget—From the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca.*

The Presbytery of Sierra Blanca overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to transfer the funding of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s involvement in ecumenical and agency relationships from the budget of the Office of the General Assembly/Per Capita to the general mission budget of General Assembly.

[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$1,560,735; (2010): \$1,571,971 (Mission)]

[Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]



***Rationale***

The original purpose of many of the ecumenical agencies to which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) belongs was to promote unity in Christian doctrine and mutual recognition of ministries. Increasingly, these same ecumenical agencies have changed their primary focus away from building Christian unity towards advocating for social policies that may or may not be consistent with the social witness policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or her members. Because these agencies have shifted their focus from ecumenism towards political action and “justice advocacy,” it is appropriate that they be funded under the mission budget, where the church normally funds advocacy activities, rather than the per capita budget, which is intended to pay for the administrative costs of the General Assembly.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-10**

*Advice on Item 03-10—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 03-10 from the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca with its advice concerning Item 03-08 from the Presbytery of Indian Nations.

*Comment:* Item 03-10 seeks to transfer ecumenical and agency expenses from the Office of the General Assembly per capita budget to the General Assembly mission budget, and in the rationale refers to concerns about items being included in the per capita budgets of the General Assembly being reviewed for current appropriateness. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s response to this concern is included in its advice on Item 03-08 from the Presbytery of Indian Nations.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 03-10 urges transferring the funding of items from the Per Capita Budget to the General Assembly Mission Budget.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 03-10 be disapproved.

***Rationale***

(Note: Rationale is the same as on Item 03-08). The ACWC concurs with the comments from the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), and the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC). Per capita apportionment has theological significance, and has been part of the polity of the Presbyterian church since 1730. Advocating for justice is the responsibility of the whole church, not just those who participate in mission giving. Participation within the ecumenical community is a crucial connection for the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and for the PC(USA) as we work together for justice and peace throughout the world.

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**GACER COMMENT ON ITEM 03-10**

*Comment on Item 03-10—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER).*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 03-10.

***Rationale***

In both parts of our Constitution, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) understands itself to be part of the one holy, apostolic, catholic church.<sup>1</sup> We do not understand ourselves to be the church of Christ by ourselves, but we are called into relationship with other Christians. We are called to seek the full, visible unity of the Body of Christ as prayed for in John 17 and taught in Ephesians 4.

The General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Articles of Agreement at Reunion, the Ecumenical Vision Statement<sup>2</sup>, and regular review of the ecumenical agencies have affirmed and reaffirmed our participation and membership in ecumenical agencies. The General Assembly has voted to be members of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the World Council of Churches (WCC), and Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC). Through the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations, the General

Assembly regularly reviews the ministry of these ecumenical councils and the participation of the PC(USA) in their governance and programs.

Per capita funding of the WCC and NCC covers our core support and delegate participation in the governance life of the councils. This is in partial fulfillment of our responsibilities as members of the council. In many ways, this is comparable to the responsibilities that individuals, churches, and presbyteries have to offer core support to the wider church. Recognizing the support that the PC(USA) gives to the NCC, the 216th General Assembly (2004) noted

... the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) cannot be characterized simply as a donor to the National Council of Churches of Christ. It is a member of the council. Our core contribution to the NCCC demonstrates the seriousness with which we take our membership and is an expression of our quest for Christian unity. As one of the wealthiest denominations in the council, and indeed, the country, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can be proud of its leadership in supporting the NCCC.<sup>3</sup>

It is through this process that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) contributes the wisdom of PC(USA) policy and witness to the ecumenical agenda and informed and shaped by the wisdom, faith, and concerns of the wider ecumenical family. This ensures that there is greater congruence between the policies of the ecumenical agencies and those of the General Assembly of the PC(USA).

Cognate or designated funding for the work of the WCC and the NCCC does come from the General Assembly Council budget and is directly related to how we choose to work through the ecumenical agencies to accomplish our mission goals. The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations understands that there is a difference between our membership responsibilities as represented in our core support through per capita and our programmatic options represented in the mission budget.

#### Endnotes

1. *The Book of Confessions*—1.3; 3.16; 5.125; 9.34. *The Book of Order*—G-4.0203; G-15.0101–.0102.
2. Approved by the 212th General Assembly (2000) (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, pp. 107ff).
3. *Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 435, Review of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

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## Item 03-11

**[The assembly disapproved Item 03-11. See pp. 34, 35.]**

*On Amending G-9.0404d to Delineate the Use of Per Capita Funds—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-9.0404d be amended as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown in italics.]

“d. Each governing body above session shall prepare a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular churches within its bounds. *Care shall be taken to ordinarily limit this budget to those ecclesial expenses related to the government, historical and archival activities, and polity of the governing body. Benevolences, ministries, ecumenical dues, or other elective spending for the work and mission of the governing body shall not be funded by the per capita budget.* The presbyteries ... [the rest of the paragraph remains unchanged]”

[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$1,096,133; (2010): \$1,096,133 (Mission)]

[Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]

#### *Rationale*

According to the *Book of Order*, per capita may be used to pay the expenses of the elders and pastors to attend governing bodies (G-9.0308). It also is meant to cover “operating expenses” for the governing body, “including administrative personnel,” which undoubtedly means some clerical and bookkeeping assistance (G-9.0404d). Those are the only specified per capita expenses.

Yet from this modest beginning, intended to provide equitably for the governance of the church and to spread the expenses fairly among the churches, per capita has grown to include the costs of a vast number of enterprises, many of which

cannot easily be distinguished from ministries or benevolences of the governing body. At every level, large staffs carrying on a number of ministries may be funded by per capita. For example, more than \$1 million annually is given to ecumenical relations through the National and World Council of Churches.

One is hard pressed in many instances to discern a sufficient criterion for why some activities are funded by the per capita budget, while others are covered by the judicatory's mission budget. And, as mission budget dollars have become scarcer, the temptation is to move expenses into the per capita budget, which can be raised by what amounts to compulsion, if need be.

Since congregations are all but required to contribute their share of per capita budget, the plethora of items currently included in the per capita budget—some of which are highly controversial—causes much of the greatest resistance to giving by congregations. While a congregation might be completely willing to supply the basic governmental functions our Constitution requires, they would not be willing to be forced to fund causes and activities not in keeping with their conscience. Thus, some churches have rebelled by declining to pay per capita at all. If what is included in per capita expense were confined to the purely ecclesial, governmental expenses as was originally intended, the per capita-withholding problem would diminish greatly.

The ministry and mission of the judicatories are important, but such activity needs to be funded through the general giving of congregations and individuals who desire to support those particular activities. Work beyond the essential governmental and historical functions of the church should not be funded through assessments, which border on the involuntary.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-11

*Advice on Item 03-11—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 03-11 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara and refers the assembly to its response to Item 03-08 from the Presbytery of Indian Nations, which does not request amendment of the *Book of Order* but presents issues similar to those in Item 03-11 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.

#### *Rationale*

Item 03-11 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara seeks to amend G-9.0404d so as “to ordinarily limit [all per capita budgets] to those ecclesial expenses related to the government, historical and archival activities, and polity of the governing body.” The response to Item 03-08 from the Presbytery of Indian Nations considers the matter of which items are included in per capita budgets of the church.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 03-11 urges transferring the funding of PC(USA)'s involvement in ecumenical and agency relationships from the Per Capita Budget.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 03-11 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

(Note: Rationale is the same as on Item 03-08.) The ACWC concurs with the comments from the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), and the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC). Per capita apportionment has theological significance, and has been part of the polity of the Presbyterian church since 1730. Advocating for justice is the responsibility of the whole church, not just those who participate in mission giving. Participation within the ecumenical community is a crucial connection for the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and for the PC(USA) as we work together for justice and peace throughout the world.

**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-11**

*Comment on Item 03-11—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly advises disapproval of Item 03-11 because it seeks to eliminate the historic method for funding the functions of the presbyteries, the synods, and the Office of the General Assembly, as an expression of our covenant community, and it does so without offering a way of underwriting these functions. “Per capita apportionments” are the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s way of making incarnate our foundational theological conviction; found in G-1.0400, a section regarding “The radical principles of Presbyterian Church government and discipline:”

That the several different congregations of believers taken collectively constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies, till they be finally decided by the collective wisdom and united voice of the whole church. ...

This radical connectional principle at the heart of our Presbyterian ecclesiology requires implementation through a participatory system of support in addition to a participatory system of government, and the per capita apportionment has been our historic way of ensuring this covenantal commitment’s expression as a form of stewardship of God’s gifts to all members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

There were 44 million dollars received in per capita in 2007. Seventy percent of that amount was for support of presbyteries and synods. It is true that some presbyteries do not employ a per capita revenue stream to support their work. Nevertheless, eliminating this historic method of support, used by the great majority of presbyteries and synods, seems unwise in this critical time in the lives of middle governing bodies.

## **Item 03-12**

[The assembly approved Item 03-12. See pp. 22, 35.]

*On Honoring the Life and Work of the Reverend Doctor Clifton Kirkpatrick—From the Presbytery of the Western Reserve.*

**The Presbytery of the Western Reserve respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to honor the life and work of the Reverend Doctor Clifton Kirkpatrick by naming him Stated Clerk of the General Assembly emeritus upon his retirement from active service as clerk.**

### *Rationale*

The Reverend Doctor Clifton Kirkpatrick has fulfilled his ordination vows, serving with energy in the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

As a leader, Kirkpatrick has understood what it means to follow Christ, and serve His Body, with idealism tempered by the reality of the flawed world of our time where mercy and grace are essential that justice may thrive.

In Kirkpatrick’s early days as a pastor, his imagination may not have permitted him to envision himself as serving as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, yet he has grown into the office with an irenic spirit as he has lead the church nationally, as well as locally, working with the boards and agencies of the General Assembly.

Rev. Kirkpatrick has not faltered in his grasp of the vision of the larger church, of the unity in Christ to which we are called, even as he has understood and acted wisely in being the servant leader of the church and its people, who are sometimes limited in their vision and contentious in their behavior.

Rev. Kirkpatrick has acted with love, making glad those privileged to spend time with him.

With a gentle and glad spirit, Kirkpatrick’s message embodies the love of the God he serves, the Christ whose life is exemplary, and the Spirit that enlivens the Church today as it did centuries ago.

Now, therefore, as a church, we will miss him, but we commission him gladly to serve Body of Christ in the world, knowing that he will go where God leads him, and that he will continue to serve with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. Our brother, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Concurrence to Item 03-12 from the Presbytery of Homestead.**

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**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-12**

*Comment on Item 03-12—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly enthusiastically concurs with Item 03-12: *On Honoring the Life and Work of the Reverend Clifton Kirkpatrick—From the Presbytery of Western Reserve*, by naming him Stated Clerk of the General Assembly emeritus upon his retirement from active service as clerk.

For the past thirty-five years, the Reverend Dr. Clifton Kirkpatrick has given exemplary service as leader of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in various capacities. Kirkpatrick is a faithful Christian leader with a gentle and servant spirit who has promoted the peace, unity, and purity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by word and deed. He is an energetic and respected leader who has given much of his time and energy to the cause of mission and justice in our denomination and also around the world. Kirkpatrick is a follower and a teacher of the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He is a minister of Word and Sacrament in good standing who has served our church with endless “energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.”

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-12**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 03-12 calls for the General Assembly to honor the Reverend Doctor Clifton Kirkpatrick as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly emeritus.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 03-12 be approved.

*Rationale*

As a leader of the church, Rev. Kirkpatrick has been a faithful disciple in giving witness to the demand of justice as an expression of God’s love for all of God’s people and all of God’s Creation. While we will miss his gentle spirit in the work of ACREC, we look forward to his continuing ministry and leadership in the church, knowing that he will always seek to serve “the least among us.”

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**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 03-12**

*Comment on Item 03-12—From the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

The General Assembly Council enthusiastically urges approval of Item 03-12, to honor the life and work of the Reverend Doctor Clifton Kirkpatrick.

Cliff’s service as Stated Clerk has been a gift to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). He has demonstrated distinctive leadership during a time of considerable transition, a time when the cultural disestablishment of the mainline church has become clearly manifest. Through his ministry as Stated Clerk, Cliff has sought to uphold the unity and integrity of the church.

Cliff’s greatest gift to the church has been his ability to clearly articulate the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to hold up before us a vision of faithfulness to our Lord. Cliff has not merely been content to demonstrate the finer points of parliamentary procedure, but has pushed the PC(USA) to engage in a world in need of concrete demonstrations of the love of God.

Cliff’s deep and abiding ecumenical commitment demonstrates his love for the Church of Jesus Christ and its ministry. His continuing service as the president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches is an embodiment of the themes of his leadership: commitment to the Gospel; commitment to international partnership in mission; and commitment to seeking the unity of Christ’s body.

The General Assembly Council will miss his wise leadership and spirit of collegiality and encouragement. We look forward to working with him in his ministry with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and bid him Godspeed in his new life.

## \*Item 03-13

[The assembly approved Item 03-13. See pp. 34, 35.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Amend the PC(USA) Open Meeting Policy as follows:

a. Amend “2.” as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“2. It is the policy of the General Assembly; the General Assembly Council, its Ministries Divisions and Mission Support Services, and of the entities and work groups related to them, that their meetings shall be open to all interested persons. *Documents being considered at such meetings shall be available to interested persons at the meeting.*”

b. Amend “3.a.” as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“a. Subjects dealt with must be limited to property negotiation, personnel, civil and criminal litigation, *including cases under the Rules of Discipline, or security.*”

2. Direct the entities subject to the PC(USA) Open Meeting Policy to post the dates, times, and locations of their open meetings on the PC(USA) calendar Web page within a reasonable time of making such plans.

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2006 Referral: Item 03-23. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Amending the “Open Meeting Policy” to Include the Whole Church in the Church’s Work (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 198–200).*

In response to the referral of Item 03-23 (commissioners’ resolution on amending the Open Meeting Policy) to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) from the 217th General Assembly (2006), COGA reviewed Referral 03-23, the current PC(USA) Open Meeting Policy (OMP), and relevant interpretations of the policy by the Stated Clerk as provided in Section 7 of the policy. We believe this policy has been and will continue to be helpful to the church.

As a result of our review, COGA recommends three actions:

1. An addition to Section 2 of the Open Meeting Policy which clarifies that where documents are being considered during an open meeting, e.g. draft proposals for discussion, amendment, and possible adoption, such documents will be available to interested persons at the meeting. Document availability was the primary proposal of Item 03-23. Although this is not specifically provided for in the current policy, in many open meetings under the GA OMP this is already being done. The documents may of course include an appropriate heading, e.g. Draft; Not Yet Acted on by the Committee; Proposal Only; Not for Distribution; Not Approved, as the case may be, to distinguish it from the finally adopted action, if any, at the open meeting. It is expected that interested persons at the meeting who receive the documents will honor such limitations.

2. A clarification of the litigation subject matter that can be the basis for a closed meeting. As has been interpreted by the Stated Clerk, this term includes cases under the Rules of Discipline. Similar to civil or criminal litigation, to require a party to a case under the Rules of Discipline to discuss that case in an open meeting would certainly impede that party’s ability to effectively respond in the case.

3. A directive to the entities covered by the OMP to post relevant information about their open meetings on the existing PC(USA) calendar Web page ([pcusa.org/calendar](http://pcusa.org/calendar)). This requirement does not relate to the meeting itself and is procedural in nature, so it is recommended as a directive rather than an amendment to the policy. Referral 03-23 proposed posting on the entity Web page and some entities may wish to do so but not all entities have a Web page and the PC(USA) calendar Web page is already available and it is relatively easy to add a new meeting notice.

Further language proposed in Referral 03-23 for Section 7 of the OMP is unnecessary since the Stated Clerk already issues opinions based on the exceptions listed in Section 3.a. of the OMP. The new language would add no new process or criteria.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 03-13 from COGA recommends amending the General Assembly Open Meeting Policy.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 03-13 be approved by adding a Recommendation 1.c. to amend Item “1” of the Open Meeting Policy (Approved by the 209th General Assembly (1997)) as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with underline.]

“1. The work of the church is strengthened when it is done in a spirit of openness and trust. Church members have a basic right to know about the work done and the decisions made by entities within the church. Church leaders have a basic responsibility to honor that right by conducting their business with a spirit of openness and vulnerability to public scrutiny. Therefore, open meetings shall be the norm for all such entities. [Equally, observers and other guests, particularly members of the PC(USA), have a basic responsibility to show respect for elected members and staff of church bodies and, though not under General Assembly authority, to demonstrate a spirit of openness and vulnerability to public scrutiny in their behavior and publications.]”

*Rationale*

This change would affirm mutual accountability and says: “It is expected that observers will observe the same practices of mutual respect, disclosure, and vulnerability that hold for entities of the PC(USA) and their individual members.”

As point one of the Open Meeting Policy is currently phrased, it splits the responsibilities of those serving the church from the rights of those observing, allowing the shared principles and values of our faith to be discounted and an adversarial approach adopted. Attitudes cannot be legislated, of course, and interests will differ, but a positive statement may raise expectations of “observership” and related journalism, at least within the church.

Presbyterian tradition supports openness and accountability in the use of power throughout the church. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy strongly supports the principles of open meetings and mutual accountability. This amendment is intended to clarify responsibilities and improve the quality of the church’s decision-making.

**Item 03-14**

[The assembly approved Item 03-14. See pp. 34, 35.]

**The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) elect the Reverend Jill Hudson and the Reverend Marcia Myers to a first, four-year term as Associate Stated Clerks of the General Assembly.**

*Rationale*

The Standing Rules of the General Assembly at H.2.d. states the following:

The General Assembly may elect one or more Associate Stated Clerks as the General Assembly shall determine. The Stated Clerk shall nominate persons to fill each such office after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly [see Section IV.B.2.j. of the *Organization for Mission*]. The term of office shall be four years, subject to reelection at the pleasure of the General Assembly.

These two persons give exemplary service as leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), are in good standing as ministers of Word and Sacrament, and are faithful Christian leaders who serve the church with “energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.” The Stated Clerk and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly enthusiastically nominate these two persons for election as Associate Stated Clerks of the General Assembly.

**\*Item 03-15**

[The assembly approved Item 03-15. See pp. 34, 35.]

*Interpretation of G-18.0301 and G-13.0112c, Deadlines for Overtures that Support/Oppose Other Overtures to Amend/Interpret the Book of Order—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 03-15 with the following response:**

1. Under G-18.0301a, all overtures supporting or opposing proposed changes to the *Book of Order* must be received by the 120-day deadline, so that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution may prepare its constitutionally required advice to the General Assembly.

2. Under G-13.0112c all overtures or requests supporting or opposing proposed authoritative interpretations of the *Book of Order* must be received by the 120-day deadline, so that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution may prepare its constitutionally required findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

### *Question*

How does the 120-day deadline apply to overtures that support or oppose proposed changes to or proposed authoritative interpretations of the *Book of Order*?

### *Rationale*

Pursuant to G-13.0112d, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the question presented:

For clarity, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has separated the request into separate findings with respect to the provisions governing amendment of the *Book of Order* and the provisions governing approval of an authoritative interpretation of a provision of the *Book of Order*.

1. With respect to part one of Item 03-14 regarding “overtures that support or oppose proposed changes to ... *Book of Order*,” the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the request presents a question in which interpretation of G-18.0301a is advisable. Section G-18.0301a provides: “All proposals requesting amendment of the *Book of Order* shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than the 120-day deadline prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.” It is worth noting that this provision uses the word “proposal” rather than “overture.” A request for amendment suggests a change to the *Book of Order*. Any overture that supports or opposes a proposed change in the *Book of Order* falls within this category. Further, such overtures require review by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, the underlying reason for the requirement that such business be submitted by a deadline earlier than other business. In other words, any item of business that could permissibly be answered by submission of an amendment to the *Book of Order* to the presbyteries must be submitted in accordance with the 120-day deadline. On the other hand, an overture in the nature of a motion to postpone or to refer an item proposing constitutional change would not have to meet the 120-day deadline.

2. With respect to part two of Item 03-15 regarding “overtures that support or oppose authoritative interpretations of the *Book of Order*,” the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the request presents a question in which the interpretation of G-13.0112c is advisable. That section provides: “All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* arising from governing bodies of the church or from individuals shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.” No logical reason exists for not including overtures that support or oppose proposed changes to authoritative interpretations within the category of “questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly.” The purpose for the requirement that such business be submitted by a deadline earlier than other business is to allow the Advisory Committee on the Constitution time to prepare findings and recommendations to the General Assembly on such matters. In other words, any item of business that could permissibly be answered by an authoritative interpretation of the Constitution must be submitted in accordance with the 120-day deadline.

## **Item 03-16**

### *Joint COGA/GAC Budget Proposals*

[The assembly approved Item 03-16, Recommendation 1. See pp. 34, 35.]

1. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve “Introduction to the Per Capita Budget” as a statement of the principles, values, and purposes for the General Assembly per capita budget.



INTRODUCTION TO THE PER CAPITA BUDGET  
General Assembly Council and  
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

## INTRODUCTION

Presbyterians have a deep concern for good stewardship, the decent and orderly administration of funds, and the best use of limited financial resources (which have declined in recent years). Given this reality, overtures and other initiatives are developed every few years to look seriously at the per capita funding system, the appropriate causes to be funded by this budget, and the most responsible and economic uses for per capita funds. The 218th General Assembly (2008) is one of those times.

The Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) welcome such a review. We took action two years ago to be certain that the 217th General Assembly (2006) had such an opportunity. In October 2007, these two bodies agreed to reactivate the Joint Per Capita Table to not only propose a 2009–2010 per capita budget to the General Assembly, but also to look more deeply into the role of the per capita budget in the life of the church and the functions that should appropriately be funded by per capita. The results of that review can be found in this paper and in the proposed budget (see attachment). In short, we reaffirm the importance of the per capita budget to the well being of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and to the ministries appropriately funded by it.

Per capita funding is how Presbyterians mutually share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit’s leading for the future; it is how Presbyterians are trained to become better elders and ministers; it is how Presbyterians participate in the life of the wider church by serving on General Assembly (GA) committees, commissions, and the General Assembly itself; it is how Presbyterians discern God’s call to service; it is how Presbyterians preserve our heritage; it is how Presbyterians participate in the life of the Church universal (catholic) as we commit ourselves to share the gospel, and work and live in fellowship with “all persons in every nation” (*Book of Order*, G-4.0101).

The Westminster Confession of Faith says, “. . . all believers, are therefore, under obligation to sustain the ordinances of the Christian religion where they are already established, and to contribute by their **prayers, gifts, and personal efforts to the extension of the Kingdom of God throughout the whole earth**” (6.058) [emphasis added]. Therefore, per capita is a fundamental way in which all of the nearly 11,000 congregations and governing bodies of the PC(USA) are connected, and the way that allows its members to participate in the work of the wider church.

## HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF PER CAPITA

Per capita has a long history in the Presbyterian church. The earliest records of a system like per capita predate the organization of the first General Assembly in 1787. Such a system was clearly codified when the assembly in 1857 adopted a “Plan for Mileage” that apportioned to every presbytery an expected payment based on their membership to reimburse General Assembly commissioners for the cost of their travel to the assembly. The reason for this was to make certain that all Presbyterians shared equally and fairly in the cost of their governance and that all duly elected commissioners would be enabled to participate in the assembly, regardless of how far they had to travel or how much it cost.

This system of covering the core ecclesiastical costs of the church has served us well for over 150 years, and we believe it will continue to serve us well into the 21st century. The *Book of Order* states that per capita exists to “give meaning to the interdependent nature of Presbyterian polity” (G-9.0404). It exists to allow the whole church to share equitably in those things that make us Presbyterian: our theological identity, our connectedness, our system of governing bodies that allow elders and ministers together to discern the mind of Christ, our ecumenical connections that make us part of the church universal, and our core structures that keep us together as a church. In short, per capita is the system that enables all Presbyterians equitably to provide the resources that mold us into being a Presbyterian covenant community. Hence, it might be well to think of per capita as the Presbyterian Covenant Community Fund.

The 207th General Assembly (1995) gave a very helpful definition of per capita when it stated:

*Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; and of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed Church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians. (Minutes, 1995, Part I, p. 301)*

The Presbytery of San Francisco has found an interesting analogy to per capita from the field of technology. They suggest that we might wish to think of per capita in relation to our overall stewardship and mission the way we think of the fees we pay to Internet service providers to be able to communicate through the Internet and email. Like with the Internet, we use those connections for a variety of missions, but we all must support the basic system that allows us to be connected to one another and to share in this electronic (or Presbyterian) world that has revolutionized how we relate to

one another. Per capita supports the basic underpinnings of being Presbyterian, connects us to one another, and enables us to make and carry out decisions as a community. All of us have a stake in that and should share in its support!

#### **OUR EXPERIENCE IN RECENT YEARS**

While every funding system in the church is under stress, the per capita system is working! Hard work has been done at the General Assembly level to keep the increase in the per capita rate below the rate of inflation, and the actual dollars proposed in the 2009 budget to be spent on the per capita budget will decline, even before inflation has been taken into account. At the same time, in spite of organized campaigns by interest groups in the church to “withhold per capita” and the reality that many congregations and governing bodies are facing financial stress, the level of per capita payments received has remained remarkably high. Over the last decade the percentage of unpaid per capita from middle governing bodies to the General Assembly has never exceeded four percent. Both COGA and GAC are exceptionally grateful for the faithful support of Presbyterians for these core ecclesiastical responsibilities.

The Mission Funding Task Force of the GAC had it right! They concluded that such a system that allows all Presbyterians to share equitably in building and sustaining Presbyterian covenant community and which, year in and year out, is receiving in excess of ninety-six percent of its requested allocation is a system that fundamentally is not broken and does not need to be fixed. We concur!

#### **APPROPRIATE FUNCTIONS FOR THE PER CAPITA BUDGET**

One other effort we have made in the OGA and GAC is to be certain that these funds are budgeted only for the purposes intended. Our concern is to be sure that per capita fulfills its purpose, but also is sensitive to the broader needs of the church. As assemblies have regularly made clear, per capita is to provide resources for those ecclesiastical and administrative purposes that make us a Presbyterian covenant community, so that Presbyterians may fund and carry out mission (which is funded through our mission budgets and designated funds) in a Presbyterian way.

The 207th General Assembly (1995) outlined those basic functions that are critical for holding us together as a Presbyterian covenant community and are funded appropriately from per capita at the General Assembly level. In accord with these provisions, COGA and GAC have reaffirmed the following as core ecclesiastical expenses to which per capita funds should be allocated:

- The General Assembly session, including commissioners’ expenses, where ministers and elders seek together to discern the mind of Christ;
- The Office of the General Assembly, which is responsible for administering the General Assembly; upholding our Constitution; maintaining our minutes, records and statistics; communicating the actions of the assembly to the church and the world; supporting our governing body system; promoting Christian vocation and the ordering of ministry; and publishing essential resources to uphold our faith and polity;
- The Presbyterian Historical Society, which collects, preserves, and shares the historic record of American Presbyterianism;
- General Assembly permanent and special committees and commissions (such as the General Assembly Nominating Committee, Advisory Committee on the Constitution, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, Permanent Judicial Commission, Form of Government Task Force, and so forth) that carry out the work of the assembly between meetings;
- Membership and core support in the ecumenical bodies in which the PC(USA) is a member (their “per capita” costs), which give expression to our basic ecclesiological conviction that we alone are not the church but only one part of the body of Christ, and thus expressing our Presbyterian identity through our ecumenical connections;
- The meetings of the GAC and the expenses for legal services and for the planning and evaluation of mission (but not the mission programs), which make it possible to coordinate our mission as Presbyterians and connect it with fidelity to the governing bodies and the whole church.

These functions enable us to maintain our Presbyterian identity and connections. They also provide a solid Reformed foundation for our church’s renewal as a missional church. These are the functions included in the proposed per capita budget for 2009 and 2010.

### **Consequences of abandoning the per capita budget**

From time to time, calls are made to abandon our system of per capita and mission budgets and simply move to a coordinated budget that would fund both ecclesiastical and mission functions. We believe that would be a serious mistake for the church. In addition to the theological and practical values of a per capita system that allows the whole church to equitably share in its core Presbyterian covenantal services and the positive record of support from the church, we believe such a move would have serious negative financial consequences not only to the General Assembly, but also to many presbyteries and synods.

With the exception of some presbyteries in the region of the former Presbyterian Church in the United States, most of our middle governing bodies and the General Assembly have established systems for promoting and receiving both mission and per capita giving. Even in a time of growing financial resources, the abandonment of one of these systems and the ethos of common responsibility for all Presbyterians to pay their “fair share” of our basic ecclesiastical expenses would likely result in the receipt of far less funding for our governing bodies than is produced by these two systems. To make this change in a time of financial stress could have disastrous financial consequences to our presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly.

However, the core reasons for maintaining a per capita funding system are that it is a proven way of giving financial expression to our core Presbyterian values, it works, it has wide (if not always enthusiastic) support among Presbyterians, and it is responsibly administered to make the gifts of the Reformed faith come alive in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

[The assembly approved Item 03-16, Recommendations 2.–6. See pp. 34, 35, 62.]

**2. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) instruct the General Assembly Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Joint Per Capita Table to review the allocation of expenses and programs to per capita and mission funds, and present a report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

**3. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) instruct the Stated Clerk and the General Assembly Council to share, in partnership with the middle governing bodies, educational materials with the whole church, so that all will have a better understanding of the history, values, and uses of the per capita budget.**

**4. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) incorporate into the *Minutes* the 2006 and 2007 Per Capita Apportionment Budget and Statement of Activities, and the Comparative Statement of Financial Position at December 31, 2007 (see attachment A).**

**5. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council approve and recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008):**

**a. approve the proposed 2009 expenditure budget totaling [~~\$12,308,884~~] [\$12,650,269] and a proposed 2010 expenditure budget totaling [~~\$15,310,620~~] [\$15,429,215];**

**b. approve that \$1,306,362 be designated from the 2009 per capita budget (about half the cost of the General Assembly meeting), and be reserved for use in the year of the General Assembly meeting (2010) (see attachment B);**

**c. approve the proposed revised 2008 expenditure budget totaling \$14,889,556 (which includes \$1,213,977 carried over from 2007).**

**6. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council approve and recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve an increase in the per capita apportionment rate from \$5.79 to [~~\$6.04~~] [\$6.15] per active member for 2009, and that the same rate be effective for 2010, without change.**

### ***Rationale***

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) continue to be grateful to the whole church for its faithfulness in meeting per capita obligations (over ninety-six percent collection rate for 2006). We believe these funds have enabled the General Assembly to carry out its core ecclesial functions so that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can carry out its ministry in faithfulness to Scripture and the PC(USA) Constitution.

Building the per capita budgets for 2009 and 2010 continues to be a challenge. The total revenue level is impacted by variables as diverse as stock market fluctuations, hurricanes and disasters, levels of membership loss, and the ability of presbyteries to fully meet their per capita obligations. Most of these factors impact negatively the overall per capita budget. On the expenditure side, challenges include added costs due to the 2008 change in the *Book of Order* to increase by 200 the number of commissioners to the General Assembly, as well as added costs to carry out an assembly on the West Coast.

Given these dynamics, both COGA and OGA faced the reality that major reductions would be necessary unless a very substantial increase in the per capita rate occurred, which we determined would create a real hardship in the church. We are, therefore, proposing an increase of 25 cents (4.3 percent) in the per capita rate in 2009 and no additional increase for 2010, after having made major personnel cost reductions in 2007 that will carry forward savings from expenditures through 2010.

In order to hold to a minimal increase in the per capita rate, hard choices had to be made relative to staffing levels, the consolidation of the Presbyterian Historical Society, ecumenical expenses, and changes in the funding of the Office of Vocation. The previously approved budget for 2008 was reduced by almost \$500,000 as a result of these staff reductions, reorganization, and other adjustments. We are, therefore, able to propose a per capita budget for 2009–2010 that is slightly less than the budget for 2007–2008, even with inflation and the added mandated costs for items like the increased number of commissioners beginning with the 218th General Assembly (2008). The details behind these calculations can be found on the attached sheets. To balance the budget, we have budgeted the planned use of reserves accumulated from prior years income in 2008, 2009, and 2010, in the amounts of \$281,966, \$282,725, and \$934,090 respectively. Such use of prior income from available funds, over the General Assembly mandated minimum reserve requirement of 30 percent of current budget, cushions the increase necessary to the per capita allocation. We believe that such restraint in the increase in the per capita rate and the expenditure level are necessary for the well being of the church and the fiscal integrity of the per capita budget. We would encourage a similar spirit of restraint by commissioners as other proposals are considered that might have financial implications at the 218th General Assembly (2008).

If we had continued the practice of annual General Assembly meetings, we would have required at least an additional \$2,500,000 for 2009 (estimate cost of the General Assembly session in 2010, schedule 1, is \$2,612,723). Directly, this cost would have necessitated an increase of at least \$1.15 per capita for 2009, or a depletion of all available reserves above the required minimum by a negative \$560,000 at the beginning of 2010.

**[The assembly approved Item 03-16, Recommendation 7. See pp. 34, 35.]**

**7. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the attached allocation of designated funds for COGA and GAC task forces totaling \$2,041,671 for 2008, \$2,294,900 for 2009, and \$2,147,700 for 2010 for revenue, and the following for expenses: \$2,126,671 for 2008, \$2,372,183 for 2009, and \$2,249,964 for 2010.**

#### *Rationale*

The allocation of designated funds are reserved for specified expenditures planned to augment the per capita budget, so that steep increases to the per capita apportionment rate may be cushioned. The primary items include the General Assembly session, vocation services, the production and distribution of OGA publications, part of the Presbyterian Historical Society operations, some conferences, and GAC task forces. The sources of these funds are mostly from independently generated revenue, including gifts and endowments. The beginning balances indicated are a result of the unused carryover from the previous year (see attachment C).

## Attachment A

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Per Capita  
COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
at December 31, 2007

Assets	2007	2006
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,879,673	\$ 1,519,510
Short term investments	1,550,917	1,488,877
Long term investments	7,383,919	7,183,110
Endowment investments	1,582,804	1,583,742
Investments PILP	323,212	311,043
Apportionment receivable--current year	1,413,157	2,164,980
Apportionment receivable--prior year		
Allowance for Uncollectible Apportionments	(350,000)	(262,149)
Other receivables	1,821,675	1,367,896
Prepaid-Other	24,080	29,399
Land and building-PHS	3,080,645	6,001,929
Accumulated depreciation	(1,105,747)	(3,178,510)
	17,604,335	18,209,827
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
<b><u>Liabilities:</u></b>		
Accounts payable	99,074	1,006,423
Receipts in Process		553,169
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>99,074</b>	<b>1,559,592</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		
Undesignated	7,147,281	6,738,770
Designated	5,713,760	4,804,321
Temporarily Restricted	1,711,688	1,849,691
Permanently Restricted	782,634	754,666
Plant Fund	2,149,898	2,502,787
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>17,505,261</b>	<b>16,650,235</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>17,604,335</b>	<b>18,209,827</b>

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Attachment B

	2005	2006	2007	2007 App	2008 Propo	2008 Propo	PROPOSED	PROPOSED
	Actual	Actual	Act (12/31/07)	Bud Rev'd	Rev'd	Rev'd (2/1/2008)	2009	2010
<b>SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>								
APPORTIONMENTS	13,395,772	13,147,311	13,394,621	13,298,796	12,806,646	13,126,613	13,117,521	12,855,168
INCOME FORMULA AND OTHER INCOME	285,216	442,372	383,296	267,000	267,000	267,000	215,000	215,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>13,680,988</b>	<b>13,589,683</b>	<b>13,777,917</b>	<b>13,565,796</b>	<b>13,073,646</b>	<b>13,393,613</b>	<b>13,332,521</b>	<b>13,070,168</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>								
<b>I. GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION</b>								
COMMISSIONER EXPENSES	810	902,192	-	-	1,265,609	1,265,609	-	1,371,661
FACILITY EXPENSES	65,861	860,720	20,526	70,034	995,845	979,845	25,920	1,118,062
WORSHIP	-	85,661	-	-	103,000	103,000	-	109,500
GA PROGRAM	-	9,707	23	-	24,500	-	-	13,500
GA MINUTES	-	-	-	-	39,000	39,000	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>66,671</b>	<b>1,858,280</b>	<b>20,549</b>	<b>70,034</b>	<b>2,427,954</b>	<b>2,387,454</b>	<b>25,920</b>	<b>2,612,723</b>
<b>II. PERMANENT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES</b>								
PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION	69,329	68,779	69,960	77,100	78,925	78,925	96,300	97,825
GA NOMINATING COMMITTEE	52,111	83,017	53,387	64,210	94,540	94,540	59,840	66,350
COMM ECUMENICAL RELATIONS	17,125	18,150	15,582	58,425	39,990	39,990	36,300	40,630
COMM PRESBYTN HISTORICAL SOCIETY	19,596	10,310	13,974	27,600	27,600	27,600	26,775	26,775
COMM ON REPRESENTATION	74,728	76,459	90,578	104,565	87,205	87,205	104,565	75,605
ADV COMM CONSTITUTION	12,015	28,516	11,009	11,205	39,059	39,059	11,205	30,494
ADV COMM ON LITIGATION	4,352	7,504	5,879	10,560	12,085	12,085	10,560	12,085
COMMITTEE ON OGA	41,062	71,934	36,711	56,970	81,370	81,370	56,970	82,370
STATED CLERK REV/NOMINATION	-	-	-	15,140	46,990	46,990	-	-
COMMITTEE ON REVIEW	53,828	35,970	54,820	54,820	35,970	35,970	54,820	35,970
PRESBYTERIES COOPERATIVE COMMITTEE	-	-	48,935	48,700	48,700	48,700	48,700	48,700
THEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY T/FORCE	69,766	41,651	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADVOCACY COMMITTEE ON RACIAL ETHNIC CONCERNS	43,773	51,242	57,785	50,000	61,000	54,900	54,900	54,900
ADVOCACY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S CONCERNS	50,000	54,596	42,513	50,000	61,000	54,900	54,900	54,900
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WITNESS POLICY	37,753	39,968	37,190	46,000	58,000	52,200	52,200	52,200
GA TASK FORCES	86,618	86,896	137,746	137,765	98,852	98,852	22,784	13,544
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>632,056</b>	<b>674,992</b>	<b>676,069</b>	<b>813,060</b>	<b>871,286</b>	<b>853,286</b>	<b>690,819</b>	<b>692,348</b>
<b>III. GRANTS TO ECUMENICAL GROUPS</b>								
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES	300,000	325,000	300,238	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES	449,414	458,402	458,402	458,402	458,402	458,402	458,402	458,402
CHURCH UNION CONVERSATIONS	30,600	30,600	30,600	30,600	30,600	30,600	30,000	30,000
WORLD ALLIANCE REF CHURCHES	307,724	298,508	232,731	232,731	232,731	232,731	232,731	232,731
ECUMENICAL ASSEMBLY ALLOCATION	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,162,738</b>	<b>1,187,510</b>	<b>1,096,971</b>	<b>1,096,733</b>	<b>1,096,733</b>	<b>1,096,733</b>	<b>1,096,133</b>	<b>1,096,133</b>
<b>IV. DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES</b>								
STATED CLERK	778,191	798,080	824,152	862,575	887,816	890,257	913,700	946,759
ECUMENICAL & AGENCY RELATIONS	781,192	805,537	810,689	858,147	880,867	774,169	785,502	804,641
CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES	884,663	989,284	725,454	704,943	729,660	666,231	730,745	736,747
ASSEMBLY SERVICES	478,755	438,270	425,391	447,336	462,450	465,999	480,904	501,918
COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY	734,807	767,375	772,814	840,577	823,897	652,672	638,271	661,947
COMMON EXPENSES	134,465	138,503	146,988	198,500	203,750	218,750	222,250	227,500
VOCATION	-	-	1,030,246	1,221,721	1,232,501	1,132,746	1,161,186	1,216,761
PRESBYTN HISTORICAL SOCIETY	2,355,746	2,087,658	1,957,031	2,023,092	1,775,097	1,755,097	1,907,495	1,957,629
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,147,819</b>	<b>6,024,707</b>	<b>6,692,765</b>	<b>7,156,891</b>	<b>6,996,038</b>	<b>6,555,921</b>	<b>6,840,053</b>	<b>7,053,902</b>
<b>I-IV TOTAL OGA</b>	<b>8,009,284</b>	<b>9,745,489</b>	<b>8,486,354</b>	<b>9,136,718</b>	<b>11,392,011</b>	<b>10,893,394</b>	<b>8,652,925</b>	<b>11,455,106</b>
<b>V. GOVERNING BODY RELATIONS (OGA/GAC SHARED)</b>	<b>193,203</b>	<b>228,474</b>	<b>232,942</b>	<b>206,548</b>	<b>232,260</b>	<b>232,260</b>	<b>213,440</b>	<b>240,564</b>
<b>VI. GENERAL ASSEMBLY COUNCIL</b>								
GAC MEETINGS	266,186	374,251	211,621	229,686	320,473	335,173	178,835	258,195
OTHER MEETINGS	129,028	104,500	137,188	183,128	134,334	134,334	122,859	122,859
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>395,214</b>	<b>478,751</b>	<b>348,809</b>	<b>412,814</b>	<b>454,807</b>	<b>469,507</b>	<b>301,694</b>	<b>381,054</b>

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

VII. GAC

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	938,234	1,099,673	1,026,412	970,969	1,032,878	1,162,755	1,206,071	1,245,429
OTHER GAC COORDINATION	1,865,327	2,056,905	899,155	907,534	910,718	742,640	773,114	803,281
TOTAL	2,803,561	3,156,578	1,925,567	1,878,503	1,943,596	1,905,395	1,979,185	2,048,710
VI-VII TOTAL GAC	3,198,775	3,635,329	2,274,376	2,291,317	2,398,403	2,374,902	2,280,879	2,429,764
VIII. SHARED SUPPORT SERVICES	565,778	593,989	633,000	678,000	689,000	689,000	711,640	735,186
IX. UNCOLLECTIBLE PER CAPITA *	270,143	426,366	528,753	350,000	350,000	700,000	450,000	450,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>12,237,183</b>	<b>14,629,647</b>	<b>12,155,425</b>	<b>12,662,583</b>	<b>15,061,674</b>	<b>14,889,556</b>	<b>12,308,884</b>	<b>15,310,620</b>
X. COMMITTED FOR SUBSEQUENT ASSEMBLIES	956,563	(956,563)	1,213,977	1,213,977	(1,213,977)	(1,213,977)	1,306,362	(1,306,362)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND COMMITMENTS	13,193,746	13,673,084	13,369,402	13,876,560	13,847,697	13,675,579	13,615,246	14,004,258
XI. NET TO OR (FROM ) RESERVE	487,242	(83,401)	408,515	(310,764)	(774,051)	(281,966)	(282,725)	(934,090)

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Attachment B-1

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Mission Support Services

STATEMENT OF PER CAPITA BUDGET

Actual and Projected Sources of Funding and Expenditures 2005-2010

USING THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS:

- Actual: 2005 & 2006; for 2007 Apportionment rev is actual while Income from other sources and expenditures is projected.
- Projected Rev and Exp for 2008, 2009, and 2010
- number of members for 2005-2010 is as follows: (please note that apportionment revenue is based on the membership reported two years prior to the current year; that is 2005 apportionment revenue is based on membership reported at end of 2003)

Actual: (2005):2,405,311 (2006): 2,362,136 (2007): 2,313,662 (2008): 2,267,118;

Projected: (2009): 2,171,775 (2010): 2,128,339

-actual membership levels are taken from Research Services web page)

- 2009 membership includes an additional 50,000 projected drop due to churches withdrawn

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Expenditures less than budgeted
- Decline in membership is less than expected

RISKS

- Actual membership declines more than projected
- Actual expenditures exceed budgeted expenses
- Impact of church and economic related issues
- General Assembly financial implications
- The level of available funds from reserves (after the 30% provision)

	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007	2008 Rev'd Bud	2009 Propo Bud	2010 Prop Bud
Unrestricted net assets, January 1	\$6,334,928	\$6,822,170	\$6,738,769	\$7,147,284	6,865,318	6,582,593
Less: Reserve (30% annual budget)	3,671,155	4,388,894	3,798,775	4,466,867	3,692,665	4,593,186
<b>Income from prior years available</b>	<b>2,663,773</b>	<b>2,433,276</b>	<b>2,939,994</b>	<b>2,680,417</b>	<b>3,172,653</b>	<b>1,989,407</b>
Sources of funding						
<u>Apportionments</u> -						
\$5.57 for 2005	3,395,772					
\$5.57 for 2006		13,147,311				
\$5.79 for 2007			13,394,621			
\$5.79 for 2008				13,126,613		
\$6.04 for 2009					13,117,521	
\$6.04 for 2010						12,855,168
<b>Income formula and other income</b>	<b>285,216</b>	<b>442,372</b>	<b>383,296</b>	<b>267,000</b>	<b>215,000</b>	<b>215,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,680,988</b>	<b>13,589,683</b>	<b>13,777,917</b>	<b>13,393,613</b>	<b>13,332,521</b>	<b>13,070,168</b>
Expenditures	12,237,183	14,629,647	12,155,425	14,889,556	12,308,884	15,310,620
Designated for Subsequent General Assembly	956,563	(956,563)	1,213,977	(1,213,977)	1,306,362	(1,306,362)
<b>Total expenditures and commitments</b>	<b>13,193,746</b>	<b>13,673,084</b>	<b>13,369,402</b>	<b>13,675,579</b>	<b>13,615,246</b>	<b>14,004,258</b>
Net to, or (from) reserves	487,242	(83,401)	408,515 *	(281,966)	(282,725)	(934,090)
<b>Unrestricted net assets, December 31</b>	<b>6,822,170</b>	<b>6,738,769</b>	<b>7,147,284</b>	<b>6,865,318</b>	<b>6,582,593</b>	<b>5,648,503</b>

\*Prior to the adjustments the amount was \$(774,051), savings of \$492,085.



03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Attachment C

PER CAPITA  
DESIGNATED BUDGET 2008-2010

	Beg Bal 1/1/08	Rev'd 08 Rev Bud	Rev'd 08 Exp Bud	Proj End Bal 12/31/08	Prop 09 Rev Bud	Prop 09 Exp Bud	Proj End Bal 12/31/09	Prop 10 Rev Bud	Prop 2010 Exp Bud	Proj End Bal 12/31/10
OGA Sales of Publications	164,761	804,300	804,300	164,761	827,000	827,000	164,761	832,000	832,000	164,761
Ecumenical Reserve	353,713	75,000	50,000	378,713	75,000	125,000	328,713	75,000	125,000	278,713
Replacement Reserve-DOH	64,892	60,000	60,000	64,892	75,000	60,000	79,892	75,000	60,000	94,892
Replacement Reserve-OGA	40,000	10,000		50,000	10,000		60,000	10,000		70,000
Historical Society	2,892,373	338,571	338,571	2,892,373	374,100	374,100	2,892,373	387,700	387,700	2,892,373
General Assembly Session- Registration	193,732	140,000	171,000	162,732			162,732	150,000	156,000	156,732
Stated Clerk Training	86,558	95,000	120,000	61,558	100,000	130,000	31,558	100,000	130,000	1,558
Cooperative Reading Group	152,090	220,000	220,000	152,090	220,000	220,000	152,090	220,000	220,000	152,090
Moderator's Travel	64,761	5,000	25,000	44,761	5,000	25,000	24,761	5,000	25,000	4,761
Moderator's Annual Gathering	12,673	5,000	5,000	12,673	5,000	5,000	12,673	5,000	5,000	12,673
Vocation	116,330	168,800	168,800	116,330	203,800	203,800	116,330	168,000	168,800	115,530
Executive Personnel Training	15			15			15			15
General Assembly Review Committee	1,783			1,783		1,783	-			-
Theological Diversity Commission	46			46			46			46
Fred Jenkins Memorial Library Fund	1,464		500	964		500	464		464	-
National Pastors Conference	(37,155)			(37,155)	160,000	140,000	(17,155)			(17,155)
Synod/GA Conversations	11,982		11,000	982			982			982
Ecumenical Consultation	16,983			16,983			16,983			16,983
Church Property and Legal	55,547	50,000	50,000	55,547	50,000	40,000	65,547	50,000	40,000	75,547
Disability Awareness	5,000		2,500	2,500			2,500			2,500
National Elders Conference	11,276			11,276	120,000	120,000	11,276			11,276
GAC/GA Task Forces	290,959	70,000	100,000	260,959	70,000	100,000	230,959	70,000	100,000	200,959
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,499,783</b>	<b>2,041,671</b>	<b>2,126,671</b>	<b>4,414,783</b>	<b>2,294,900</b>	<b>2,372,183</b>	<b>4,337,500</b>	<b>2,147,700</b>	<b>2,249,964</b>	<b>4,235,236</b>

## Attachment C

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
PER CAPITA  
COMPARATIVE SCHEDULE OF DESIGNATED FUNDS  
at December 31

	2007	2006
OGA Sales of Publications	\$ 164,761	\$ 297,693
Ecumenical Reserve	353,713	318,831
Replacement Reserve	104,892	88,072
General Assembly Registration	193,732	236,354
Stated Clerk Training	86,558	132,693
Cooperative Reading Group	152,090	132,430
Vocation	116,330	
Moderator's Travel	64,761	56,063
Moderator's Annual Gathering	12,673	13,911
Executive Personnel Training	15	2,469
Review of General Assembly Cmte	1,783	73,689
Theological Diversity Commission	46	46
Fred Jenkins Memorial Library Fund	1,464	1,544
National Pastors Conference	(37,155)	47,674
Synod/GA Conversations	11,982	20,000
Communion & Conversation		8,000
Ecumenical Consultation	16,983	
Church Property and Legal	55,547	113,930
Disability Awareness	5,000	
National Elders Conference	11,276	
Department of History	2,892,373	2,984,101
GAC/GA Task Forces	290,959	276,823
	<u>4,499,783</u>	<u>4,804,323</u>

**\*Item 03-17**

[The assembly approved Item 03-17. See pp. 34, 35.]

The Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) authorize the Office of the General Assembly to make the necessary changes to the Session Annual Statistics Report (SASR) form as may be needed to conform with the revised Form of Government, should it be approved by majority of the presbyteries, and that the OGA report such changes to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

*Rationale*

The Session Annual Statistics Report (SASR) collects data based on requirements outlined in the *Book of Order*. The membership section of the SASR deals with the rolls churches are required to maintain and the reporting of those rolls to their presbytery. The revised Form of Government would necessitate changes to the SASR. The revised form would be used to collect the 2009 information, which would be reported to the Office of the General Assembly in the spring of 2010.

**Item 03-18**

[The assembly approved Item 03-18. See pp. 34, 35.]

*On the Continuation of the Hanmi Presbytery—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.*

The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to continue Hanmi Presbytery without term limit.

*Rationale*

The 195th General Assembly (1983) approved the organization of the Hanmi Presbytery within the bounds of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii with a ten-year term (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, pp. 106, 821).

On January 28, 1984, the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii (hereafter synod) organized the Presbytery of Hanmi (hereafter presbytery) with fifteen Korean American churches and pastors from outside our denominations.

The presbytery, with the concurrence of the synod, submitted an overture to the 204th General Assembly (1992) to extend the term of the presbytery for an additional fifteen years.

The 204th General Assembly (1992) approved an amended overture that extended the life of the presbytery for another fifteen years with the term ending in January 2009, which instructed the presbytery and the synod to “prepare an intentional plan for the transfer of congregations, as they are ready, to the proper geographic presbytery . . . .”

While it is clear that the presbytery was created originally, and subsequently extended, with the intent that it be a transitional presbytery, the General Assembly has taken actions since that time that indicate a change in denominational approach e.g., the *Book of Order* has been amended at G-12.0102k to specifically provide for the creation of nongeographic presbyteries to meet the mission needs of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations, a provision that was not in the Constitution when the General Assembly authorized the creation of Hanmi Presbytery nor when it took action to approve the amended overture in 1992, which extended the term of the presbytery.

The presbytery has experienced some difficult years following the extended term including a dispute over matters of governance, particularly the nominations and elections of presbytery officers on December 3, 1998, which was one of the precipitating issues that led to the synod council appointing an Administrative Commission to Work with Hanmi Presbytery (hereafter commission) for the purpose (among others) of conducting a special administrative review of the affairs of the presbytery (G-9.0408-.0409) and determining who were the rightful officers, committee chairs, and committee members of the presbytery for 1999.

Subsequent to the holding of open hearings and the reviewing of presbytery records, the commission determined that there were deep underlying problems within the presbytery, and on June 12, 1999, a special Called Meeting of the Synod Assembly reaffirmed the earlier granted authority of the commission and approved the recommendation of the commission to be granted “original jurisdiction,” including acting for the presbytery in several major areas.

The commission, in its 2003 report to the synod assembly, stated that “An increasing number of Hanmi Presbytery members are working very hard to follow the *Book of Order*... that under the guidance of the Commission, the Committee on Ministry has made significant progress ... that Hanmi Presbytery has formed a Mission Statement Advisory Committee to do a Mission Study and prepare a Mission Statement.”

The synod assembly, in October 2004, granted the request of the commission to relinquish “original jurisdiction” effective December 2004 with several major aspects of the presbytery’s work remaining with the commission until the work related to those areas were completed.

During 2006, ministers and elders of the presbytery determined that “...transformation is needed in Hanmi Presbytery and it is worth the pursuit of developing a healthy Presbytery,” the presbytery created the Hanmi Presbytery Transformation Task Force at its meeting of June 1, 2006.

The Transformation Task Force and leadership of the presbytery continue to stress the importance of compliance with the *Book of Order* and the presbytery has initiated training for the committees of the presbytery and the sessions in Presbyterian Polity with some resourcing provided by the commission.

The presbytery continues to work with sessions to bring them into compliance with G-14.0221 and 14.0222, and as of May 2007, 13 of the 27 churches have sessions with women elders, 16 of the 27 churches now have sessions in two or three year classes, with the remaining sessions expected to come into compliance with G-14.0222 by the end of 2008, and the committee on ministry with the stated clerk continues to work with these churches.

The commission is encouraged by the evident efforts on the part of the leadership of Hanmi to work with the commission in a spirit of cooperation, which is a contrast with the struggle during much of the service of the commission.

As a Korean-language, nongeographic presbytery, it has numerous gifts to share with the synod and the whole church—cultural and spiritual gifts that can enrich the life of the whole church in this 21st century, and can serve as an effective model of what a viable nongeographic language presbytery should be.

The presbytery realizes that while there is still much work to do, they have expressed their commitment to “succeeding” with God’s help as stated in their recently adopted new Mission Statement: “The Mission of Hanmi Presbytery is to be a faithful partner in mission and ministry with the sessions, congregations, and minister members of the Presbytery; to empower, support, nurture and walk with them in their ministries. As a Presbytery, we hold ourselves accountable to Jesus Christ as Head of the Church, and to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); working cooperatively as mission partners with the Synod and the General Assembly. The Presbytery expresses commitment to God’s grace and love by seeking opportunities not only to continue serving Korean immigrants but also for promoting racial and ethnic harmony in a multicultural society. in glorifying the Lord our God with a modest and faithful lifestyle.”

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-18

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-18—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

Item 03-18 on the continuation of Hanmi Presbytery in the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii without term limit.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 03-07.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-18

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-18—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)*

Item 03-18 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) for continuation of the Hanmi Presbytery.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be disapproved and/or answered by the action taken on Item 03-07.

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**\*Item 03-19**

[The assembly approved Item 03-19. See pp. 34, 35.]

The General Assembly Nominating Committee recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) amend Standing Rule F.6.c.(2) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added is shown as italic.]

**“(2)When any nomination for service on a General Assembly committee, council, or board comes from the floor of the assembly, the commissioner making the nomination will provide the General Assembly Nominating Committee, ~~at least twenty-four hours in advance of the nomination being made from the floor~~ *no later than 48 hours after the convening of the General Assembly*, with pertinent information about the person whose name is being presented, as well as the name of the particular person nominated by the nominating committee whose nomination is being challenged. Such information shall be provided on the “Nomination by Commissioner Form” provided for use at the assembly and available from the Stated Clerk.”**

***Rationale***

The current timeline for submission of persons commissioners wish to nominate from the floor does not provide sufficient time for members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), the Assistant Stated Clerk staffing that committee, nor the Moderator of the previous General Assembly (who nominates the slate for the General Assembly Nominating Committee) to prepare adequate and factual responses. This is of particular concern when there are numerous challenges to the GANC slate. At the 217th General Assembly (2006), commissioners were presented with a total of ten challenges. Additionally, the number of GANC members attending General Assembly has been reduced from sixteen to no more than five. This lessening of the resources available at General Assembly impacts the preparation time needed for response.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee’s slate of nominees is published no later than the forty-five-day deadline. The procedure for floor nominees is explained in the preface of that document. The *Book of Order* provides that the Moderator of the General Assembly nominate members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee within thirty days prior to the General Assembly. Thus, commissioners should have sufficient time to review the slate of nominees.

**§Item 03-20**

[In response to Item 03-20, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 34, 35.]

*On Creating a Presbyterian Office for the Prevention and Healing of Minister of Word and Sacrament Misconduct and Abuse—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to authorize the following:

1. Establish an Office for the Prevention and Healing of Misconduct and Abuse by Ministers of Word and Sacrament as an on-going and permanent structure in the Office of the Stated Clerk and the General Assembly Council. This office will be church-wide, serving local congregations, governing bodies, world missions, and other church services. The mission of this office is to
  - a. educate, providing training and resources for the prevention of and response to sexual abuse and misconduct by ministers of Word and Sacrament;
  - b. provide training and resources for the healing of individuals, congregations, communities, and presbyteries impacted by minister of Word and Sacrament abuse;
  - c. encourage churchwide systems of accountability for ministers and church professionals;
  - d. offer a place of sanctuary and confidentiality, providing advocacy, information, and referrals for those in church-related abusive situations, both primary and secondary victims and congregations; and
  - e. develop theological resources on restorative justice, grace, forgiveness, and reconciliation, and address issues of faith related to the abuse of power by a minister of Word and Sacrament.

2. Hiring of the director, oversight, and direction of the office will be provided by an advisory board appointed by the General Assembly Council to include survivors, professionals, and those experienced in the prevention and healing of minister of Word and Sacrament abuse.

3. The office will be staffed by a minister of Word and Sacrament or an elder with experience in healing sexual abuse and with clinical training preferred.

*Alternate Resolution:*

**Joint Resolution Between the Office of the General Assembly; the General Assembly Council;  
the Overture Advocates of the Presbyteries of San Francisco, Geneva, and San Jose;  
and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns**

While the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) provide a combination of staff and resources to assist in prevention of sexual misconduct and to support middle governing bodies and local churches when a minister of the Word and Sacrament controlled or employed by them is accused of sexual misconduct, this approach may have been perceived to be reactive rather than responsive, and could be more proactive. The approach should be expanded and strengthened to ensure appropriate resources are easily accessible to middle governing bodies and local particular churches. At the same time, survivors must receive information to enable them to access pastoral care and access advocacy assistance regardless of whether the perpetrator is a minister of the Word and Sacrament, member, elder, deacon, commissioned lay pastor, volunteer, or nonordained staff doing ministry, including Christian educators and youth leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

To strengthen and improve resourcing for middle governing bodies and local particular churches, the OGA/GAC will:

1. Better coordinate and develop resources by forming a joint OGA/GAC staff advisory team that will meet regularly to review existing resources and recommend development of additional resources; review the hotline response to ensure it includes appropriate pastoral and advocacy elements; review and recommend Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) "best practices" to be included in a revised Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Sexual Misconduct Policy and Guidelines to be recommended as guidelines to middle governing bodies and local churches, which will be sent as a report to the 219th General Assembly (2010); and to review the training resources for needed updates and enhancements.

2. Train three to four people to answer the hotline in the absence of the Sexual Misconduct Ombudsperson.

3. Survey, through the Office of Middle Governing Body Relations, to determine what resources presbyteries need for the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual misconduct and, if needed, to develop and distribute at reasonable cost to middle governing bodies and local particular churches, a training on the topic of preventing and responding to sexual misconduct by ministers of the Word and Sacrament, member, elder, deacon, commissioned lay pastor, volunteer, or non-ordained staff doing ministry, including Christian educators and youth leaders. This training could be available on DVD and available for order on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Website at reasonable cost. The advisory staff team could investigate online training and train-the-trainer educational programs to be provided through third party vendors at a reasonable fee per participant.

4. Place resources currently available on the PC(USA) website in one easily accessible area of the website, and develop and distribute a brochure to promote the available resources on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) website to middle governing bodies and local churches and available opportunities for training.

5. Increase middle governing body and local particular church awareness of the availability of these resources through MGB Connect, OGA and GAC websites, by sending online communications.

[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$141,406; (2010): \$122,130 (Per Capita-OGA)]  
[Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$22,500; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)]

*Rationale*

Sexual abuse occurs more frequently than we would like to believe. Statistics indicate that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will have been sexually abused by the age of 18.<sup>1</sup> Ninety percent of offenders are known to the child and the typical offender is a male using his position of power to take advantage of a child's trust, need for affection, and innocence.<sup>2</sup>

Donaldina Cameron House is a faith-based community center founded by Presbyterian Women in 1874 as a rescue mission for Chinese women trafficked to this country for prostitution or domestic slavery. In 1947, as a National Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., a youth work component was added and an ordained pastor was called to be the director of a youth ministry. This pastor also eventually became co-pastor at the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown. A strong, charismatic leader, he established a hugely successful and popular youth ministry in Chinatown for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. During his tenure, forty young persons attended seminary and others became fraternal workers or active lay persons.

However, in 1987, ten years after he retired, stories surfaced of his sexual molestation with adolescent youth in the Cameron House program. The Presbytery of San Francisco formed an investigating committee; however, just as charges were to be filed, he renounced the jurisdiction of the church. Victims felt abandoned by the church, were sometimes accused of lying and worse, and were left to deal with their abuse alone. It would take another fifteen years before the sexual abuse would be brought fully to light by the Final Report of the Healing Task Force of the Cameron House Board of Directors. Finally, a safe environment was created to allow this “secret” to be discussed openly with victims, the Cameron House community, and the congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Chinatown. Victims of this abuse would finally be heard and find their voice. They found that they were not the only persons abused, but that there were many other victims.

Victims were provided support for healing. In turn, they became survivors who helped Cameron House and the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown in the healing process.

Unfortunately, what occurred at Cameron House is not an isolated incident of sexual abuse by ministers of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). All across the country, presbyteries are dealing with cases of sexual misconduct and abuse by ministers of Word and Sacrament. Internationally, the PC(USA) has dealt with the abuse of missionary children in a mission school in the Congo by a Presbyterian minister and is currently investigating allegations of similar problems with mission schools in Egypt and the Cameroon.

When the Healing Task Force of Cameron House began to implement the recommendations for healing contained in its final report, it was unable to find denominational resources for healing victims of sexual abuse by ministers of Word and Sacrament other than a hotline for reporting abuse in the international mission field. As a result, Cameron House had to develop its own healing program of community workshops, retreats, group therapy for victims, retreats for victims and spouses, and locate culturally competent therapists for individual therapy. After an appeal from Cameron House, the General Assembly Council provided monetary support of individual therapy for victims.

In the aftermath of recent media coverage of sexual abuse by Catholic priests and by Protestant ministers, presbyteries throughout the denomination have implemented sexual misconduct policies and procedures and now require ministers and lay leaders under their jurisdiction to attend sexual abuse training. Training, policies, and procedures are important and essential, but the denomination has now begun to address the far-reaching impact of sexual abuse on victims, families, and congregations. Sexual abuse not only traumatizes victims, it devastates spouses and families. The impact of sexual abuse extends even beyond victims and their families. It often creates distrust of the institutional church and loss of faith. The health of the congregation is also jeopardized. When there is sexual misconduct by the minister, it fractures the church community and sometimes leads to schism.

The idea for a denominational center was first raised in a Cameron House sponsored retreat for victims/survivors. Clearly, instances of sexual abuse and misconduct by Presbyterian ministers will continue to damage not only of victims and their extended relationships but congregations and presbyteries as well. If it is to restore the faith in God that is often destroyed by the abuse by ministers of Word and Sacrament, the institutional church needs to demonstrate a strong commitment to justice, advocacy, and healing for victims. The establishment of an Office for the Prevention and Healing of Misconduct and Abuse by Ministers of Word and Sacrament by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will demonstrate its unequivocal commitment to providing resources and support for restoring health and wholeness to those wounded by sexual abuse and to the boarder communities of relationships that are also impacted.

#### Endnotes

1. Finkelhor, David, et al. “Sexual Abuse in a National Survey of Adult Men and Women: Prevalence, Characteristics, and Risk Factors,” 1990.
2. Conte, Jon R. and Berliner, Lucy. “Sexual Abuse of Children: Implications for Practice,” *Social Casework*, Volume 62, Number 10, December 1981.

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**Concurrences to Item 03-20 from the Presbyteries of Geneva and San Jose.**

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**COGA AND GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 03-20**

*Comment on Item 03-20—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) suggests that the current structure and positions within the national staff provide the resources to address the concerns raised in this overture. As such, the COGA and the GAC urge disapproval of Item 03-20.

Sexual misconduct within the context of the church is sinful and contrary to Scripture, PC(USA) Constitution, and General Assembly policy. All congregations and governing bodies are urged to address the threat of sexual misconduct in a variety of ways. The General Assembly has urged that congregations and governing bodies create spaces for reflection of healthy sexuality, boundaries, ministries, and missions of members and officers of the church in order to prevent and respond to those instances of sexual misconduct within the context of the church.

This overture seeks to authorize and fund an office for the prevention and healing of misconduct and abuse by ministers of the Word and Sacrament as an ongoing and permanent structure in the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council. According to the overture, the financial implications include funding for a staff member, resources for healing and theological concepts of restorative justice, and an advocacy board appointed by the GAC.

The overture limits this position to prevention and healing of misconduct and abuse by ministers of the Word and Sacrament and does not address misconduct and abuse by others within the context of the church. Unfortunately, sexual misconduct within the context of the church can be varied depending upon the perpetrator's relationship with the church such as member, elder, deacon, minister of the Word and Sacrament, commissioned lay pastor, volunteer, and non-ordained staff doing ministry, including Christian educators and youth leaders.

Currently, the OGA and GAC have offices that provide the following resources for congregations and governing bodies responding to sexual misconduct within the context of the church.

*Office of the General Assembly:*

- Manager of Judicial Process and Social Witness

—Provides advice and resources to governing bodies regarding policies and procedures for prevention, reporting, and response to allegations of sexual misconduct.

—Provides advice and resources regarding the use of the Rules of Discipline to provide accountability for members, elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

*General Assembly Council:*

- Sexual Misconduct Ombudsman

—Provides advice and resources to overseas missionaries regarding prevention, reporting, and response of sexual misconduct.

—Staffs a hotline to advise persons regarding prevention, reporting, and response procedures.

- Compassion, Peace and Justice Associate for Child Advocacy

—Provides educational materials for the advocacy of children within the context of the church.

- Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries Associate for Women's Advocacy

—Provides staffing to a Committee of the General Assembly that is empowered to advocate for women's concerns within the context of the church

- Compassion, Peace and Justice Associate for Social Welfare Organizations (also the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association)

—Provides staffing to the Presbyterian Child Advocacy Network, which provides advocacy for children both within the church and the community and has as a focus child abuse in general. This network most recently provided a response on the Web to lift up April as the Child Abuse Prevention month. <http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/childabuseawareness.htm>



A Website addressing the issues of sexual misconduct within the context of the church is maintained in part by a staff team made up of each of the above offices and can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/sexualmisconduct>.

The rationale for the overture describes the experience of the Presbytery of San Francisco and the Healing Task Force of Cameron House as they were responding to allegations of sexual abuse of minors by a minister of the Word and Sacrament. Both of these entities worked hard at creating a space for healing and transparency after the horrendous acts of child sexual abuse. All governing bodies that have to create such spaces for healing recognize that there are a variety of responses that may be required in order to empower or encourage such healing. These responses include holding the perpetrator accountable, reporting to the secular authorities, providing a safe place for the survivors to tell their stories, providing a safe place for the church to engage in mission with the survivors and their families. The particular responses will depend upon the situation and by necessity have to be carried out by the churches, congregations, and governing bodies that are affected. It is not an easy process, nor is there a one process fits all approach. There is the commitment on behalf of all who are in community together within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to seek God's will in preventing, reporting, responding, and providing care when sexual misconduct occurs by members of our community or within our community.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-20

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-20—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 03-20 urges creating a Presbyterian Office for the Prevention and Healing of Minister of Word and Sacrament misconduct and abuse.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) concurs with the Office of General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) in advising the disapproval of this overture.

#### *Rationale*

In a time of limited resources, we believe there is an effective current structure and sufficient positions within the national staff to address these concerns. These structures are outlined in OGA-GAC response. We also recognize that while these resources are in place at the General Assembly level, any particular response will have to be carried out and tailored to fit the situation on the local level in the churches, congregations, and governing bodies that are affected. The ACWC will continue monitoring this process, holding General Assembly and GAC accountable and assessing policy effectiveness as part of its regular work.

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## **Item 03-21**

[The assembly approved Item 03-21 with amendment. See pp. 34, 35.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Sharing Costs of Legal Defense in Our Connectional System of Government.*

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

**1. Provide funds to the Office of General Assembly for the purpose of sharing the cost of legal fees defending our Constitution against the New Wineskins Non-geographic Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and a group which has joined that denomination.**

**2. From these funds, reimburse the Presbytery of Northern New England for half of all of its remaining legal costs up to a maximum of \$185,000.**

**3. That the Office of the General Assembly establish and promote an Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO) account that will be the source of this support and welcomes contributions from the whole church.**

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$2,000,000; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)]

#### *Rationale*

We are in the civil court defending freedom of religion, the right of the PC(USA) and any other denomination to organize and govern itself according to its beliefs. The precedent set in the decision in this case could have serious and far-reaching effects.

The *Book of Order*, G-1.0400, reads as follows:

4. The Historic Principles of Church Government

The radical principles of Presbyterian church government and discipline are:

That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies, till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church. For these principles and this procedure, the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive Church are considered as authority. [The text of this section was adopted in 1797 by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. In this quotation the word “radical” is used in its primary meaning of “fundamental and basic,” and the word “appeals” is used in a general sense rather than with reference to a case involved in judicial process.]

The PC(USA) holds that the Church is an organic unity of which its synods, presbyteries, and local congregations are integral parts.

On September 15, 2007, the Presbytery of Northern New England recognized a problem in the Londonderry Presbyterian Church of Londonderry New Hampshire, in that the session had called a congregational meeting and recommended that the congregation vote to disaffiliate with the PC(USA). In response to this action, the presbytery elected an administrative commission to work with the session and congregation for resolution.

On September 27, 2007, the session of the Londonderry PC(USA) filed suit against the presbytery, obtaining a court order prohibiting the administrative commission from taking any action, prohibiting the presbytery from exercising any oversight in the selection of their pastor, prohibiting the presbytery from exerting any control over the property of the congregation, and prohibiting any minister or elder or representative of the presbytery from entering onto the church property.

On September 30, 2007, the Londonderry Presbyterian Church voted in a congregational meeting to leave the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to join the New Wineskins Non-Geographic Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The session immediately brought a civil law suit against the Presbytery of Northern New England and obtained a civil injunction to prevent the presbytery from settling this matter within the framework of our Constitution, or even entering the property.

The continuing congregation (those who did not vote to leave) is now about 200 members strong and is meeting in another location with 80 to more than 125 attending worship each Sunday. The newly constituted session of the continuing PC(USA) congregation has brought a civil suit against the dissidents to reclaim its property that was illegally taken. These two lawsuits have been joined into one trial with the presbytery covering all legal costs. So far, we have incurred more than \$226,000 in legal costs. We estimate another \$150,000 by the end of this year. These legal costs are running much higher than the \$80,000 in the presbytery’s 2008 budget.

The Presbytery of Northern New England consists of 3,837 members in 31 churches and 3 ethnic fellowships. Most of the churches are small rural churches with an average membership of 124 and over half with less than 100 members. The presbytery’s budgeted income for 2008 is \$347,925. The additional legal costs for 2008 may increase presbytery expenditures by more than 50 percent over its budget. Many of the churches are already struggling to pay their per capita of \$35.25 and any significant increase is not possible.

For a small, mostly rural, presbytery these legal costs are extremely difficult to handle. The result of this civil lawsuit will set a precedent for our entire denomination and all of us will benefit or suffer from the consequences. Our connectional system of government compels us to work together in our mission. It is unfortunate that part of our mission is to deal with such distasteful affairs as defending our constitution and our freedom of religion in civil courts.

We have received small contributions from General Assembly and synod to help with our costs. Additionally, a law firm in New York has been made available to assist our attorneys. We are very grateful for this assistance, and we realize that neither General Assembly nor synod has the budgeted funds to provide any additional assistance.

We must be careful that we do not lose the civil lawsuit and set legal precedent endangering our Constitution, simply because we cannot afford to put up the best defense.

Thus, we ask that funds be provided to share costs in this matter. The \$185,000 represents approximately half of the estimated legal costs of \$376,000.

The Reverend Thomas Woodward, Presbytery of Northern New England  
Elder Ingrid Cyros, Presbytery of Northern New England

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**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-21**

*Comment on Item 03-21—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly does not concur in the relief requested by this resolution.

The strategy of inviting secular judges to interject with presbyteries doing constitutional and pastoral work with disaffected congregations is eloquently described in this commissioner resolution. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) expresses its appreciation to the Presbytery of Northern New England for its care of the loyal continuing congregation in Londonderry and its faithful defense of this important constitutional principal. The COGA notes that an additional thirty-nine presbyteries face, or have faced, similar challenges. The spiritual, emotional, and financial costs faced by our presbyteries in dealing with such painful situations is extraordinary. The whole church owes all those presbyteries, including Northern New England, gratitude for their faithfulness.

The Stated Clerk has also made his staff, as well as the PC(USA) general counsel, available to these presbyteries in advising them how to navigate between their church constitutional responsibilities and secular legal interventions into their lives. Virtually all of those presbyteries have taken advantage of this resource.

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted actions that permit the Stated Clerk to assist presbyteries with up to 50 percent of the direct legal costs, that is, the hours and costs of services and fees billed by attorneys or courts. Unfortunately, our present annual budget for this assistance is only \$50,000 intended to cover all ongoing cases. Recognizing that a single legal dispute might easily exceed that amount, the Stated Clerk has negotiated with faithful Presbyterian attorneys so that the church may become their firm's pro bono client. The Stated Clerk has made that resource available to presbyteries facing secular lawsuits. Most of those thirty-nine presbyteries, including Northern New England, have gratefully accepted such assistance. The Stated Clerk has provided the Presbytery of Northern New England \$20,000 in defending this civil lawsuit. The Stated Clerk has in hand requests for additional funds from this presbytery.

Finally, Section IV.B.2.b. of the *Organization for Mission* gives the Stated Clerk responsibility and authority to "participate in legal proceedings in civil and criminal courts." Recently the Stated Clerk, upon the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, has joined a number of amicus (friend of the court) briefs in support of the Episcopal Church in America and its current overwhelming conflict with local congregations seeking to leave its communion.

The approval of the resolution as presented would seriously burden our present resources and certainly increase per capita costs.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly:

1. urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to be in prayer for its presbyteries facing these difficult challenges;
2. commends the Stated Clerk to continue to provide legal and advisory services and support;
3. urges the presbyteries to continue their faithfulness; and
4. in response to this resolution, COGA urges the assembly to approve the Advisory Committee on the Constitution's recommendations (Item 07-13) regarding the Evangelical Presbyterian Church's New Wineskin's transitional presbytery to give presbytery an additional tool for use in such situations.

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## **Item 03-22**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 03-22. See pp. 34, 35.]**

*Commissioners Resolution. On Amending Standing Rule B.5.d. Granting Presbytery Executives and Clerks Advisory Vote.*

That the 218th General Assembly (2008) amend Standing Rule B.5.d. by striking the existing text and inserting new text as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~"d. The presbytery's executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery's stated clerk shall be supplied with all reports and materials related to the General Assembly, but shall not be entitled to speak in plenary meetings or in meetings of assembly committees unless called upon by a moderator to provide information. The executive staff (or designee) and stated~~

*clerks of presbyteries and synods shall be able to be a constituency to be polled in an advisory capacity by the Moderator prior to certain issues that come before the plenary. Presbytery staff and synod stated clerks will not serve as advisory delegates as a part of General Assembly committees nor have the privilege of the floor in committee or plenary unless elected as a commissioner by a presbytery.”*

### ***Rationale***

Many of us in presbytery leadership, whether we like it or not, have to be in the trenches interpreting the actions of the General Assembly. The actions of a General Assembly will be topics of conversation in session meetings and congregations, and we have to deal with the ramifications of some of those actions.

Financial implications: Unknown at this time but since executive presbyters/general presbyters and stated clerks already sit at table, the assembly would only need to add the voting machines.

The Reverend Dana Knapp, Presbytery of Scioto Valley  
The Reverend Walt Peters, Presbytery of Baltimore

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## **Item 03-23**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 03-23. See pp. 34, 35.]**

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Publishing in the Minutes the Full Audits of Each Assembly Entity Completed Since the Previous General Assembly Meeting.*

That the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) direct the Stated Clerk to publish with the *Minutes* of each General Assembly the full audits of each assembly entity that have been completed since the last meeting of the General Assembly.

### ***Rationale***

Sessions, presbyteries, and synods are expected to record in their minutes that appropriate financial reviews have been conducted and the results of those reviews. Approval of this resolution would provide a similar expectation of assembly entities, would provide for transparency in our records, and would create an important historical and public record for the church into the future.

Elder Connie Tubb, Presbytery of Grace  
The Reverend Kris Crawford, Presbytery of Arkansas

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## **Item 03-24**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 03-23. See pp. 34, 35.]**

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Amending the Standing Rules Related to Communication Strategies, the Media, and the Unity of the Church.*

That the 218th General Assembly (2008) amend the Standing Rules of the General Assembly as follows:

1. Amend Standing Rule A.4.d. by adding a new paragraph as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“d. Advice and counsel memoranda are resources prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns for the purpose of providing information about existing policy, current work on specific topics, recent developments, and other factors useful to commissioners as they consider issues before the assembly.

*“Additionally, an advice and counsel memorandum shall be prepared by the Communications Office of the General Assembly Council with a communication strategy, including possible media coverage, for the PC(USA) and/or the general public related to overtures and recommendations that are coming to the assembly. Additionally, the Theology and Worship Office may provide a statement regarding the potential impact on preserving and promoting the peace, unity, and purity of the church, when applicable, related to overtures and recommendations the assembly is considering.”*

2. Amend Standing Rule E.7. by adding new text as “d.” and re-lettering sections “d.”–“h” as “e.”–“i.” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

*“d. A communication strategy, including possible media coverage, for the PC(USA) and/or the general public shall be presented at the time that the recommendation is considered by the assembly. Additionally, a statement regarding the potential impact on preserving and promoting the peace, unity, and purity of the church, when applicable, will accompany recommendations the assembly is considering.”*

~~“d. e.~~ Recommendation for assembly action, or action taken by the committee, shall identify the entity that is directed to carry out and report back to the General Assembly regarding the matter dealt with by the recommendation or action.

~~“e. f.~~ When the entity to which an assembly action is directed is a part of the General Assembly Council, such as a division or related entity, the Stated Clerk shall automatically amend the language so that the action is directed to the General Assembly Council. The council shall determine which entity shall carry out the responsibility and report to the assembly on the matter.

~~“f. g.~~ The votes recorded in the assembly committee on each recommendation or action shall be included in the report for the information of the commissioners, but shall be omitted from the *Journal* of the General Assembly.

~~“g. h.~~ If the report of an assembly committee proposes or records an action affecting the interests of an entity of the General Assembly or of a governing body other than the General Assembly, it shall be the responsibility of that assembly committee to confer with the representative(s) designated by the entity or governing body concerned before proposing such action to the General Assembly or taking such an action.

~~“h. i.~~ Minority Report [Text in the rest of this section remains unchanged.]”

### ***Rationale***

The General Assembly, according to the Constitution, is responsible for preserving and promoting the unity of the church (*Book of Order*, G-13.0101; G-13.0103a, b).

The General Assembly, on behalf of the whole church, is responsible for communication (*Book of Order*, G-13.0103j).

In an internet instant communication age, being proactive and giving forethought on effectively communicating the actions of each assembly is essential in preserving the peace and unity of the church.

Past actions of the General Assembly have been framed and defined by those outside the church before anyone from the General Assembly had thought about a communication strategy.

Implicit in the responsibility of the General Assembly is a pastoral responsibility for the whole church.

The issues that each assembly must resolve and decide are often complex and controversial, and some have very localized implications. The above additions to the Standing Rules would help General Assembly committees and commissioners address issues related to the unity of the church, as well as address communication strategies as part of how we are [and do] church in the 21st century.

The Reverend Clinton Cotrell, Presbytery of Peace River  
Elder Lee Martin, Presbytery of Peace River

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-24**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-24—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The ACSWP advises that the assembly answer Item 03-24 with the alternate resolution:

“The 218th General Assembly (2008) requests the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to consider amending Standing Rule A.4.(d) of the General Assembly as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“d. Advice and counsel memoranda are resources prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns for the purpose of pro-

viding information about existing policy, current work on specific topics, recent developments, and other factors useful to commissioners as they consider issues before the assembly.

*“Additionally, the Communications Office of the General Assembly Council shall review all business submitted to the assembly by the 45-day deadline as part of its overall communications strategy, using their professional expertise to prepare proactive approaches to topics expected to garner media attention.”*

#### *Rationale*

The commissioners’ concern for proactive communications strategy is understandable, given media interest in matters of controversy, real or imagined. At the same time, most commissioners are able to judge which topics are likely to be controversial and the Communications Office already does prepare strategies for interpreting potential General Assembly actions, including issuing background press releases produced by Presbyterian News Service. Further, most social witness resolutions and policy statements contain basic communication strategies for publication, correspondence, and electronic posting of materials. At all points, however, care is taken not to anticipate action by the assembly itself, but once action has been taken, to ensure that it is reported faithfully both within and outside the church.

As Item 03-24 recognizes, the advice and counsel process is designed to ensure that commissioners have the best information available to them in order to make informed decisions. The calling of commissioners is to consider all items of business in light of their understanding of God’s redemptive work in Christ, and to seek the will of God through the Holy Spirit in a shared process of discernment and deliberation. The peace, unity, and purity of the church, and the six great ends of the church, are ways of speaking of the church’s response to God’s intent, but should not be reduced to considerations of self-censorship or conflict-avoidance. The *Book of Order* affirms that “truth is in order to goodness,” emphasizing the practical and public impact of our faithfulness to Christ. It does not speak of regulating the faithfulness of the church in terms of anticipated popular responses—this would be another form of what the commissioners rightly oppose, letting secular interests frame, condition, or limit our witness to the living Word of God.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy hastens to note that the public attention given to actions of the General Assembly has no necessary relation to their intrinsic importance. Overall, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy favors more public attention rather than less to General Assembly action, but recognizes that predicting media impact is often a subjective process and can distort consideration of issues on their merits. We affirm that the commissioners to the General Assembly faithfully seek to discern the mind of Christ and communicate that discernment to the church and world as clearly and carefully as possible.

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#### **ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-24**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-24 —From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 03-24 asks for an addition to the General Assembly Standing Rules related to communication strategies, the media, and the unity.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises disapproval of this item.

#### *Rationale*

Advice and counsel memoranda are one means used to give commissioners information necessary for their decision making. To include a communication strategy and media plan in the decision-making process suggests that concern for public image influences the assembly’s decisions. Public image should not hinder the assembly’s decision to act according to the will of the Holy Spirit, remembering “God alone is Lord of the conscience” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0301).

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#### **COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-24**

*Comment on Item 03-24—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly raises serious concerns over the proposed Standing Rules changes proposed by Item 03-24.

The theological integrity of the Presbyterian process is that the session of any single congregation can draft an overture, petition their presbytery, and access the General Assembly. This open process undergirds the relational nature of our govern-

ance. In the 300 years of history of the PC(USA), overtures have often been the window for the Spirit to move the church in a new direction.

There are several other issues raised:

- Overtures, recommendations, and commissioner resolutions should be evaluated primarily on their merit and not on the potential media impact. Concerns about the secular media should not redefine the open process for assembly business.
- The Standing Rules in section H.2.a.(11) assign to the Stated Clerk the responsibility to “report on actions of the General Assembly.” A communication strategy would need to be in cooperation with the Office of the General Assembly.
- The General Assembly itself has the capacity to determine potential impact on the peace, unity, and purity of the whole church.
- The agencies of the General Assembly already have the power to prepare comments on any item of business.

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### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 03-24

*Comment on Item 03-24—From the General Assembly Council.*

We appreciate the concerns expressed in this resolution, and believe that the means are already in place to address the underlying issues. The General Assembly Council, in collaboration with the other five General Assembly agencies, already does communications planning for those items of assembly business that are most likely to generate immediate publicity requirements. This represents less than 5 percent of assembly business, and is covered within existing budgets. To proactively plan communications strategy for 100 percent of business would drastically increase personnel and material costs—just under \$1million per 100 items of business.

The General Assembly Council is committed to collaboration and believes the communications staffs of the other five agencies should also be included in communications planning—specifically in the items of business to be incorporated in their mission and ministry.

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## Item 03-B

[The Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures approved Item 03-B. See pp. 34, 35.]

### *Report of the Committee on Review of the Office of the General Assembly*

#### I. Introduction

The General Assembly Committee on Review submits to the 218th General Assembly (2008) this written report of its examination and review of the work of the Office of the General Assembly (hereafter OGA). This review process was established by the 213th General Assembly (2001) to provide regular oversight of the work of General Assembly agencies. The purpose of the review is “to evaluate the relationship of their individual [agency] ministry with the mission of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (*Minutes*, 2001, Part 1, p. 67, addition of Standing Rule E.10.). The instructions to the Committee on Review were that it must conduct the process according to predetermined standards and present a written report to the next General Assembly.

Fundamental to this process is that the agency being reviewed shall conduct a self-study review of its work over the previous six-year period (2001–2006). The Committee on Review, having been elected by the previous General Assembly, then participates with the agency and its staff in a study and review process to determine how the agency relates and contributes to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The review process is further guided by an Agency Review Manual, developed by the Office of the General Assembly to focus and facilitate the committee’s work. The review process is not an attempt to look for problems, but to evaluate current practices and offer affirmations and recommendations for improvements where appropriate.

In accordance with Standing Rule M.4.a. (now found in the *Organization for Mission*, Section IV.D.1.), the following persons were elected by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to serve as the General Assembly Committee on Review of the Office of the General Assembly: The Reveren John Cairns, moderator, Elder Carl Carpenter, Elder Ernest Ettlich, Elder Freda Gardner, The Reverend Bruce Gillette, The Reverend Adele Langworthy, The Reverend Michael Livingston, The Rev-

erend John McFayden, Elder Pat Niles, Elder James Tse, and ecumenical representative The Reverend Lowell Almen, ELCA. The Reverend Danelle McKinney was also elected but was unable to serve.

These individuals brought a wide variety of skills and experience to the task. The group included former moderators of presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly, stated clerks, and veterans of service on the boards of several denominations agencies. Our work was greatly facilitated by the staff support of Gary Luhr and Arlene Torrens. We wish to express our deep appreciation for their attention to the many large and small details necessary to carry out this process within a very limited meeting schedule.

This report is the result of three multiday meetings of the committee in Louisville, during which we met with much of the staff of OGA and others whose work intersects with that of OGA. We are grateful for the cooperation of Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick and Director of Operations/Associate Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons for their personal participation and for facilitating the participation of other members of the OGA staff. Further work was done through a number of telephone conference calls and a visit by a delegation of committee members to the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia.

The Committee on Review appreciates the work done by the OGA staff on their self-study. It provided a comprehensive base for the committee's work and was an important reference resource throughout the review process.

## **II. Church Relatedness**

The first criterion for assessment set forth in the Agency Review Manual is church relatedness. The Committee on Review asked, "Is OGA doing what the church and its congregations and governing bodies need for it to be doing, and in a way that is faithful to its defined role?" Said another way, "How does OGA serve and support the church's mission and exhibit a constant awareness of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?" Is it accountable? Does it exercise appropriate leadership? Does it cooperate with other agencies of the church in areas where responsibilities may overlap? These questions were addressed as follows:

### **AWARENESS OF OGA'S MISSION AND SERVANT ROLE**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a diverse group of people serving as the staff of OGA. The staff reflects in its diversity the PC(USA)'s desire to be a multicultural church.

Those with whom we met displayed competence, openness, and a generous spirit. They bring years of experience serving the church in a variety of roles in congregations, middle governing bodies, overseas mission service, and ecumenical organizations. The staff is a cohesive, collegial community that understands its OGA work to be a "call." We were not charged to evaluate the OGA staff, but the committee did conclude that many are well-matched for their present service. There is a clear understanding of OGA's specific mission and the staff's role in helping to fulfill that mission. The Review Committee heard few complaints about OGA's basic operations, and much praise for the work of individual members of its staff. Despite work that sometimes involves controversial issues and demanding constituents, it is our judgment that the OGA staff performs its duties faithfully with sensitivity and intelligence.

The faithful leadership of Stated Clerk Cliff Kirkpatrick as head of the OGA staff set a clear example of servanthood for the staff and the whole church. During the years under review, Dr. Kirkpatrick, along with former General Assembly Council Executive Director John Detterick, visited as many presbyteries and synods as they could, not only to share their vision for our denomination, but also to listen to those whom they sought to serve. Thousands of Presbyterians throughout the church had the opportunity at these meetings to talk with these leaders and to see that the Stated Clerk served and cared for the PC(USA) by listening, praying, preaching, teaching, and building community.

### **FIDELITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND LEADERSHIP IN DELIVERING SERVICES**

Many with whom we spoke praised the quality of work done by OGA. The OGA's servant-style leadership is evident in its accessibility by phone and e-mail and by the staff's timely and faith-filled responses to questions and concerns from all sources. Many senior staff have BlackBerries, which help in these efforts, but can also be a burden for their owners. The staff's non-defensive attitude in responding to inquiries has helped to ameliorate the inevitable conflicts that can occur within a diverse denomination. The addition of a communications coordinator has helped OGA respond to concerns more rapidly and thoroughly and be proactive in conveying information to the larger church. These efforts have significantly improved communication, but in spite of the work of the OGA staff, some challenges remain with the dissemination of information beyond the middle governing body level.

Denominational statistics are well kept. The ability to file a congregation's annual numbers online has been well-received.



The Presbyterian Historical Society is a resource that is appreciated by ecumenical groups, national agencies, middle governing bodies, congregations, and individual researchers. The latter group ranges from people tracing their family trees to graduate students working on dissertations to professional historians writing books. (Further comments on the Presbyterian Historical Society appear in Appendix A.)

#### HONORING THE CONSTITUTION AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLICIES

The OGA is a faithful steward of our denomination's constitution and polity. The Review Committee saw clear evidence of the staff's commitment to the health and unity of the church. One excellent way of promoting the Constitution has been through the OGA-led "Common Faith, Common Mission" conferences at Presbyterian seminaries.

The Department of Constitutional Services received strong affirmations in several surveys from those who used its services. Presbytery stated clerks rated this department as "very effective" (57 percent) or "effective" (33 percent) when it came to doing its work. Ninety-four percent of presbytery stated clerks who inquired about an interpretation of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reported satisfaction with the results they received. The department worked consistently, in a focused manner, to serve the church in the midst of disputes over church property, ordination standards, and a process of phased selective divestment in multinational corporations operating in Israel. The department acted quickly to ensure that the OGA staff responded consistently to questions regarding the potential impact of *A Season of Discernment: The Final Report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church* as approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006).

The addition of an Office of Immigration Issues has enabled the Department of Constitutional Services to provide a helpful and timely new service. The staff person in that office has been a legal and pastoral resource to many presbyteries and congregations. A Presbyterian News Service story in May 2006 reported that Julia Thorne, manager for immigration issues, had been contacted by sixty to seventy presbyteries in her first year after being hired in July 2005. This new resource has been clearly important to the church as it seeks to be faithful to General Assembly policies regarding immigration. A helpful resource kit and the increased level of training that this office has provided throughout the church on this topic are commendable. A concern raised by the Review Committee was a lack of sufficient funding for this office.

The synergy of the new vocation office, which is lodged in OGA but reports to both OGA and the General Assembly Council (GAC), is exciting. This joint office is successfully meeting a variety of needs of OGA, GAC, and presbyteries. Ordination exams are administered more smoothly, though some concern was raised with the Review Committee that the process of the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates for selecting exam readers and reading exams needs attention in order to show greater sensitivity to racial ethnic candidates.

The leadership of the Stated Clerk in communicating the denomination's social witness policy is vital and has been faithful to General Assembly mandates. Commissioners to the 216th General Assembly (2004) specifically commended the Stated Clerk's leadership in opposition to the war in Iraq. Assisted by letters from the Stated Clerk, the church saw a positive resolution of the boycott it supported against Taco Bell over compensation of migrant farm workers.

#### ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

The ecumenical movement experienced several ups and downs during the period under review. The Review Committee commends OGA for providing strong leadership and resourcing to ecumenical agencies and initiatives nationally and worldwide. The Stated Clerk and the Department of Ecumenical and Agency Relationships coordinated the representation of the PC(USA) on the governing board of the National Council of Churches and its program commissions. The church was represented on the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) as well as key programmatic committees of this world ecumenical body. In addition, during this period of evaluation, the PC(USA) sent a delegation to the Ninth Assembly of the WCC in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The Reverend Robina Winbush, Associate Stated Clerk for ecumenical and agency relationships, preached at the closing worship of the assembly.

The PC(USA) was a founding member of Churches Uniting in Christ, which evolved out of the Consultation on Church Union. (See the CUiC document in the appendices to the *Book of Order*.) Unfortunately, progress continues to be slow for full communion between the member churches. A multi-church witness for racial justice is still a concern. The OGA continued to monitor and encourage interpretation and implementation of the Formula of Agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Church of Christ, and the Reformed Church in America, and noted progress toward deepening relationships among the full communion partners.

In 2006, the PC(USA) became a provisional member of Christian Churches Together in the USA, which has the potential of becoming a dynamic organization not only for mainline Protestants, but also for Roman Catholics, Pentecostals, and Evangelicals, who have not worked together through a national council in the United States as they have in some other countries.

In December 2000, Edward Cardinal Cassidy, then president of the Roman Catholic Church's Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, visited the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Kentucky, for discussions with a delegation from the PC(USA) and others. The starting point for the discussions was the Presbyterian paper "The Successor to Peter," written in response to the 1995 encyclical, *Ut unum sint*, by the late Pope John Paul II that invited suggestions for new ways of understanding Christian unity. In March 2001, Stated Clerk Cliff Kirkpatrick led a delegation to Rome to continue the conversation.

In 2006, the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America met concurrently in Birmingham, Alabama. The concurrent assemblies were a wonderful way to celebrate the 300th anniversary of American Presbyterianism.

The Stated Clerk gets very high marks for his strong personal leadership in ecumenical circles. His 2004 election as president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches shows the esteem in which he is held globally. The WARC's gain, however, was seen as a loss by the World Council of Churches, which no longer benefits from his service on its Central and Executive committees.

### SERVICE TO MIDDLE GOVERNING BODIES AND CONGREGATIONS

Through their visits to more than 100 presbyteries and synods, Cliff Kirkpatrick and John Detterick were a visible witness of concern by national leaders for middle governing bodies.

Development of a joint OGA-GAC Office of Middle Governing Body Relations in 1999 has been praised by many. This office was well staffed by Gary Torrens during the period under review. The OGA is seen by many as providing positive help with conflict management for middle governing bodies.

The "MGB Connects" Web site has been an excellent source for "best practices" that provide specific help and services to middle governing bodies and congregations. The OGA and the rest of the PC(USA) should build on this successful model to make more resources available online in a timely fashion. The Review Committee recognizes the need for more resourcing of congregations by OGA. Such online resources are increasingly important. Overall, the OGA Web site has made a wide array of information available. The continued use of multiple forms of media to disseminate information is encouraged.

The OGA received high marks for its role in arranging Fall Polity Conferences, Moderators' Conferences, and Pastors' Sabbath conferences (also the Elders' Conference, which met for the first time in 2007). The Committee on Review encourages OGA to pursue the idea of a so-called "big tent" conference in years when the General Assembly does not meet, where pastors and elders can engage a variety of subjects such as evangelism, peacemaking, racial justice, multicultural ministry, etc.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

The Committee on Review commends OGA for its work coordinating and producing General Assemblies. The work of training the local arrangements committee and its hundreds of volunteers and the various assembly committee leadership personnel has been consistently well done. Survey results confirm this. In addition, the site selection and physical arrangements have been carried out smoothly and efficiently. The OGA generally got high reviews for the guidance and support afforded to Moderators, although some additional attention needs to be paid to moderatorial travel arrangements.

The assembling of ecumenical representatives makes visible the unity of the body of Christ. These people, along with other invited guests, have enriched the educational and spiritual experience of all who attend General Assemblies. The OGA's evolving efforts to produce a high tech, "paperless" assembly have been largely successful. Providing reports, overtures, resolutions, other assembly materials, and streaming video of plenary sessions online has been well-received.

The move to biennial assemblies and the development of pastors' conferences in the off years was a significant change for our denomination and the OGA staff. The staff has effectively managed the move to biennial assemblies. The challenge of finding gifted people to serve for two years as General Assembly Moderator was raised as a concern by some former Moderators, but that concern is beyond the scope of the Review Committee. General Assemblies have been well-organized, but the OGA staff remains open to new ideas for making them more meaningful and effective. Other denominational agencies praised the OGA staff for its cooperative spirit in resolving docket and exhibit hall issues in the planning of recent General Assemblies.

### III. Policies and Practices

The second criterion for assessment is policies and practices. The Committee on Review asked if OGA were working in ways that are "decent and in order," displaying transparency, justice, and good stewardship throughout the scope of its work?

The Agency Review Manual directs the Committee on Review to examine the appropriate documents and procedures that guide the work of the agency to ensure they are properly framed and carefully followed.

#### HIRING PRACTICES AND PERSONNEL POLICIES

The Committee on Review commends the OGA for its personnel policies and the proactive stance it has taken regarding the hiring and equitable treatment of its employees. The staff of OGA is small enough that it has been able to create a “family feel” in the work place. The staff reflects the intention of the Stated Clerk to give attention to diversity as well as ability in hiring decisions.

Throughout its review, the committee heard strong praise for the staff leadership provided by Cliff Kirkpatrick and Grady Parsons, and the positive tone their efforts have set for the entire office. In general our surveys and personal interviews affirmed a high level of competence and performance throughout the OGA staff, particularly by those in support roles who are often the public’s primary point of contact.

The OGA’s personnel policies encourage staff members to continue their professional development. Three staff members completed degree programs in the last year. In spite of the need to eliminate several staff positions in 2007 because of budget cuts, the Review Committee perceived the morale of the OGA staff to be quite good. A few of the staff, however, expressed some concern about the limited opportunities available for spiritual formation.

Our examination of compensation and benefits policies and practices found them to be both fair and competitive. The OGA has a clear sexual abuse policy and a high standard of compliance with EEOC and affirmative action guidelines.

#### BUDGET MANAGEMENT

Our conversations with those responsible for managing the budget and the day-to-day financial operations of OGA led us to conclude that there is a sound set of practices in place. The OGA budget office assists the Stated Clerk with planning, forecasting, and budgeting. Good stewardship of limited resources was evident. All PC(USA) protocols are being followed. The accounting and auditing of per capita apportionment funds is handled through the GAC’s financial offices. Of critical importance looking forward is OGA’s reliance on per capita income for the majority of its budget. A declining membership base raises questions about the adequacy of OGA’s per capita funding in the years ahead.

#### LONG RANGE PLANNING AND ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESSES

The Stated Clerk, working with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), produces an annual list of goals and work targets for OGA. This list becomes the heart of the work plan for the Stated Clerk and, by implication, the entire OGA staff and the basis for staff evaluation at the end of the year.

The Committee on Review examined these lists—and the reviews that followed from them—for the six years under consideration. We found the targets to be well chosen and appropriate for the life and mission of the PC(USA). Annual reviews were extremely positive, indicating that the OGA took these annual goals seriously and worked effectively to accomplish them.

We were concerned, however, that this process focuses primarily on the work of the Stated Clerk and may ignore the more routine work of many of the subsections of OGA. We questioned whether these annual work plans, which appear to focus only on the upcoming twelve months, qualify as long range planning and whether they provide an adequate basis for annual reviews of anyone beyond the Stated Clerk. Because of the scope of this review, we were not able to determine whether complaints about the work of particular OGA staff members were addressed in annual reviews or work plans.

#### WORKING UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF COGA

It is the responsibility of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to oversee work of the OGA and ensure that OGA faithfully fulfills its constitutional responsibilities. The Committee on Review found a good working relationship between COGA and OGA. Trust is high and working relationships are productive. In the years covered by this review we noted that the OGA workload was often controlled by “urgent” issues, frequently to the detriment of “important” issues. We commend both COGA and OGA for the way that several of these “urgent” issues have become—through proactive efforts—positive opportunities for the church.

Central among the responsibilities of OGA is being a faithful steward of the church’s Constitution. As COGA has guided the work of OGA, this enterprise has remained a high priority and been carried out in a way well described by the phrase “decently and in order.” We see the OGA (and particularly the Stated Clerk’s office and the Department of Constitutional Services) as an effective interpreter of the Constitution. In addition, the proposed revision of Chapter 14 of the Form of Gov-

ernment (Ordination, Certification, and Commissioning) is regarded as an important positive step in the way church moves forward.

The COGA's assignment as the entity responsible for the annual review of the Stated Clerk has been carried out with care and discernment (see comments above). The Review Committee did not examine other aspects of COGA's work.

#### IV. Program Effectiveness

The third criterion for assessment is program effectiveness. The Committee on Review asked how well OGA is doing what it does. Our focus was on the consistency, appropriateness, and usefulness of OGA services, programs, and communications. We also paid attention to the way OGA staff monitored these efforts and opportunities for improvement.

#### CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL ASSEMBLY DIRECTIVES AND MANDATES

The OGA has developed an appropriate and faithful mindset of being an instrument of the General Assembly and the *Book of Order*. It consistently references its work to actions of the General Assembly, mandates within the *Book of Order*, and oversight assigned by the General Assembly to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. Surveys and interviews with persons outside of OGA revealed satisfaction with the scope and range of OGA's work.

One new initiative has been the development of national meetings in years when the General Assembly does not meet. We heard consistently glowing reports of the events held in the first two "off" years, particularly the Pastors' Sabbath and the 2007 Elders' Conference. A number of people have recommended that several national gatherings be scheduled at the same time and place to create a "big tent" event comparable to a General Assembly in attendance and impact. Such an event might conceivably include the Pastors' Sabbath, the Elders' Conference, Presbyterian men's and women's events, youth events, and more, and result in a national celebration focused on worship and mission in alternate years.

Many of those interviewed and polled gave high marks to the OGA staff for carrying out its assigned responsibilities even after recent staff reductions due to budget cuts. That commendation extended to OGA's representation of the denomination in social, political, and legal arenas, though the Review Committee also heard some criticism, as would be expected given the diversity within our denomination. The Stated Clerk and staff in the Department of Constitutional Services have sought advice in these subject areas from different parts of the denomination, particularly when considering the filing of amicus curiae briefs. The OGA's restrained issuance of these social, political, and legal opinions on behalf of the denomination appears to have been done within authorized limits and to have accurately represented actions and policies of the General Assembly, and historic principles of the denomination, and to have been concentrated on issues central to the Reformed faith.

#### EVALUATION OF SERVICES

The Review Committee conducted an extensive survey of PC(USA) representatives on a wide range of topics. In addition, the OGA staff uses evaluation forms regularly to determine the effectiveness of events and services for which they are responsible. These forms made it relatively easy for the Review Committee to assess the satisfaction of the church with staff, programs, and events. A summary of these findings is included in Appendix B.

Evaluations of the Stated Clerk from interviews and questionnaires were laudatory. The two Executive Directors of the General Assembly Council during the years of our review, five recent General Assembly Moderators, and a representative group of synod and presbytery executives were uniformly positive in their assessments of Cliff Kirkpatrick. His work in ecumenical agencies and councils was lauded by a representative group of ecumenical executives. All said they would like to see him be even more active, but realize that is not possible given the full range of his duties.

The Review Committee was impressed with the fact that nearly all whom we interviewed and polled characterized the OGA staff as eager to serve, honoring of the offices held by others, and efficient in executing their duties. The culture of the OGA seemed to fit a servant attitude and did not exhibit a sense of position or power to be imposed on the church.

#### COMMUNICATION QUALITY AND STRATEGY

In recent years, the main constituency for all OGA communication has been middle governing bodies—presbytery and synod executives and stated clerks. Obviously the OGA staff, COGA, other agency heads, the Presbyterian Communicators Network, and Presbyterian press outlets receive regular communication from OGA along with individuals who have participated in events and activities organized by OGA. An extensive survey of middle governing body staffs shows that OGA's communication effort has been appreciated and judged highly effective. Comments received from a variety of sources suggest that middle governing body staffs have been less effective and consistent in forwarding communication from OGA on to congregations. Some direct communication from OGA that is targeted for session members and clerks of session, Christian educators, and other church staff appears to be needed. The OGA needs to communicate effectively regarding its supportive

services, publications, and events targeted to the needs of congregations in order to effectively serve those needs. Without such communication, congregations are likely to be unaware of the role and value of OGA.

Both online and print publications such as *Continuing the Journey*, *Perspectives*, *Journal of Presbyterian History*, *Constitutional Musings* and *Assembly in Brief* continue to be of high quality and seem to serve their purposes effectively, though information about them may need to go beyond middle governing body executives to increase readership. Notices designed for posting in church libraries, for example, might serve this purpose. Likewise inserts for worship bulletins and church newsletters made available on the Web may prove a helpful resource for congregations.

The interpersonal communication between OGA staff and individuals at all levels of the PC(USA) remains strong and effective. Such communication is numbered in the thousands. Nearly all who contact OGA staff receive a reply that is selected, tailored, or discretely prepared for that individual, an amazing accomplishment enabled by the integration of computer-assisted technology and staff trained in the use of that technology. A reduction of OGA support staff was accomplished even as the flow of correspondence increased. While the development and implementation of this communication system has been thorough and professional in its planning and implementation, further upgrades in hardware and software are needed.

A similar transformation of General Assembly communication, including the “paperless” distribution of information and legislative materials, has been rapid and accomplished with minimal problems. Surveys indicated a high level of acceptance of these changes, much to the credit of the staff responsible for their design and implementation.

One communication challenge that remains is the development of a reliable system for forwarding information from middle governing bodies to congregants in the pew. That communication must include an interpretation of per capita and its purpose.

The PC(USA) Web site, including the pages pertaining to OGA, is administered by GAC. At times this arrangement has caused delay in the dissemination of information from OGA to the larger church and beyond.

## **V. Recommendations**

1. The Committee on Review recommends that the OGA seek and use more volunteers in times of peak workload and where particular experience and expertise are needed. An example of the latter would be the work of Vernon Broyles, a long-time member of the national church staff, in the area of social witness.

2. The committee recommends that the OGA expand conversations with other denominations for the purpose of sharing best practices.

3. The committee recommends that the joint OGA-GAC Office of Vocation address disparities in the ordination examination process. Concerns include the need for increased sensitivity to racial ethnic candidates in the way the exams are created and read. The committee further recommends the development of procedures for recruiting and training readers that remedy these concerns.

4. The committee applauds the progress OGA has made in using electronic communication as a means of disseminating information. We recommend that OGA either develop its own Web site or that a way be found to guarantee faster dissemination of time-sensitive information generated by OGA on the PC(USA) Web site administered by the GAC.

5. The committee recommends that the Web be utilized as a means of making available OGA’s vast library of position papers, study documents, General Assembly reports, etc. to a larger constituency and that the Constitution be available in a user-friendly and accessible format.

6. The committee recommends the development by OGA of a reliable system, perhaps Web-based, for forwarding information to pastors and congregants.

7. The committee acknowledges and underscores the importance of the per capita apportionment as an essential and joyful affirmation of belonging both to the PC(USA) and the church catholic, as well as an equitable opportunity for all Presbyterians to responsibly support mission coordination and ecclesiastical expenses. Therefore, the committee recommends an expanded effort to interpret and clarify the purpose and use of the per capita apportionment by means of various media including the PC(USA) Web site.

8. The committee recommends that OGA with COGA strengthen its long-range planning process and document a three- to five-year plan.

9. The committee's most challenging recommendation addresses the fact that our denominational structure includes two entities with overlapping responsibilities—OGA and GAC. The committee affirms the steps that have been taken toward synthesis and cooperation between these agencies, most notably through the joint offices for vocation and middle governing body relations. At the same time, however, the Review Committee cannot ignore evidences during the period of review of turf conflict, inefficiencies due to duplication of effort in the dual nature of the system, and substantial public confusion of OGA and GAC roles. It is not our place to suggest a new structure. Even so, we strongly recommend that both agencies increase their commitment to communication and cooperation, find ways to speak with a clear and singular voice, and continue to identify areas such as social witness, theology, and leadership development where joint offices could be established.

10. Pending acceptance of the recommendation from the GAC Review Committee seeking a joint review of all the agencies, the committee recommends that the review process of individual agencies be delayed until 2010 and that COGA, in consultation with the agencies, evaluate the "Standards of Review" and the manual built on these standards before the next cycle of review commences. The committee further recommends that the revised manual specify that each agency be required to complete its self-study and present it to its review committee within 120 days of the close of the General Assembly at which that committee is elected. [Our committee was not able to begin its work until more than nine months after it was elected.]

## VI. Summary

It has been our privilege on behalf of the General Assembly to review the work of OGA. We are pleased to report that we have found no critical problems beyond those associated with having too much to do and too few human and financial resources to work with. In spite of staff downsizing and budget limitations, we found the OGA to be faithful to its appointed mission as the ecclesiastical and ecumenical arm of the PC(USA).

We were impressed with the agency's self-study. It was comprehensive and candid, and showed a keen understanding of the strengths and weaknesses—the accomplishments and the challenges—of the agency's work. Our surveys and personal interviews reinforced our initial impressions. While issues were raised during our review process, they did not in our judgment indicate problems within the OGA, nor a failure to be faithful to the mandates set by the General Assembly and the Constitution.

It is clear that much of the credit for this positive review goes to the Stated Clerk Cliff Kirkpatrick. His skill in administration and delegation was evident over and over in our investigation into the working of the OGA. He has been an extremely able leader. This sentiment was echoed by ecumenical officers who have worked with his office, and by those throughout the church who rely on OGA for procedures, reference material, counsel, and resources. Looking ahead, we share the opinion heard often during our work that "Cliff will be a hard act to follow."

We are pleased to report to the 218th General Assembly (2008) our findings that the work of the OGA during the six-year period under review was faithful to the church's mission and to the mandates set for this agency. Further, the recommendations made in Section V of this report have been agreed to by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and will be reflected in OGA's work going forward.

## Appendix A

### Report of the Subcommittee to Review the Presbyterian Historical Society

*Interviews conducted August 6, 2007 by Freda A. Gardner, Michael Livingston, and James N. Tse*

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The task of the Committee on Review of the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) was to review the agency and its substructures "from a 10,000-foot viewpoint" for the years 2001–2006. It is with this same approach that we reviewed the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS). Such a review is limited in scope compared to a more in-depth review that would have required additional time and documentation to complete. It is with that understanding that we report our findings.

This report is based on interviews with the senior staff and chairperson of PHS. We began the day with a tour of the facilities in Philadelphia for an overview of PHS's current operations. For the next three hours our interviews focused primarily on the three major assessment criteria in the Agency Review Manual: church relatedness, policies and practices and program effectiveness. The following persons were interviewed:

- Frederick J. Heuser, Associate Stated Clerk and Director
- Margery Sly, Deputy Director and Assistant Stated Clerk
- Morton Bell, Associate for Administration and Finance
- Margo Szabunia, Manager of Technical Services
- Charles Soltis, Chairperson of the Board of Directors

Eileen Rojas, Director of Development, was on our list of staff to interview but was not available that day. After the interviews, the subcommittee felt that the other interviewees had answered our questions regarding funds development adequately, so an interview with Rojas was not rescheduled.

The subcommittee was also given a copy of a 2001 Archival Assessment Report (the Warner Report) prepared by Robert M. Warner and Elizabeth Yakel, consultants from the University of Michigan's School of Information. This report helped shape PHS's focus, vision and mission in succeeding years. A summary of the report and its recommendations are highlighted below.

## II. OVERVIEW

The mission of the Presbyterian Historical Society as presented on the PHS Web site is:

*"...to serve all levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in its administrative, legal, and historical needs; to collect, preserve, and share information relevant to American Presbyterianism; and to encourage appreciation of the church's heritage.*

*"The Presbyterian Historical Society is the national archives and historical research center of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As the memory of the Reformed tradition, the PHS uses the lessons of the Church's heritage to confront the challenges of tomorrow. Headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with a records management program at the denomination's headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky, it serves the church's national agencies, middle governing bodies, and local congregations as well as scholars and the general public."*

In 2001, the PHS hired consultants from the University of Michigan's School of Information to address issues in four major areas:

1. The role and mission of the Society in the 21st century;
2. The governance of PHS, which the consultants expanded to include the internal structure of the Society;
3. The sustainability of the current funding model and the potential for developing a new funding model for the PHS; and
4. How technology can be incorporated into the infrastructure to help sustain the role of an institutional archives in the 21st century.

Over the next few years, PHS incorporated many recommendations of the Warner Report. Among those recommendations:

1. The Warner Report affirmed the mission statement of PHS, but said, *"...what is needed is a clearer vision of how best to fulfill this mission statement and what aspects of the mission statement will be emphasized and embraced to set the tone for all PHS activities."* The report, proposed four possible models for PHS:

a. **The Historical Society.** This model closely resembles the current PHS, which serves as the archives of a major organization, collects other historical materials, and offers historical programming.

b. **Records and information management (RIM) for the PC(USA).** This model focuses solely on providing archival and records management services to the PC(USA).

c. **Records and information management for the PC(USA) and coordination and support of collecting by other archives on a regional level.** This model's emphasis is to carry out the RIM functions described in model "b." for national offices only and document other national movements, while leaving management of regional and local records to other repositories.

d. **Presbyterian Historical Center – facilitator, coordinator, and standard-bearer for Presbyterian history.** This model emphasizes facilitating the placement of PC(USA) records in other appropriate subject and area repositories, with PHS serving only as the archives of last resort.

The Warner Report concluded, *"...the important thing for the PHS to do is to think about the various options and purposefully adopt a mission focus and strategically plan to fulfill that in the future to select a future that is sustainable. The important element to consider, though, is that the selected scope and vision must have a business plan and be sustainable."*

2. The Warner Report recommended the creation of a Governance Board with responsibility for policy-making authorities including development, finance and operations. In 2004, a new Board of Directors was elected to replace the existing committee that only served PHS in an advisory capacity. Another recommendation concerning governance led to the consolidation of PHS operations in one location, which eventually led to the closing of the PHS offices in Montreat, North Carolina, in 2006.

3. The Warner Report reinforced the need for development plans and operations, which were already an important concern of PHS. This led to the creation of a new development office and staff.

4. The Warner Report affirmed the need for a strong and seamless technological infrastructure to fulfill PHS's mission and responsibilities to the PC(USA) and its members. The report recommended three areas where technological solutions could be applied.

- a. Communications among PHS offices and between PHS and PC(USA);
- b. Increasing access to and visibility of collections and services; and
- c. Electronic records

The Warner Report concluded, *"...the Society has a talented and dedicated staff, a respected director, support at the highest level from within the PC(USA), and individuals willing to help the Society with their expertise. The Society is seen as a model for other denomina-*

*tional archives in the United States).*” The final conclusion of the report was that “...within the staff, the intellectual and professional expertise exists to make or remake the PHS for the new century.” In our interviews with the staff and its chairperson, we found this final statement to be true.

### **III. CHURCH RELATEDNESS**

PHS relates to the PC(USA) in its capacity as a resource for American Presbyterianism. To that end, the staff offers workshops and training annually to presbytery and synod executives and stated clerks, as well as congregations, on topics such as record retention and preservation. As stewards of Presbyterian history and archives, they share and offer to Presbyterians and non-Presbyterians opportunities to access, study and learn about the rich heritage of the PC(USA) and its predecessor denominations and entities. Although their primary focus is Presbyterian, they offer their retention services to other organizations including the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Board of Pensions.

General Assembly per capita funds 80 percent to 85 percent of PHS’s budget, to enable PHS to provide storage, records management and information services to the agencies and offices of the General Assembly, middle governing bodies, and congregations. The other 15 percent to 20 percent is derived from grants, contributions, and endowment interest and program fees. Over 90 percent of PHS expenditures are for salaries, benefits, and the cost of maintaining the offices in Philadelphia. More than one interviewee noted that per capita funds are not permitted to be used for funding technology. Therefore, upgrades in both hardware and software depend largely on other sources of revenue.

### **IV. POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

The PHS is part of the OGA and subject to its policies in areas such as human resources, salary administration, and per capita funding. Although PHS reports to the General Assembly through the Office of the Stated Clerk, a new governing board was created in 2004 to provide oversight in areas such as finance, administration, and development. This Board replaced the advisory committee that existed at the time.

Board members are elected by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), not by the General Assembly. As such, the board views itself as a subcommittee of COGA, yet it has its own nominating committee. The board seeks members who have a demonstrated love for the church and its history, as well as the ability to support PHS and friends who share the same passion. In addition the nominating committee seeks members who have board experience and specific expertise and knowledge. The nominating committee also ensures that board members represent the diversity of the PC(USA) including gender, race/ethnicity and geographic diversity.

One of the new board’s immediate challenges is funds development. As PHS moves toward providing more access of its resources through emerging technology, new funds to meet those demands and cover the increasing cost of technology will be crucial. All of the interviewees acknowledged and are committed to using technology as a tool for expanding the reach of PHS to as many people as possible. The board is also committed to working with donors to develop a steady stream of funds to maintain PHS’s current standards and to meet future needs as the PC(USA) copes with declining membership, which results in fewer per capita funds.

One of the casualties of diminishing funds was PHS’s Montreat office. The Montreat office represented a remnant and the heritage of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, which was often referred to as the “southern church” prior to the 1983 merger with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The recommendation to close the Montreat office came after a task force was appointed by COGA and the Stated Clerk to assess the emotional and financial impact of consolidating the three PHS offices (Philadelphia, Montreat, and Louisville) into one central location.

The closing was a daunting and painful process, with some of the archives and records being moved to Philadelphia, some to Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, and some to Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Austin, Texas. One positive result of this move was that Columbia Seminary established a new study of Presbyterian history.

### **V. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS**

As the oldest church historical society in the United States (begun in 1852), PHS has done extremely well in collecting and preserving the rich history of American Presbyterianism. Through its work with congregations, presbyteries, and synods, PHS has assisted Presbyterians in creating their own history of what it means to be Presbyterian.

Recognizing that these collections will continue to grow, available storage space is of a major concern. In 2006, PHS spent over \$900,000 renovating its available storage, creating 48 percent more space. This new and innovative technology will enable PHS to remain in Philadelphia without immediate need for expansion in the foreseeable future.

This national treasure of the PC(USA) receives about 5,500 to 6,000 inquiries annually, of which 40 percent are church-related requests including for information of a legal or historical nature. Another 40 percent are from genealogical users searching for information about their family’s church history. Many of the users are seminary students of various communions and faiths.

Over the last few years, PHS has increased the accessibility of its archives through its Web site, which currently includes about 130 pages of information, exhibits, electronic indexes, and its online catalog, CALVIN. Development of CALVIN began more than twenty-five years ago with the online cataloging of its collections. As innovative electronic technology becomes the norm in today’s society, the reach of PHS in sharing the stories of American Presbyterianism seems endless.



**VI. CONCLUSION**

PHS does an extremely good job of carrying out its mission to collect, preserve, and share information relevant to American Presbyterianism. The PHS has embraced the use of new technology in fulfilling this mandate, while being hampered by decreasing funds and restrictions on the use of per capita dollars to upgrade and update the technology.

The board has made funds development one of its top priorities and recognizes that this is a similar challenge for many not-for-profit organizations. It recognizes that the challenge ahead to secure new funding streams will rely heavily on PHS's ability to share the Presbyterian story. To that end, PHS has created a new DVD and new opportunities to promote itself and its rich history of American Presbyterianism.

Finally, PHS has prepared a document called "A Strategic Plan for the 21st Century, 2007–2013." This plan documents PHS's self-study and sets goals and priorities for the coming years. Because the task of this review committee is to focus on the years 2001–2006, this plan is not within the scope of our review. We wanted, however, to acknowledge its existence and commend PHS for its proactive and forward-looking focus.

**Appendix B**

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Office of the General Assembly Review  
Summary of Evaluation Survey Research**

**October 2007**

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**Office of the General Assembly Review  
Summary of Evaluation Survey Research**

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**Office of the General Assembly Review  
Summary of Evaluation Survey Research**

**Highlights**

During the summer of 2007, Research Services contributed to a review of the work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of the General Assembly between 2001 and 2006 by surveying 13 Office of the General Assembly constituencies: congregational leaders, synod and presbytery executives, synod and presbytery stated clerks, synod and presbytery moderators, leaders of other General Assembly agencies, General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates, General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements members, General Assembly permanent committee and task force members, international and ecumenical partners, racial-ethnic caucus participants, Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators, Presbyterian Communicators Network participants, and *Presbyterian Heritage* recipients. Response rates ranged from 56% for synod and presbytery stated clerks to 7% for international and ecumenical partners. Analysis of survey responses shows that:

- Seven in eight synod and presbytery stated clerks (88%) were *very familiar* or *familiar* with the work of the Office of the General Assembly. At least half of respondents from all other constituencies, except for racial-ethnic caucus participants, were familiar with the work of the Office of the General Assembly. Two in five racial-ethnic caucus participants (38%) were familiar with the agency's work.
- Between one-third and one-half of staff and elected leaders of Presbyterian entities believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in building up community among PC(USA) governing bodies. Half of synod and presbytery stated clerks (54%), General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (54%), and synod and presbytery moderators (45%), two in five leaders of other national General Assembly agencies (43%) and synod and presbytery executives (42%), and one-third of presbytery Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators (31%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was effective in building up this community.
- Leaders of between one-quarter and two-fifths of congregations believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving congregations of their sizes (with memberships of 100 or less, 39%; with memberships between 101 and 350, 24%; with memberships between 351 and 800, 23%; with memberships of 800 or greater, 32%). At least half of presbytery leaders and synod leaders believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving the staffs and elected leaders of presbyteries and synods, respectively.
- Of eight Office of the General Assembly-produced communications resources, larger proportions of Presbyterian leaders had examined the following four between 2001 and 2006: *Constitution of the PC(USA)*, Office of the General Assembly Web site, *Minutes of the General Assembly*, and *Continuing the Journey* (a publication for past, present, and future General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates). At least two-thirds of those who had examined these resources rated them as *good*.
- Between one-third and 95% of Presbyterian leaders from different constituencies had talked by telephone with the Office of General Assembly staff between 2001 and 2006. Among those in telephone contact with the staff were congregational leaders (31%) and General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (95%). At least three-quarters of the Presbyterian leaders who had participated with these calls. The proportion of leaders who had been in e-mail contact with Office of the General Assembly staff between 2001 and 2006 ranged from one-quarter to 94%. With all but one constituency, three-quarters of the leaders in e-mail contact were satisfied with these contacts.
- Asked about the failure of a limited number of congregations and presbyteries to make the per-capita, or per church member, contributions that finance the work of the Office of the General Assembly in the amounts the denomination has recommended, at least two-thirds of Presbyterian leaders from each constituency *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that asking for per-capita contributions is a fair way to finance the Office of the General Assembly's work. At least half of leaders from the constituencies surveyed were concerned about the failure of congregations and presbyteries to make those contributions in the recommended amounts.
- Asked how the PC(USA) and Office of the General Assembly should respond to the needs of presbyteries with congregations that are interested in separating from the denomination, at least four in five Presbyterian leaders believed that the denomination should help presbyteries engage in dialogue with congregations about their concerns. Two other denominational responses that at least one-third of leaders recommended were: helping presbyteries maintain ownership of all church buildings and property at the expense of the congregations that choose to separate and helping presbyteries negotiate equitable divisions of buildings and properties with separating congregations.
- At least two-thirds of Presbyterian leaders from each different constituency believed that the Office of the General Assembly exhibits leadership in support of PC(USA) mission *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Three-quarters of synod and presbytery executives (74%) and two-thirds of congregational leaders (64%) believed this, as did 87% of synod and presbytery stated clerks.

### 03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

- For half of the constituencies surveyed, interpretation of the PC(USA) Constitution was the quality that the largest proportion of Presbyterian leaders identified as an Office of the General Assembly strength. For half of the constituencies, funds development was the quality that fewest identified as a strength.
- At least half of Presbyterian leaders from each constituency believed that the Office of the General Assembly was faithful to its charge (given in the text) *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Seven in ten synod and presbytery executives (75%) and congregational leaders (68%) believed this.
- At least two-thirds of Presbyterian leaders from each constituency believed that the work of the Office of the General Assembly is *very important* or *important* to the PC(USA). Three-quarters of congregational leaders (74%), five in six synod and presbytery executives (86%), and almost all synod and presbytery stated clerks (99%) believed this.
- In response to an open-ended question about the Office of the General Assembly, some Presbyterian leaders expressed a range of opinions about the work of Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick: some very positive, some not so positive. In addition, Presbyterian leaders who responded to the open-ended question exhibited a mix of confusion about and opposition to the difference among the General Assembly, Office of the General Assembly, and General Assembly Council. A few leaders called for the merger of the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council.

#### Introduction

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly Review Committee on the Office of the General Assembly asked the Research Services staff to conduct research about the work of the PC(USA) Office of the General Assembly between 2001 and 2006. The committee is reviewing the Office of the General Assembly's work in advance of the 2008 General Assembly.

The Office of the General Assembly (OGA) is one of six national agencies that carry out the work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly (GA) and serve PC(USA) synods, presbyteries, and congregations. During the two years between General Assemblies, the Office of the General Assembly is the agency that speaks for the General Assembly, arranges future assemblies, provides staff assistance to many General Assembly committees, and maintains connections with PC(USA) ecumenical partners, synods, and presbyteries. The PC(USA) Stated Clerk (elected by alternating General Assemblies) and the 15-member Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) oversee the work of this agency. A 15-member board helps govern the Office of the General Assembly's Department of History, also known as the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS).

#### Research Strategy

During the summer of 2007 Research Services staff surveyed 13 constituencies on behalf of the Review Committee. These were:

- Leaders of 800 sampled congregations (with surveys addressed to each congregation's "Pastor or Clerk of Session").
- 186 synod and presbytery executives.
- 162 synod and presbytery stated clerks.
- 189 synod and presbytery moderators.
- 155 staff and elected leaders of the other national General Assembly agencies (the Board of Pensions, General Assembly Council, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation).
- 1,440 commissioners and advisory delegates to the 216th and 217th PC(USA) General Assemblies (in 2004 in Richmond, Virginia, and in 2006 in Birmingham, Alabama).
- 75 members of the Committees on Local Arrangements (COLAs) for the 214th, 215th, 216th, and 217th General Assemblies.
- 117 current members of General Assembly permanent committees and members of General Assembly task forces active in 2006 or 2007.
- 199 international and ecumenical partners (leaders of Christian denominations in the United States with which the PC(USA) is in correspondence, PC(USA) partner churches overseas, and PC(USA) ecumenical partner organizations).
- 249 racial-ethnic caucus participants.
- 357 presbytery Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators and co-moderators.
- 250 Presbyterian Communicators Network listserv subscribers.
- 700 sampled recipients of the Presbyterian Historical Society newsletter *Presbyterian Heritage*.

Respondents from ten of these constituency groups received printed surveys by mail. Research Services sent e-mail messages inviting recipients from two other constituencies (Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators and Presbyterian Communicators Network participants) to participate in Web-based surveys. The survey of those in a final constituency group (leaders of other General Assembly agencies) used both a Web-based survey for those with accessible e-mail addresses and printed surveys for others in the group.

### Survey Response Rates

Table 1 gives information about the percentages of those in each constituency who completed and returned surveys.

Table 1

#### Survey Response Rates by Constituency

Synod and presbytery stated clerks .....	56%
General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	54%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	53%
General Assembly permanent committee and task force members .....	48%
Synod and presbytery executives .....	44%
Congregational leaders.....	41%
General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates .....	40%
Synod and presbytery moderators .....	35%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	32%
Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators.....	28%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants .....	22%
Presbyterian Communicators Network participants .....	20%
International and ecumenical partners.....	7%

Readers should use caution when interpreting responses from constituencies with lower response rates.

Complete information about survey responses can be found in the 13 appendixes that follow this narrative summary. The appendixes present summaries with percentage responses to each question on the surveys—one for each constituency.

#### Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Most congregational leaders who responded to the congregational survey were pastors, clerks of sessions, or elders. More than two-thirds (70%) were ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

Table 2 shows that most respondents were middle-aged whites. A majority were men. A few constituencies provided exceptions. Only 9% of racial-ethnic caucus participants were white. Only one-third of General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements members (32%), racial-ethnic caucus participants (42%), and Presbyterian Communicators Network participants (36%) were men. The median age of *Presbyterian Heritage* recipients was 70.<sup>1</sup>

Table 2  
Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

	% White	% Men	Median Age
Congregational leaders.....	95%	74%	56
Synod and presbytery executives .....	93%	73%	60
Synod and presbytery stated clerks .....	99%	59%	62
Synod and presbytery moderators .....	83%	50%	60
Leaders of other GA agencies .....	83%	78%	60
GA commissioners and advisory delegates.....	91%	56%	59
Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	95%	32%	66
Permanent committee and task force members .....	70%	64%	62
International and ecumenical partners.....	—	83%	58
Racial-ethnic caucus participants .....	9%	42%	60
COM and CPM moderators .....	100%	63%	58
Communicators Network participants.....	100%	36%	57
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients .....	94%	54%	70

Note: — = not asked of this group

#### Familiarity with the Work of the Office of the General Assembly

The surveys asked respondents to rate how familiar they were with the work of the Office of the General Assembly.<sup>2</sup> At least half of respondents in all but one constituency reported they were *very familiar* or *somewhat familiar* with the work of the Office of the General Assembly. Five in six synod and presbytery stated clerks (88%) were familiar with the Office of the General Assembly's work. Only one-third of racial-ethnic caucus participants (38%) were familiar with that work. (See Table 3.)

<sup>1</sup> The median is the middle number in an ordered series of numbers. For example, the median of the series 1, 2, 5 is 2.

<sup>2</sup> All surveys included a brief description of the Office of the General Assembly.

**Table 3**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Were *Very Familiar* or *Somewhat Familiar***  
**with the Work of the Office of the General Assembly**

Synod and presbytery stated clerks .....	88%
General Assembly permanent committee and task force members .....	85%
Synod and presbytery executives .....	84%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies .....	77%
Presbyterian Communicators Network participants .....	68%
General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements members .....	62%
General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates .....	61%
Synod and presbytery moderators .....	58%
Congregational leaders .....	53%
COM and CPM moderators .....	51%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients .....	51%
International and ecumenical partners .....	50%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants .....	38%

#### **Effectiveness of the Office of the General Assembly**

The surveys asked respondents how effective they believed the Office of the General Assembly was in accomplishing various objectives and serving various constituencies. The percentages of respondents who marked *no opinion* in response to some of these questions were relatively large. This was not so much the case, however, when respondents were asked about the effectiveness of the Office of the General Assembly in accomplishing objectives of special interest to *their particular constituencies* or in serving *their particular constituencies*.

#### **Accomplishing Objectives**

Between one-third and one-half of the staff and elected leadership of Presbyterian entities believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in building up community among the governing bodies of the PC(USA). These included synod and presbytery stated clerks (54%), General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (54%), synod and presbytery moderators (45%), leaders of other national General Assembly agencies (43%), synod and presbytery executives (42%), and presbytery Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators (31%).

At least two-thirds of General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates and General Assembly Committees on Local Arrangement believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in facilitating General Assemblies that are celebrations of a common witness in Christ (commissioners and advisory delegates, 79%; Committee on Local Arrangements members, 81%) and that are unique times for seeking the leadership of the Holy Spirit for the PC(USA) (commissioners and advisory delegates, 63%; Committee on Local Arrangements members, 72%).

At least two-thirds of international and ecumenical partners believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in accomplishing several ecumenical objectives: promoting the quest for unity and reconciliation throughout the church (83%), facilitating substantive ecumenical progress towards more visible unity in enterprises such as Churches Uniting in Christ (67%), and facilitating cooperative ecumenical effort in areas such as the delivery of emergency relief assistance (67%).

Seven in ten Presbyterian Communicators Network participants (70%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in using appropriate technology to support a more interconnected PC(USA). Two in five communicators network participants (40%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in creating a climate of communication where dialogue flows naturally and facilitates the sharing of the Gospel, the telling of stories of faith, the building up of trust, and the creation of community.

Two in five *Presbyterian Heritage* recipients (40%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in engaging the PC(USA) in a new appreciation of its heritage.

#### **Serving Constituencies**

Between one-quarter and two-fifths of leaders of congregations of various membership sizes believe that the Office of the General Assembly is effective in serving congregations of their sizes. Larger proportions of leaders of small and very large congregations than of other congregations believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving congregations of their sizes.

Two in five leaders of congregations with memberships of 100 or less (39%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving congregations with memberships of 100 or less. One-quarter of leaders of congregations with memberships between 101 and 350 (24%) and of leaders of congregations with memberships between 351 and 800 (23%) believed that the agency was effective in serving congregations of their membership sizes, respectively. One-third of leaders of congregations with memberships greater than 800 (32%) believed that the agency was effective in serving congregations with memberships greater than 800.

At least half of presbytery leaders (presbytery executives, 64%; presbytery stated clerks, 91%; presbytery moderators, 60%; presbytery Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators, 54%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving presbytery staff and elected leadership.

At least three in five synod leaders (synod executives, 70%; synod stated clerks, 57%; synod moderators, 71%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving synod staff and elected leadership.

At least half of those from PC(USA) constituencies other than leaders of congregations, presbyteries, and synods believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving their constituencies:

- Two-thirds of staff and elected leaders of other General Assembly agencies (67%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving other national General Assembly staff or elected leadership.
- Five in six General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (85%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving General Assembly permanent committees and task forces.
- Four in five international and ecumenical partners (80%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving ecumenical partners.
- Half of racial-ethnic caucus participants (45%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was *very effective* or *effective* in serving racial-ethnic caucuses.

#### **Participation in and Assessment of Activities That the Office of the General Assembly Staff Supports**

Respondents reported whether they had participated (between 2001 and 2006) in various activities supported by Office of the General Assembly staff. Those who had participated in these activities were asked if they were satisfied with the Office of the General Assembly's contribution to the activity.

At least three-quarters of those who had served on the staff or elected leadership of presbyteries or synods (synod and presbytery executives, 77%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 94%; synod and presbytery moderators, 77%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly made to the experience of serving in synod or presbytery leadership.

At least half of synod and presbytery leaders had participated in other activities that the Office of the General Assembly supports: submitting overtures for consideration and possible adoption by the General Assembly (synod and presbytery executives, 54%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 63%), submitting inquiries about the interpretation of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* (synod and presbytery executives, 67%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 62%), nominating themselves or other people to serve on General Assembly permanent committees or task forces (synod and presbytery executives, 51%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 48%). In addition, one-third had helped initiate PC(USA) judicial proceedings (synod and presbytery executives, 32%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 34%).

At least two-thirds of the synod and presbytery leaders who had participated in these activities were *satisfied* with the contribution the Office of the General Assembly had made to their experiences. These included: submitting overtures for consideration and possible adoption by the General Assembly (synod and presbytery executives, 80%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 80%), submitting inquiries about the interpretation of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* (synod and presbytery executives, 92%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 94%), nominating themselves or other people to serve on General Assembly permanent committees or task forces (synod and presbytery executives, 64%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 76%), and helping initiate PC(USA) judicial proceedings (synod and presbytery executives, 68%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 88%).

The surveys also asked those from constituencies outside of synod and presbytery leadership about their involvement in activities. At least half of those who had been involved indicated that they were satisfied with the Office of the General Assembly's contribution to that experience:

- Leaders of five in six congregations (83%) had completed and submitted Session Annual Statistical Reports or Five-Part Forms. Of these, three in five (60%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly had made to the experience of doing this.
- Almost all of those who had served on the staff or elected leadership of other national General Assembly agencies (94%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly had made to the experience of doing this.
- Four in five General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates (82%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly had made to the experience of attending General Assemblies.
- Two-thirds of General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates (66%) had used Les, the PC(USA)'s electronic system for meetings. Half of these commissioners and delegates (44%) were *satisfied* with the Office of the General Assembly's contribution to their experience of using Les. One-quarter (28%) were *dissatisfied*.
- Three-quarters of General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements members who attended General Assemblies (77%) were *satisfied* with the Office of the General Assembly's contribution to the experience of doing this.
- Five in six of those who had served on General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements (84%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly had made to the experience of doing this.
- Almost all of those who had served on General Assembly permanent committees and task forces (97%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly had made to the experience of doing this.
- All of those who had served on the staff or elected leadership of PC(USA) ecumenical partner organizations, U.S. denominations with which the PC(USA) is in correspondence, and/or non-U.S. churches with which the PC(USA) maintains partnerships (100%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly made to the experience.

- One-third of recipients of the Presbyterian Historical Society newsletter *Presbyterian Heritage* (36%) had contacted the historical society with research questions. Of these, four in five (82%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly had made to the experience of doing this.
- One in five *Presbyterian Heritage* recipients (20%) had submitted materials to the Presbyterian Historical Society for storage or microfilming. Of these, five in six (83%) were *satisfied* with the contribution that the Office of the General Assembly had made to the experience of doing this.

**Examination and Assessment of Office of the General Assembly  
Communications Resources**

All of the surveys asked respondents which of eight PC(USA) communications resources produced by the Office of the General Assembly they had examined between 2001 and 2006 and how they would rate those resources they had examined. The resources assessed were: Office of the General Assembly Web site ([www.pcusa.org/oga](http://www.pcusa.org/oga)), Presbyterian Historical Society Web site ([www.history.pcusa.org](http://www.history.pcusa.org)), *Continuing the Journey* (a publication for past, present, and future General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates), *Perspectives* (an electronic publication), *Journal of Presbyterian History*, *Presbyterian Heritage* (a Presbyterian Historical Society newsletter), *Constitution of the PC(USA)*, and *Minutes of the General Assembly*.

Table 4 shows that the most widely examined of the eight resources listed were the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, Office of the General Assembly Web site, and *Minutes of the General Assembly*. Two in five respondents from 11 of the 13 constituencies surveyed had examined each of these three communications resources between 2001 and 2006. For example, two-thirds of congregational leaders had examined the *Constitution* (69%) and the Web site (65%), and 44% had examined the *Minutes*.

Half of synod and presbytery leaders (synod and presbytery executives, 54%; synod and presbytery stated clerks, 52%) and General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates (56%) had also examined *Continuing the Journey*. Two-thirds of recipients of the Presbyterian Historical Society newsletter *Presbyterian Heritage* (70%) had examined the newsletter.

**Table 4  
Percentage of Respondents Who Had Examined the Following Office of the General Assembly  
Communication Resources Between 2001 and 2006**

	<b>Congre- gational Leaders</b>	<b>MGB MGB Stated Execs.Clerks</b>	<b>MGB MGB Mods.</b>	<b>GA Agency Leaders</b>	<b>GA Comms.</b>	<b>COLA Mems.</b>
<i>Constitution of the PC(USA)</i> .....	69%	92%	92%	73%	59%	47%
Office of the General Assembly Web site .....	65%	88%	95%	76%	78%	70%
<i>Minutes of the General Assembly</i> .....	44%	79%	78%	64%	67%	34%
<i>Perspectives</i> (electronic publication).....	11%	62%	43%	16%	33%	10%
Presbyterian Historical Society Web site.....	11%	28%	34%	13%	12%	10%
<i>Continuing the Journey</i> .....	9%	54%	52%	22%	21%	23%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> (PHS newsletter) .....	8%	25%	42%	9%	18%	10%
<i>Journal of Presbyterian History</i> .....	6%	28%	28%	7%	9%	10%

**Table 4 (cont.)  
Percentage of Respondents Who Had Examined the Following Office of the General Assembly  
Communication Resources Between 2001 and 2006**

	<b>Comm. Mem- bers</b>	<b>Inter. &amp; Ecum. Partners</b>	<b>Racial- Ethnic Caucus</b>	<b>COM/ CPM Mods.</b>	<b>Comm. Network Parts.</b>	<b>Presbyt. Herit. Recips.</b>
<i>Constitution of the PC(USA)</i> .....	90%	60%	27%	87%	60%	60%
Office of the General Assembly Web site .....	86%	40%	40%	75%	85%	45%
<i>Minutes of the General Assembly</i> .....	64%	60%	18%	46%	43%	44%
<i>Perspectives</i> (electronic publication).....	29%	40%	10%	10%	38%	19%
Presbyterian Historical Society Web site.....	17%	—	3%	10%	38%	35%
<i>Continuing the Journey</i> .....	26%	—	10%	19%	10%	8%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> (PHS newsletter) .....	12%	—	—	8%	22%	70%
<i>Journal of Presbyterian History</i> .....	21%	—	—	8%	10%	47%

Note: — = no cases in this group

At least two-thirds of respondents from the survey constituencies who had examined the communications resources listed between 2001 and 2006 rated those resources as *good*. These were the only two exceptions: only half of General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (50%) rated *Presbyterian Heritage* as *good*, and one-third of General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements members (33%) rated *Perspectives*, the Office of the General Assembly’s electronic publication, *good*. (See Table 5.)

**Table 5**  
**Percentage of Those Who Had Examined**  
**Office of the General Assembly Communication Resources**  
**Between 2001 and 2006 Who Rated Them as Good**

	<b>Congre- gational Leaders</b>	<b>MGB MGB Stated Execs.Clerks</b>	<b>MGB MGB Mods.</b>	<b>GA Agency Leaders</b>	<b>GA GA Comms.</b>	<b>COLA Mems.</b>
<i>Constitution of the PC(USA)</i> .....	92%	86%	96%	97%	91%	93%
Office of the General Assembly Web site .....	82%	72%	92%	92%	76%	81%
<i>Minutes of the General Assembly</i> .....	87%	95%	92%	89%	97%	90%
<i>Perspectives</i> (electronic publication).....	66%	83%	91%	75%	83%	33%
Presbyterian Historical Society Web site.....	90%	90%	93%	100%	71%	67%
<i>Continuing the Journey</i> .....	76%	80%	82%	91%	82%	83%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> (PHS newsletter) .....	84%	65%	91%	100%	89%	67%
<i>Journal of Presbyterian History</i> .....	94%	79%	96%	100%	100%	67%

**Table 5 (cont.)**  
**Percentage of Those Who Had Examined**  
**Office of the General Assembly Communication Resources**  
**Between 2001 and 2006 Who Rated Them as Good**

	<b>Comm. Mem- bers</b>	<b>Inter.Racial- &amp; Ecum.Ethnic PartnersCaucus</b>	<b>COM/ CPM Mods.</b>	<b>Comm. Network Parts.</b>	<b>Presbyt. Herit. Recips.</b>
<i>Constitution of the PC(USA)</i> .....	82%	67%	88%	91%	96%
Office of the General Assembly Web site .....	76%	100%	92%	86%	88%
<i>Minutes of the General Assembly</i> .....	88%	67%	80%	89%	82%
<i>Perspectives</i> (electronic publication).....	82%	100%	100%	62%	78%
Presbyterian Historical Society Web site.....	71%	—	100%	83%	92%
<i>Continuing the Journey</i> .....	100%	—	100%	79%	90%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> (PHS newsletter) .....	50%	—	—	100%	93%
<i>Journal of Presbyterian History</i> .....	100%	—	—	100%	96%

Note: — = no cases in this group

#### **Contact with Office of the General Assembly Committee Members and Staff**

The surveys asked respondents about their contact with Committee on the Office of the General Assembly members and Office of the General Assembly staff. Respondents were asked whether they had been in contact in various ways with Office of the General Assembly committee members and staff between 2001 and 2006. Those who had been in contact were asked how many times there had been such contact and whether they were satisfied with this contact. The types of contact listed were by telephone, e-mail, letter, in-person visits to their areas, in-person visits to the Presbyterian Center, in-person visits to the Presbyterian Historical Society office, at General Assembly, at General Assembly permanent committee or task force meetings, at ecumenical gatherings, at training events or workshops, and through other contacts.

The largest proportions of respondents had been in contact with the Office of the General Assembly staff by telephone and e-mail (see below). In general, contact was less common for other types of contact with staff and for any type of contact with Office of the General Assembly committee members.

#### **Telephone Contact**

Nine in ten synod and presbytery executives (89%), synod and presbytery stated clerks (93%), and General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (95%) had talked with Office of the General Assembly staff by telephone, while one-third of congregational leaders (31%) had done so. The median number of times that those from each constituency who had talked with Office of the General Assembly staff by telephone between 2001 and 2006 had done so ranged from 3 to 45 times. At least three-quarters of those from each constituency who had talked with Office of the General Assembly staff by phone were *satisfied* with those phone conversations. (See Table 6.)



**Table 6**  
**Information about Telephone Contact Between Respondents and**  
**Office of the General Assembly Staff**

	<b>Percent in Contact 2001 to 2006</b>	<b>Median Telephone Contacts 2001 to 2006</b>	<b>Percent Satisfied with Contacts</b>
Congregational leaders.....	31%	3	78%
Synod and presbytery executives.....	89%	45	90%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks.....	93%	25	99%
Synod and presbytery moderators.....	46%	3	100%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	46%	11	88%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates.....	39%	4	86%
Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	68%	20	95%
Permanent committee and task force members.....	95%	20	100%
International and ecumenical partners.....	60%	—	100%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants.....	50%	3	92%
COM and CPM moderators.....	47%	3	79%
Communicators Network participants.....	51%	12	95%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	42%	5	89%

Note: — = not available

### **E-Mail Contact**

Nine in ten synod and presbytery executives (89%), synod and presbytery stated clerks (94%), and General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (88%) had exchanged e-mail messages with Office of the General Assembly staff, while one-quarter of congregational leaders (24%) had done so. The median number of times those in each constituency who had exchanged e-mail with Office of the General Assembly staff between 2001 and 2006 had done so ranged from 1 to 99 times. At least four in five respondents from each constituency who had exchanged e-mail with Office of the General Assembly staff were *satisfied* with that e-mail exchange. The one exception was international and ecumenical partners. Only one-third of them (33%) were satisfied with the e-mail contact. (See Table 7.)

**Table 7**  
**Information about E-mail Contact Between Respondents and**  
**Office of the General Assembly Staff**

	<b>Percentage In Contact 2001 to 2006</b>	<b>Median E-mail Contacts 2001 to 2006</b>	<b>Percentage Satisfied with Contacts</b>
Congregational leaders.....	24%	4	75%
Synod and presbytery executives.....	89%	—	87%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks.....	94%	50	97%
Synod and presbytery moderators.....	41%	10	100%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	47%	8	96%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates.....	38%	4	86%
Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	66%	12	88%
Permanent committee and task force members.....	88%	30	100%
International and ecumenical partners.....	80%	—	33%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants.....	38%	4	100%
COM and CPM moderators.....	29%	5	86%
Communicators Network participants.....	46%	10	94%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	36%	10	96%

Note: — = not available

### **Possible Responses to Shortfalls in Per-Capita Contributions and** **to Interest on the Part of Congregations in Separating from the PC(USA)**

The surveys asked respondents how the PC(USA) should respond to the limited number of congregations and presbyteries that have not made the per-capita, or per church member, contributions in the amounts that the denomination has recommended. These contributions

finance the work of the Office of the General Assembly. Respondents were asked to what extent: (1) the financing of the Office of the General Assembly’s work through per-capita contributions is fair and equitable; (2) the General Assembly should dramatically reduce the size and scope of the Office of the General Assembly’s ministries to eliminate the per-capita contribution shortfall; and (3) the failure of presbyteries and congregations to make the recommended per-capita contributions concerns them greatly. Respondents were also asked to what extent the reduction or cessation of per-capita contributions reflects financial problems or legitimate concerns that the presbyteries and congregations have about the denomination’s direction.

At least two-thirds of the respondents from each constituency *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that financing the work of the Office of the General Assembly through per-capita contributions is fair and equitable and at least half were concerned about the failure of presbyteries and congregations to make these contributions in the amounts suggested. For example, four in five congregational leaders (78%) and synod and presbytery executives (82%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that funding the Office of the General Assembly through per-capita contributions is fair. Two-thirds of congregational leaders (60%) and synod and presbytery executives (75%) agreed that the failure of some presbyteries and congregations to make the per-capita contributions that the denomination has recommended worries them.

Respondents from some specific constituencies were more understanding about the per-capita contribution shortfall. More than half of congregational leaders (54%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that congregations choosing not to make per-capita contributions have legitimate concerns. More than half of General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (51%) and Presbyterian Communicators Network participants (58%) agreed that, for financial reasons, many congregations are not able to make per-capita contributions in the amounts lines that the denomination has recommended. (See Table 8.)

**Table 8**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Strongly Agreed or Agreed with Selected Statements**  
**about the Shortfall in Per-Capita Contributions**

	<b>Financing OGA Through Per-Capita Contributions Is Fair</b>	<b>Those Not Making Per-Capita Contributions Have Concerns</b>	<b>Those Not Making Per-Capita Contributions Lack Money</b>
Congregational leaders.....	78%	54%	45%
Synod and presbytery executives.....	82%	42%	45%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks.....	90%	41%	40%
Synod and presbytery moderators.....	84%	49%	41%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	84%	34%	34%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates.....	84%	47%	49%
Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	81%	56%	38%
Permanent committee and task force members.....	93%	33%	51%
International and ecumenical partners.....	100%	20%	—
Racial-ethnic caucus participants.....	68%	43%	36%
COM and CPM moderators.....	88%	45%	45%
Communicators Network participants.....	82%	26%	58%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	80%	38%	43%

Note: — = no cases in this group

**Table 8 (cont.)**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Strongly Agreed or Agreed with Selected Statements**  
**about the Shortfall in Per-Capita Contributions**

	<b>Shrink OGA Ministries To Eliminate Shortfall</b>	<b>Failure to Make Per-Capita Contributions Concerns Me</b>
Congregational leaders.....	38%	60%
Synod and presbytery executives.....	29%	75%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks.....	15%	88%
Synod and presbytery moderators.....	24%	86%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	27%	80%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates.....	30%	71%
Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	19%	75%
Permanent committee and task force members.....	16%	86%
International and ecumenical partners.....	20%	60%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants.....	14%	55%
COM and CPM moderators.....	32%	75%
Communicators Network participants.....	16%	79%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	33%	67%

Leaders of one in ten congregations (9%) indicated that in 2006 their congregations had not made per-capita contributions in the amounts that the denomination had recommended. One in ten presbyteries whose leaders responded to the surveys (synod and presbytery executives, 16%; presbytery stated clerks, 15%; synod and presbytery moderators, 9%; presbytery Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry moderators, 6%) had not made per-capita contributions in the recommended amounts.

The surveys also asked respondents how the PC(USA) and the Office of the General Assembly should respond to the needs of presbyteries with congregations that are interested in separating from the PC(USA). Respondents were asked to what extent that the PC(USA) and the Office of the General Assembly should : (1) help presbyteries engage in dialogue with congregations about their concerns; (2) help presbyteries maintain ownership of all church buildings and property at the expense of congregations that choose to separate; (3) help presbyteries negotiate divisions of buildings and property with congregations that choose to separate; and (4) encourage presbyteries to allow congregations that choose to separate to take all church buildings and property with them at the expense of the presbyteries.

At least four in five respondents from each of the various constituencies believed that *to a great extent* or *to some extent* the PC(USA) should help presbyteries engage in dialogue with congregations interested in separating. At least half of the respondents from each constituency believed that the denomination should help presbyteries maintain ownership of all church building and property at the expense of any congregations that separate. Between one-third and two-thirds of respondents from the constituencies believed that the denomination should help presbyteries negotiate equitable divisions of buildings and property with congregations that choose to separate. One-third or less of respondents from each constituency believed that the denomination should encourage congregations to take all church buildings and property with them at the expense of the presbyteries. (See Table 9.)

**Table 9**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Believed**  
**That the PC(USA) Should *to a Great Extent* or *to Some Extent***  
**Respond to Interest on the Part of Congregations in Separating from the PC(USA)**

	<b>Help Presbyteries Dialogue with Congregations</b>	<b>Help Presbyteries Keep Ownership of All Church Property</b>	<b>Help Presbyteries Negotiate Equitable Property Divisions</b>	<b>Encourage Presbyteries to Let Congre- gations Take All Property</b>
Congregational leaders.....	83%	49%	57%	31%
Synod and presbytery executives.....	88%	62%	66%	20%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks.....	94%	76%	71%	6%
Synod and presbytery moderators.....	89%	59%	59%	16%
Leaders of other GA agencies.....	95%	70%	62%	22%
GA commissioners and delegates.....	90%	56%	55%	21%
Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	88%	67%	55%	9%
Committee and task force members.....	93%	74%	58%	14%
International and ecumenical partners.....	83%	50%	50%	33%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants.....	83%	62%	30%	38%
COM and CPM moderators.....	93%	58%	60%	14%
Communicators Network participants.....	87%	66%	55%	13%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	89%	61%	49%	24%

The Office of the General Assembly’s Leadership in Support of PC(USA) Mission

At least two-thirds of respondents from the various constituencies believed that the Office of the General Assembly exhibits leadership in support of PC(USA) mission *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Three-quarters of synod and presbytery executives (74%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly exhibits leadership, while two-thirds of congregational leaders (64%) did so. (See Table 10.)

**Table 10**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Believed that the Office of the General Assembly**  
**Exhibits Leadership in Support of PC(USA) Mission *to a Great Extent* or *to Some Extent***

Synod and presbytery stated clerks.....	87%
Synod and presbytery moderators.....	86%
Communicators Network participants.....	86%
Permanent committee and task force members.....	84%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates.....	82%
Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	80%
International and ecumenical partners.....	80%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	78%
COM and CPM moderators.....	75%
Synod and presbytery executives.....	74%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	70%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants.....	68%
Congregational leaders.....	64%

Larger proportions of leaders of congregations with 800 or fewer members than of leaders of even larger congregations believed that the Office of the General Assembly exhibits leadership in support of PC(USA) mission. Leaders of two-thirds of congregations with memberships of 800 or less (65%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly exhibits leadership in support of PC(USA) mission *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. In contrast, leaders of half of congregations with memberships greater than 800 (55%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly exhibits leadership in support of mission.

### Office of the General Assembly Strengths and Their Importance

Table 11 shows the extent to which respondents believed that various qualities were strengths of the Office of the General Assembly. For half of the Office of the General Assembly's constituencies, respondents selected—more than any other potential Office of the General Assembly strength—interpretation of the PC(USA) Constitution. At least three in five respondents from each constituency believed that interpreting the Constitution was an agency strength. Three constituencies cited the agency's expertise more than any other strength. At least half of respondents from each constituency believed that expertise was an agency strength. Also for half of the constituencies, funds development was the quality that the fewest respondents selected as an agency strength. (See Table 11.)

**Table 11**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Believed that the Following Qualities**  
**Are to a Great Extent or to Some Extent General Assembly Strengths**

	Cong Lead.	MGB. Execs.	MGB. Clerks	MGB. Mods.	GA Agency Leaders	GA Comms.	COLA Mems.	Comm. Mems.	Int'l. Ecum. Parts.	Racial Ethnic Cauc.	COM CPM Mods.	Comm. Network Parts.	Pres. Herit. Recip.
Advocacy.....	60%	66%	68%	73%	82%	73%	76%	79%	83%	69%	73%	78%	56%
Communication.....	60%	79%	87%	76%	77%	72%	31%	62%	83%	72%	78%	90%	59%
Cooperation with international and ecumenical partners.....	67%	74%	62%	74%	77%	74%	50%	72%	83%	66%	72%	76%	56%
Cooperation with synod and presbytery leadership.....	64%	82%	94%	78%	84%	70%	57%	68%	50%	61%	74%	82%	57%
Efficiency.....	40%	59%	80%	60%	59%	51%	39%	60%	67%	57%	45%	71%	44%
Expertise.....	56%	91%	95%	86%	84%	72%	79%	77%	67%	51%	80%	87%	56%
Fairness.....	52%	80%	86%	76%	73%	61%	55%	77%	67%	57%	68%	87%	50%
Funds develop- ment.....	40%	22%	39%	53%	32%	44%	21%	38%	67%	56%	53%	68%	33%
Helpfulness.....	57%	91%	94%	78%	75%	69%	72%	76%	67%	63%	84%	90%	54%
Implementation of General Assembly directives.....	60%	83%	86%	74%	89%	74%	69%	74%	83%	57%	73%	84%	57%
Interpretation of the PC(USA) Consti- tution.....	67%	91%	95%	87%	84%	77%	72%	81%	67%	59%	85%	86%	62%
Leadership.....	50%	70%	81%	78%	80%	67%	60%	77%	83%	59%	73%	84%	55%
Representative- ness.....	47%	57%	76%	62%	75%	60%	60%	76%	83%	59%	63%	71%	43%
Responsiveness.....	49%	78%	89%	69%	79%	60%	62%	72%	67%	57%	71%	79%	46%
Vision.....	42%	53%	58%	64%	62%	54%	50%	60%	67%	48%	49%	76%	47%

How important is it that these qualities be Office of the General Assembly strengths? Table 12 shows how important respondents believed it is that the Office of the General Assembly excels in these 15 areas. Communication, fairness, helpfulness, and interpretation of the PC(USA) Constitution were all areas that the largest proportion of respondents from at least two constituencies cited as being *very important* or *important*. Advocacy, cooperation with international and ecumenical partners, and funds development were areas that the smallest proportion of respondents from at least two constituencies selected as important. (See Table 12.)

**Table 12**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Believed that It Is *Very Important* or *Important***  
**that the Office of the General Assembly Excels in the Following Areas**

	Cong Lead.	MGB. Execs.	MGB. Clerks	MGB Mods.	GA Agency Leaders	GA Comms.	COLA Mems.	Comm. Mems.	Int'l. Ecum. Parts.	Racial Ethnic Cauc.	COM CPM Mods.	Comm. Network Parts.	Pres. Herit. Recip.
Advocacy.....	62%	49%	60%	72%	69%	72%	77%	74%	67%	80%	69%	84%	66%
Communication .....	89%	92%	100%	82%	96%	96%	94%	93%	100%	87%	91%	97%	88%
Cooperation with international and ecumenical partners.....	70%	73%	72%	71%	80%	76%	74%	79%	83%	72%	65%	84%	70%
Cooperation with synod and presbytery leadership .....	86%	97%	92%	100%	96%	95%	90%	88%	67%	86%	89%	97%	85%
Efficiency .....	87%	95%	60%	96%	86%	93%	90%	86%	67%	80%	93%	97%	85%
Expertise.....	89%	95%	80%	96%	93%	95%	94%	84%	67%	83%	95%	95%	86%
Fairness.....	87%	96%	99%	98%	95%	96%	90%	91%	67%	83%	93%	95%	85%
Funds develop- ment .....	73%	55%	67%	87%	59%	77%	71%	61%	83%	80%	79%	89%	74%
Helpfulness .....	88%	96%	100%	98%	96%	95%	90%	88%	67%	83%	95%	95%	88%
Implementation of General Assembly directives.....	85%	92%	96%	91%	94%	94%	87%	88%	83%	80%	84%	95%	84%
Interpretation of the PC(USA) Consti- tution.....	88%	97%	100%	94%	95%	94%	87%	91%	67%	80%	96%	97%	86%
Leadership .....	84%	89%	94%	96%	95%	90%	87%	93%	83%	83%	92%	92%	83%
Representative- ness.....	80%	65%	85%	87%	80%	87%	80%	84%	83%	80%	84%	87%	79%
Responsiveness.....	88%	92%	98%	96%	95%	95%	90%	91%	83%	83%	92%	97%	86%
Vision .....	83%	88%	88%	94%	91%	88%	87%	84%	83%	79%	89%	95%	79%

**The Office of the General Assembly’s Faithfulness to Its Charge  
and Importance to the PC(USA)**

The survey included the text of the Office of the General Assembly’s charge. That charge reads: “The Office of the General Assembly accepts the call of God to work for a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that is reconciled in Christ and led by the Spirit to be a vital church in the world. Our hope is for a church of renewed congregations committed to being an effective witness to the good of the Gospel and a powerful advocate for justice and mercy.”

At least three in five respondents from each constituency believed that the Office of the General Assembly was faithful to its charge *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Nine in ten leaders of other General Assembly agencies (92%) and synod and presbytery stated clerks (90%) believed that Office of the General Assembly was faithful to its charge. Three-quarters of synod and presbytery executives (75%), two-thirds of congregational leaders (68%), and three in five racial-ethnic caucus participants (59%) also believed that the agency was faithful to its charge. (See Table 13.)

**Table 13**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Believed that the Office of the General Assembly Was Faithful**  
**to a Great Extent or to Some Extent to Its Charge**

Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	92%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks .....	90%
Communicators Network participants.....	88%
COM and CPM moderators.....	86%
Committee on Local Arrangements members .....	85%
GA permanent committee and task force members.....	81%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates .....	80%
International and ecumenical partners.....	80%
Synod and presbytery moderators .....	79%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	76%
Synod and presbytery executives .....	75%
Congregational leaders.....	68%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants .....	59%

Larger proportions of leaders of congregations with memberships of 800 or less than of even larger congregations believed that the Office of the General Assembly was faithful to its charge. Leaders of seven in ten congregations with memberships of 800 or less (70%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was faithful to its charge *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Leaders of three in five congregations with memberships greater than 800 (59%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly was faithful to its charge.

At least three in five respondents from each constituency believed that the Office of the General Assembly charge (see above) reflects what the Office of the General Assembly *should* be doing *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Five in six congregational leaders (85%) and synod and presbytery executives (82%) believed the charge reflects what the agency should be doing. Eleven in twelve General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (93%) believed the charge reflects what the agency should be doing, while three in five international and ecumenical partners (62%) believed this. (See Table 14.)

**Table 14**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Believed that the Office of the General Assembly Charge Reflects to a Great Extent or to Some Extent What the Agency Should Be Doing**

GA permanent committee and task force members .....	93%
GA Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	91%
Presbyterian Communicators Network participants .....	90%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks .....	89%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates .....	89%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants .....	88%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	87%
Synod and presbytery moderators .....	86%
Congregational leaders .....	85%
COM and CPM moderators.....	84%
Synod and presbytery executives .....	82%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	79%
International and ecumenical partners.....	62%

The survey also asked respondents to rate the importance of the Office of the General Assembly's work to the PC(USA). At least three-quarters of respondents from each constituency believed that the Office of the General Assembly's work is *very important* or *important* to the denomination. Three-quarters of congregational leaders (74%) and seven in eight synod and presbytery executives (86%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly's work is important. At least nine in ten synod and presbytery stated clerks (99%), synod and presbytery moderators (92%), leaders of other General Assembly agencies (90%), General Assembly Committee on Local Arrangements members (100%), General Assembly permanent committee and task force members (98%), international and ecumenical partners (89%), and Presbyterian Communicators Network participants (92%) believed that work is important. (See Table 15.)

**Table 15**  
**Percentage of Respondents Who Believed that the Office of the General Assembly's Work Is Very Important or Important to the PC(USA)**

GA Committee on Local Arrangements members.....	100%
Synod and presbytery stated clerks .....	99%
GA permanent committee and task force members .....	98%
Synod and presbytery moderators .....	92%
Presbyterian Communicators Network participants .....	92%
Leaders of other General Assembly agencies.....	90%
International and ecumenical partners.....	89%
GA commissioners and advisory delegates .....	87%
Synod and presbytery executives .....	86%
Racial-ethnic caucus participants .....	85%
COM and CPM moderators.....	78%
<i>Presbyterian Heritage</i> recipients.....	77%
Congregational leaders.....	74%

Larger proportions of leaders of congregations with 800 or fewer members than of even larger congregations believed that the work of the Office of the General Assembly is important to the PC(USA). Leaders of three-quarters of congregations with memberships of 800 or less (75%) believed that the Office of the General Assembly's work is *very important* or *important* to the denomination. Leaders of two-thirds of congregations with memberships greater than 800 (67%) believed that the agency's work is important.

#### **Responses to Open-Ended Questions**

Some respondents from each constituency wrote or typed responses to the surveys' open-ended question about the Office of the General Assembly.

In response to the open-ended question, some respondents praised the work of the Office of the General Assembly in what many observed were difficult times. Respondents singled out for praise Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick and several of his Office of the General Assembly colleagues (Evelyn Hwang, Gradye Parsons, Valerie Small) as well as his General Assembly Council counterpart, Linda Valentine. That

Kirkpatrick and others speak out on issues such as the Taco Bell boycott has made some of the respondents proud to be Presbyterian. “Cliff rocks!” wrote one respondent.

People who had had a good experience at General Assembly, on a General Assembly permanent committee or task force, in synod or presbytery leadership training, or within the call system were particularly effusive with their praise.

Others sought to defend the Office of the General Assembly and the PC(USA) against criticism from the *Layman* and what they saw as creeping congregationalism and individualism that, to their minds, threatens Presbyterian connectionalism.

Others were much tougher on Reverend Kirkpatrick, the Office of the General Assembly, and the denomination in general. The stated clerk and the General Assembly office have presided over a period in which the denomination’s traditional roots in evangelism and spiritual revitalization have eroded, the critics observed. According to these critics, “leftist” or “liberal” individuals who appropriate Christianity only very selectively have taken over General Assemblies and the Office of the General Assembly staff. This has at the very least set up a protracted battle over social issues that will drive away from the denomination not only conservatives but also moderates who simply grow sick of conflict, the critics contended. Declining membership and attendance numbers is one of the results of this shift away from evangelism, protracted internal conflict, and development of an institution-building focus on structures, rules, and money (evident even in the tone, content, and length of the evaluation survey itself, a few wrote).

Critics urged the Office of the General Assembly and the PC(USA) to focus on communication, congregational transformation, faith-sharing, and stewardship, instead of on social witness advocacy and ecumenical outreach. Social witness advocacy, ecumenical outreach, and even mission itself can, do, and should take place in local congregations, not in Louisville. Different respondents stressed different aspects of communication: information-sharing and aggressive public relations. As part of a further devolution of responsibilities to local congregations that some respondents advocated, the denomination should scale back the size and scope of Office of the General Assembly ministries dramatically, these respondents suggested. “Get out of the way [of local congregations]!” several respondents wrote.

Sometimes respondents from very different perspectives ended with a similarly pessimistic tone. About the PC(USA), wrote one respondent: “We should disband as soon as possible.”

Respondents who wrote comments in response to the open-ended question sometimes were poorly informed about the ministries of the Office of the General Assembly and the differences among the General Assembly, Office of the General Assembly, General Assembly Council, and other national General Assembly agencies. Some respondents used the phrases General Assembly, Office of the General Assembly, and General Assembly Council and the corresponding acronyms interchangeably.

Other respondents pursued different strategies with reference to their knowledge or lack of knowledge. International and ecumenical partners and professional historians who receive the *Presbyterian Heritage* newsletter were particularly outspoken about their lack of knowledge about the Office of the General Assembly. Others were clearly familiar with differences between the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, but they wanted these differences abolished. Merge the two agencies and finance them in a combined mission funding system that does away with per-capita contributions, some respondents urged. Few people understand what the difference between the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council is anyway, they wrote.

The Office of the General Assembly and the PC(USA) as a whole, on the one hand, and individual congregations, on the other hand, have become aloof from each other, some critics and supporters alike argued. An aggressive communications campaign might help reconnect everyone. That campaign might start with an improved PC(USA) Web site, an improved Les electronic system for meetings, and staff returning e-mail messages and voice-mail messages even more promptly, respondents suggested.

Very few of those who responded to the open-ended question referred to the *Committee* on the Office of the General Assembly. Some respondents expressed concern about the Office of the General Assembly charge, which they said was vague and/or overemphasized social justice advocacy.

### Conclusion

Many Presbyterian leaders believe that the Office of the General Assembly has exhibited leadership in support of the PC(USA)’s mission and has been faithful in carrying out its responsibilities between 2001 and 2006. Most also believe that the Office of the General Assembly’s work is important to the denomination. Somewhat smaller numbers of leaders of synods, presbyteries, and congregations believe that the Office of the General Assembly has been effective in serving synods, presbyteries, and congregations of various memberships sizes. Leaders of small congregations and very large congregations are more likely than leaders of other congregations to regard the Office of the General Assembly as effective.

Most Presbyterian leaders who have participated in activities that Office of the General Assembly staff support or who have communicated with Office of the General Assembly staff by telephone or e-mail are satisfied with the Office of the General Assembly’s contribution to those activities and with that communication, respectively. Those who have examined Office of the General Assembly-produced communications resources such as the *Constitution of the PC(USA)*, Office of the General Assembly Web site, *Minutes of the General Assembly*, and *Continuing the Journey* regard those resources favorably.

Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick, who helps direct the Office of the General Assembly, is a focal point for Presbyterian leaders’ assessments of the work of the Office of the General Assembly. Many Presbyterians praise Reverend Kirkpatrick’s work effusively, while others connect his tenure with what they see as the denomination’s decline. Some Presbyterian leaders cannot distinguish between the General Assembly, Office of the General Assembly, and General Assembly Council. A few leaders recommended that the Office of the General Assembly and General Assembly Council be merged.

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**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-B**

*Comment on Item 03-B—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) expresses its deep appreciation to the Committee on Review of the Office of the General Assembly. We believe your review has been thorough and gives COGA and the staff of the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) useful insights and directions for the years ahead.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) agrees to the recommendations in the report and offers the following comments on them.

“1. The Committee on Review recommends that the OGA seek and use more volunteers in times of peak workload and where particular experience and expertise are needed. An example of the latter would be the work of Vernon Broyles, a long-time member of the national church staff, in the area of social witness.”

*Comment:* The COGA/Office of the General Assembly (OGA) will continue to explore the use of volunteers and interns in the OGA. The OGA has also used interns from seminaries and colleges. Some were paid by OGA and others were paid by their institution. In addition, OGA has been the chosen spot for sabbaticals from some presbytery staff. The meeting of the General Assembly could not be held without the generous support of hundreds of volunteers. The COGA has certainly benefited from the volunteer service of Rev. Broyles.

“2. The committee recommends that the OGA expand conversations with other denominations for the purpose of sharing best practices.”

*Comment:* The OGA currently shares best practices with other denominations in a variety of areas such as the planning of meetings, use of technology, ecumenical efforts, and vocations. The COGA/OGA will continue to explore with the OGA staff other areas where it may benefit from the practices of other denominations.

“3. The committee recommends that the joint OGA-GAC Office of Vocation address disparities in the ordination examination process. Concerns include the need for increased sensitivity to racial ethnic candidates in the way the exams are created and read. The committee further recommends the development of procedures for recruiting and training readers that remedy these concerns.”

*Comment:* The Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examination of Candidates (PCCEC) underwent a six-year review during the same period as the OGA. The report can be found as Item 14-Self-Study PCCEC. The PCCEC acknowledges the issues raised by the review committee and is already working to address them.

“4. The committee applauds the progress OGA has made in using electronic communication as a means of disseminating information. We recommend that OGA either develop its own Web site or that a way be found to guarantee faster dissemination of time-sensitive information generated by OGA on the PC(USA) Web site administered by the GAC.”

*Comment:* The use of the World Wide Web as distribution of information has increased tremendously in the six-year period of the review. The current PC(USA) Web site is undertaking a major study of its future. The goal of the COGA/OGA in this study is to develop faster and more efficient ways to disseminate its time sensitive information.

“5. The committee recommends that the Web be utilized as a means of making available OGA’s vast library of position papers, study documents, General Assembly reports, etc. to a larger constituency and that the constitution be available in a user-friendly and accessible format.”

*Comment:* Currently advisory opinions, constitutional musings, General Assembly *Minutes* since 1991, archived issues of *Perspectives*, the *Book of Order*, ecumenical newsletters, and many other materials are available. We agree that not all material is accessible nor is what available easily accessible. Some of the PC(USA) seminaries are working on placing many of these materials on-line. The COGA/OGA is committed to addressing this recommendation and working collaboratively with the seminaries.

“6. The committee recommends the development by OGA of a reliable system, perhaps Web-based, for forwarding information to pastors and congregants.”

*Comment:* The COGA welcomes this challenge. The OGA has current mailing addresses for all congregations and ministers but a smaller list of e-mail addresses. The COGA/OGA would need to develop protocols with middle governing bodies



before sending information directly to congregations and ministers. The COGA/OGA will explore ways to create such a database and the means to keep it current.

“7. The committee acknowledges and underscores the importance of the per capita apportionment as an essential and joyful affirmation of belonging both to the PC(USA) and the church catholic, as well as an equitable opportunity for all Presbyterians to responsibly support mission coordination and ecclesiastical expenses. Therefore, the committee recommends an expanded effort to interpret and clarify the purpose and use of the per capita apportionment by means of various media, including the PC(USA) Web site.”

*Comment:* The COGA/OGA affirms the review committee’s understanding of per capita as sign of affirmation of belonging to the PC(USA). A report of per capita can be found at Item 03-16. The per capita Website is up on the Web now: [www.pcusa.org/percapita](http://www.pcusa.org/percapita). Other interpretive materials are needed and will be created in 2008.

“8. The committee recommends that OGA with COGA strengthen its long-range planning process and document a three- to five-year plan.”

*Comment:* The COGA/OGA appreciates the concerns and will explore new ways to strengthen the planning process.

“9. The committee’s most challenging recommendation addresses the fact that our denominational structure includes two entities with overlapping responsibilities—OGA and GAC. The committee affirms the steps that have been taken toward synthesis and cooperation between these agencies, most notably through the joint offices for vocation and middle governing body relations. At the same time, however, the Review Committee cannot ignore evidences during the period of review of turf conflict, inefficiencies due to duplication of effort in the dual nature of the system, and substantial public confusion of OGA and GAC roles. It is not our place to suggest a new structure. Even so, we strongly recommend that both agencies increase their commitment to communication and cooperation, find ways to speak with a clear and singular voice, and continue to identify areas such as social witness, theology and leadership development where joint offices could be established.”

*Comment:* The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly meets annually with the General Assembly Council Executive Committee. There is a commitment by the elected members and staff members to work collaboratively. The senior staffs of the two agencies meet regularly. There has been ongoing collaboration and regular meetings among the agency legal offices, the agency operating officers, Theology and Worship, and the Presbyterian Communicators Network. Examples of recent collaboration are the National Elders Conference, the development of officer training material, a joint funds development table, logistical support for large meetings, technology, the ecumenical consultation, the Belhar Confession, and joint work on Middle East issues. The COGA/OGA is committed to making collaboration the norm for the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council.

“10. Pending acceptance of the recommendation from the GAC Review Committee seeking a joint review of all the agencies, the committee recommends that the review process of individual agencies be delayed until 2010 and that COGA, in consultation with the agencies, evaluate the “Standards of Review” and the manual built on these standards before the next cycle of review commences. The committee further recommends that the revised manual specify that each agency be required to complete its self-study and present it to its review committee within 120 days of the close of the General Assembly at which that committee is elected. (Our committee was not able to begin its work until more than nine months after it was elected).”

*Comment:* The COGA welcomes the recommendation to study the review process and standards in light of the completion of the review of all six agencies.

## Item 03-Info

### A. *Advisory Committee on Litigation*

#### I. Narrative

##### *Assigned Responsibilities*

The Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) is composed of six Presbyterian attorneys. Each General Assembly elects two members to a six-year term. Each member is eligible for reelection to an additional term, but in no case may a member serve for a period exceeding twelve consecutive years of service. The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates

persons for the ACL who fit the criteria for eligibility. The Advisory Committee on Litigation was established by the 200th General Assembly (1988) to advise the Stated Clerk on matters relating to litigation.

The consultations typically take place via telephone conference calls after committee members have been provided copies of all pertinent pleadings, orders, and information. The committee ordinarily meets face-to-face at least once each year. It is normally consulted whenever the Stated Clerk is asked to participate in litigation involving matters of civil and religious liberty, church and state relations, and other matters related to the mission and interests of the church.

## II. Disposition of Cases Reported in 2006

### A. *Crawford, US Immigration and Customs v. Sergio Suarez Martinez* Clark v. Sergio Suarez Martinez

U.S. Supreme Court

No. 03–878. Argued October 13, 2004—Decided January 12, 2005

On August 2, 2004, Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick joined a variety of denominational leaders on an amicus brief in the Supreme Court of the United States, *Crawford, US Immigration and Customs v. Sergio Suarez Martinez*.

Under U.S. immigration law, an alien seeking immigration status must be inspected by an immigration officer at a port of entry and unless he is found “clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted” must either be removed immediately under expedited removal or undergo removal proceedings in order to determine whether he or she is admissible into the U.S. While in the removal proceedings, the alien may be detained unless the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security has agreed to parole the alien into the U.S. If the alien has been determined to be inadmissible to the U.S., the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security must deport the alien within ninety days.

This brief is consistent with the policies approved by the General Assembly regarding immigrant persons living and working within the United States.

On January 12, 2005, the Supreme Court of the United States held that under the statute the secretary of Homeland Security may detain inadmissible aliens beyond the ninety day removal period, but only for as long as necessary to achieve reasonable removal. If the government is unable to enforce a removal order within six months, even inadmissible aliens, like Martinez, are entitled to release from immigration detention.

### B. *Christ Universal Mission Church v. City of Chicago*

(7th Cir. 2003)

U.S. Supreme Court—Amici Brief in support of petition for certiorari

On December 2, 2004, Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick joined a variety of denominational and religious leaders on an amicus brief filed in the Supreme Court of the United States asking the Supreme Court to issue a writ of certiorari in *Christ Universal Mission Church v. City of Chicago*. The brief highlighted a split in the Circuits in which the 7th Circuit held in this case and an earlier case, *CLUB v. City of Chicago*, 342 F3rd 752 (7th Cir. 2003), that “a land-use regulation that imposes a substantial burden on religious exercise is one that necessarily bears direct, primary, and fundamental responsibility for rendering religious exercise—including the use of real property for the purpose thereof within the regulated jurisdiction generally—effectively impracticable” *Id.* at 761 [emphasis added].

Amici argued that the Seventh Circuit created such a high standard for establishing when land use decisions impose a substantial burden on religious exercise that the protections of the Free Exercise Clause and Religious Land Use and Institutional Persons Act (RLUIPA) would often be rendered meaningless and would have nationwide adverse consequences on the ability of religious organizations to construct houses of worship. This standard conflicts with the decisions of other circuits and lower courts and violates the express intent of Congress in enacting RLUIPA.

This brief was consistent with the policies approved by the General Assembly regarding the religious liberty guarantees of the First Amendment. The 200th General Assembly (1988) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expressly addressed these issues:

1. Churches have a right of autonomy protected by the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment. Each worshipping community has the right to govern itself and order its life and activity free of government intervention.

2. The government must assert a compelling interest and demonstrate an imminent threat to public safety before the right of autonomy may be set aside [and create a substantial burden] in specific instances and government permitted to interfere with internal church activities. ... (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 555; see also Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience*, A Policy Statement Adopted by the General Assembly 42–43 (1988))

The Supreme Court of the United States denied the petition writ of certiorari. The Circuits are still split on the standard to be applied when deciding whether or not a governmental regulation imposes a substantial burden on the religious exercise of the owner and user of land.

C. *Cutter v. Wilkinson*

U.S. Supreme Court

125 S.Ct. 2113 (2005). Decided May 31, 2005

On December 20, 2004, Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick joined a coalition of religious entities and individuals on an amicus brief to the Supreme Court of the United States in *Cutter v. Wilkinson*. The brief brought together a coalition of entities that gathered under the umbrella of Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion (CFER) to defend the constitutionality of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). The Circuit held that RLUIPA violated the Establishment Clause and was an impermissible legislative accommodation of religion. The amicus brief argued that RLUIPA did not violate the Establishment Clause because it satisfied all three requirements of the establishment clause test: (1) RLUIPA has a secular purpose, to minimize government interference with religious exercise; (2) it does not have the primary effect of advancing religion, because alleviating substantial government burdens on religious exercise—even exclusively, as religious accommodation laws do—does not involve the government *itself* advancing religion; (3) and the statute entails no greater entanglement problem than the ordinary application of Free Exercise doctrine.

This brief is consistent with the policies approved by the General Assembly regarding the religious liberty guarantees of the First Amendment. The 200th General Assembly (1988) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expressly addressed these issues:

1. Churches have a right of autonomy protected by the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment. Each worshiping community has the right to govern itself and order its life and activity free of government intervention.

2. The government must assert a compelling interest and demonstrate an imminent threat to public safety before the right of autonomy may be set aside [and create a substantial burden] in specific instances and government permitted to interfere with internal church activities. ... (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 555; see also Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience*, A Policy Statement Adopted by the General Assembly 42–43 (1988))

On May 31, 2005, the Supreme Court decided the *Cutter v. Wilkinson* case, reversing the 6th Circuit’s opinion. In a decision written by Justice Ginsberg, the Court held that RLUIPA on its face does not violate the Establishment Clause. The RLUIPA, the Court stated, fits within the “corridor between the Religion Clauses: On its face, the Act qualifies as a permissible legislative accommodation of religion that is not barred by the Establishment Clause.” The Court recognized the need for prisons to maintain security, but said: “We have no cause to believe that RLUIPA would not be applied in an appropriately balanced way.” Additionally the Supreme Court affirmed the feasibility of a case-by-case consideration of religious exemptions when a governmental regulation imposes a substantial burden on a sincere expression of religion. The RLUIPA was enacted to establish a standard for such a case-by-case consideration when the regulation imposes a substantial burden upon the religious use of property or the sincere expression of religion of a person who is incarcerated by the government. The statute states that the government must prove that it has a compelling state interest in the regulation if the regulation substantially burdens the religious use of property or the sincere expression of religion of a person who is incarcerated by the government. The court stated in the UDV case below that they have no cause to believe that the compelling interest test would not be applied in an appropriately balanced way to specific claims for exemption from a generally applicable regulation which burdens the religious use of property or the sincere expression of religion of a person who is incarcerated by the government.

D. *Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, et al, v. City of New York, et al*

U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit

Decided June 6, 2007

On April 25, 2005, Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick joined on an amicus brief filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, *Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, et al, v. City of New York, et al*.

Plaintiffs, a religious corporation that owns and operates a church at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 55th Street in Manhattan, New York City (the “Church”), et al.—brought this action to obtain a permanent injunction preventing the City of New York (the “City”) from dispersing homeless persons sleeping, at the Church’s invitation, in the landings at the tops of the staircases and on the Church’s property along 55th Street adjacent to the Church wall (extending about five feet into the public sidewalk), as well as for a declaration that the dispersal of such persons from such areas has violated plaintiffs’ rights.

The United States District Court, S.D. New York, decided on October 24, 2004, that the defendant had failed to prove that there was a compelling state interest in removing homeless persons sleeping on church property. The district court found that the reasons stated were not neutrally applicable to all entities and were individually assessed by the government thus the

government had the burden to assert a compelling state interest in dispersing homeless persons sleeping on church property and substantially burdening the free exercise of religion of 5th Avenue Presbyterian Church.

The issue of when the strict scrutiny standard of review applies in Free Exercise cases has, at times, caused considerable confusion among state and local governments in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in *Employment Div. v. Smith*, 494 U.S. 872 (1990). Amici submitted this brief to the 2nd Circuit to emphasize that the strict scrutiny standard of review, which shifts the burden to the government to assert a compelling state interest when the government has substantially burdened the free exercise of religion, continues to apply, post-*Smith*, where religious exercise is substantially burdened pursuant to a system of individualized assessments by government.

This brief is consistent with the policies approved by the General Assembly regarding the religious liberty guarantees of the First Amendment. The 200th General Assembly (1988) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expressly addressed these issues:

1. Churches have a right of autonomy protected by the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment. Each worshiping community has the right to govern itself and order its life and activity free of government intervention.
2. The government must assert a compelling interest and demonstrate an imminent threat to public safety before the right of autonomy may be set aside [and create a substantial burden] in specific instances and government permitted to interfere with internal church activities. (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 555; see also Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience*, A Policy Statement Adopted by the General Assembly 42–43 (1988))

The U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, on June 6, 2007, affirmed the summary judgment of the District Court. In their Order, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals noted that the City provided no medical evidence that the homeless people who spent the night on Church property constituted a health risk to themselves or to the public at large. They also noted that speculation about potential injuries in insufficient to establish the existence of a public nuisance.

E. *Alberto R. Gonzales, Attorney General, ET AL v. O Centro Espirita Beneficiente Uniao Do Vegetal, ET AL*  
U.S. Supreme Court  
No. 04-1084. Argued November 1, 2007 – Decided February 21, 2006

On September 9, 2005, Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick joined a large variety of denominational leaders on an amicus brief filed in the Supreme Court of the United States, *Alberto R. Gonzales, Attorney General, ET AL v. O Centro Espirita Beneficiente Uniao Do Vegetal, ET AL*. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (“RFRA”) generally prohibits the federal government from imposing a substantial burden on a sincere exercise of religion without first showing that the regulation furthers a compelling governmental interest in the least restrictive way. The District court required the government to prove the underlying facts of the asserted compelling state interest in this case: that sacramental consumption of hoasca posed a serious health risk to the UDV members and that it would lead to a significant increase in nonreligious use. The District court found that the government failed to prove a compelling state reason to restrict the sacramental use of hoasca under RFRA and issued a preliminary injunction against governmental restriction. The 10th Circuit upheld the finding that the government failed to build an adequate record demonstrating that the sacramental use of hoasca presented a danger to the members of the UDV church and thus the government failed to show a compelling state interest in the regulation, which imposed a substantial burden on a sincere exercise of religion.

The amici argued to the U.S. Supreme Court that although RFRA was found unconstitutional when applied to the states, the government can and did choose to provide a standard that allowed for a case-by-case review of a generally applicable federal regulation when the regulation provides a substantial burden on a person's right to exercise their religion. The amici argued that RFRA is consistent with the Establishment clause and is within the authority of the legislature to require a case-by-case analysis when a generally applicable federal regulation is a substantial burden on an individual's sincere exercise of religion.

This brief is consistent with the policies approved by the General Assembly regarding the religious liberty guarantees of the First Amendment. The 200th General Assembly (1988) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expressly addressed these issues:

1. Churches have a right of autonomy protected by the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment. Each worshiping community has the right to govern itself and order its life and activity free of government intervention.
2. The government must assert a compelling interest and demonstrate an imminent threat to public safety before the right of autonomy may be set aside [and create a substantial burden] in specific instances and government permitted to interfere with internal church activities. (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 555; see also Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience*, A Policy Statement Adopted by the General Assembly 42–43 (1988))

On February 21, 2006, the U.S. Supreme Court with Chief Justice Roberts writing the opinion upheld the preliminary injunction against the federal government and affirmed the lower courts' interpretation of RFRA.

## III. Cases Joined (2006–2008)

A. *People of the State of New York v. John Taylor*  
 New York Court of Appeals  
 New York Court of Appeals Decision October 23, 2007

On November 2, 2006, Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk, joined a variety of religious leaders on an amicus brief against the death penalty. In this case, the defendant was convicted of six counts of first-degree murder and sentenced to the death penalty. In his appeal of the sentence, the defendant asserted that there were procedural errors in the sentencing phase of his trial.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long held positions against capital punishment and joined the amicus brief on that basis.

On October 23, 2007, the New York State Court of Appeals ordered that the death sentence be vacated and returned the case to the New York State Supreme Court for re-sentencing.

B. *The Presbyterian Church of Sudan et al., v. Talisman Energy Inc, and the Republic of Sudan*  
 U. S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit

On March 7, 2007, the Stated Clerk joined scholars and former prosecutors with the International Criminal for the former Yugoslavia and the Special Court for Sierra Leone submitting to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit an amicus brief arguing that Talisman Energy could be held liable for its participation in international law violations under either federal common law or international law. The brief argued that a judicial dismissal on a motion to dismiss for lack of evidence was premature prior to a trial on the merits where the parties would submit evidence on their behalf.

The plaintiffs, who are current and former residents of Southern Sudan, allege that they were victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and other violations of international law as a result of acts perpetrated by the Canadian energy company, Talisman Energy, Inc., and the government of Sudan.

The 2nd Circuit has not yet issued an opinion in the appeal.

C. *Town of Foxfield, Colorado, v. The Archdiocese of Denver*  
 State of Colorado Supreme Court  
 Colorado State Court Decision May 1, 2007

On March 15, 2007, the Stated Clerk joined sixteen other religious and civil rights organizations submitting to the Colorado Supreme Court an amicus brief supporting the constitutionality of RLUIPA.

At issue was whether the Court of Appeals erred when it concluded that a parking ordinance was subject to the Freedom to Gather to Worship Act. Also at issue was whether the court of appeals erred in concluding that the archdiocese met either of the relevant jurisdictional prerequisites of RLUIPA.

On May 1, 2007, the Supreme Court of the State of Colorado reversed the earlier ruling favoring the Town of Foxfield. The Court's ruling allows the church's RLUIPA claims to go forward.

D. *Shafiq Rasul et al., v. Donald Rumsfeld et al.*  
 U. S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit  
 U. S. Court of Appeals Decision January 11, 2008

On March 16, 2007, the Stated Clerk joined other religious organizations submitting to the U.S. Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia an amicus brief in supporting the plaintiffs (Rasul) in their suit against the U.S. government. The plaintiffs are being held in a detention center in Guantanamo and assert that the U.S. is in violation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). The defendants (U.S. government and its agents) assert that RFRA is applicable to areas within the United States territory, but outside its sovereignty, which in this case, is the military base at Guantanamo Bay.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long history of support of religious freedom including participation in the drafting the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

In their decision on January 11, 2008, the Court of Appeals affirmed the district court's decision that the plaintiffs rights under RFRA were not violated stating "We believe that RFRA's use of 'person' should be interpreted consistently with the Supreme Court's interpretation of 'person' in the Fifth Amendment and 'people' in the Fourth Amendment to exclude non-

resident aliens. Because the plaintiffs are aliens and were located outside sovereign United States territory at the time their alleged RFRA claim arose, they do not fall with the definition of ‘person.’”

*E. The District of Columbia and Adrian Fenty, Mayor, v. Dick Anthony Heller*  
U. S. Supreme Court Case No. 07-290

On January 11, 2008, the Stated Clerk joined other religious organizations in submitting to the United States Supreme Court an amicus brief affirming the Constitutional right of the District of Columbia to regulate handguns. For decades, many amici have supported meaningful handgun regulations that amici believe are critical to protecting life, liberty, and property. Amici thus have a particular interest in the manner in which the decision below struck down the District of Columbia’s handgun law, because it threatens their ability to seek and obtain effective protection through firearm regulation at the state and local level.

The PC(USA) has a long history of supporting federal and state regulation of handguns.

The U.S. Supreme Court scheduled oral arguments for March 18, 2008, and has not yet issued a decision in this case.

*F. Episcopal Church Cases*  
California Supreme Court

On May 4, 2008, the Stated Clerk joined in an amicus brief with other denominational partners to the California Supreme Court. In this case, the congregation of St. James Parish of the Protestant Episcopal Church had been in schism regarding theological issues for several years. The Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles (the “Diocese”) unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile the factions. Therefore, applying its internal Constitution and Canons, the Diocese determined which faction was entitled to manage the affairs of St. James Parish. The Diocese and several individuals then filed a complaint in which they sought relief including a declaration of rights giving effect to this determination as to which faction shall control St. James’ affairs. The lower court’s decision focused exclusively on the issue of whether the Episcopal Church had proven a cognizable property interest in St. James’ real and personal property. The court, finding it did not, dismissed the complaint as a strategic lawsuit against public interest, which infringed on the Respondents’ free speech rights. On June 25, 2007, the California Court of Appeals, Fourth District, Division Three, issued an opinion in a combined decision with other Episcopal Church cases involving church property and reversed the judgments from the lower court.

The Appellants appealed to the California Supreme Court arguing that California should follow “neutral principles of law” and only look at secular documents to determine which faction has the legal property interest. The amicus brief filed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) argued that Federal constitutional jurisprudence allowing states to apply “neutral principles of law” does not abrogate the right of states to apply a “principle of [church] government” approach to resolve disputes over church property. The brief argues that the California courts may, under the U.S. Constitution, apply its traditional “principle of government” approach to resolving disputes over church property or it may apply a “neutral principles of law” approach. If the California Supreme Court applies the “neutral principles of law” approach, it is not limited to an analysis of only secular legal documents such as deeds or corporate charters alone but has been explicitly instructed by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Jones v. Wolf* (1979) 443 U.S. 595, 602, to take into account an express trust within the denomination’s own constitution.

The California Supreme Court has not yet issued a decision in these cases.

**B. General Assembly Nominating Committee Agency Summary**

Not infrequently you will hear people complain about the never-ending use of committees in the Presbyterian Church; frustrated members and pastors sometimes say, “if you want something done right, do it yourself.” The notion that we are called to be together has led Presbyterians to conclude that this is how we should make decisions: not independently or unilaterally, but together. This is as true within the life of a local congregation as it is for the denomination as a whole. Decisions are shared among the various members or governing bodies for the good of the whole, because together we are the body of Christ. (Cynthia Campbell in *Presbyterian Polity for Church Officers*, Third Edition, Gray & Tucker, p. xii).

The General Assembly Nominating Committee mandate is charged in the *Book of Order*, G-13.0111, with ensuring “careful nomination of members of such boards, agencies, and committees as the General Assembly shall from time to time designate...”

Through the General Assembly’s nominations process, the church has the benefit of selecting, from the varied gifts and services of Presbyterians, the most qualified persons to serve on General Assembly level entities. The committee makes nominations to twenty-eight such General Assembly level entities.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee

1. presents to the General Assembly for election, nominees for at-large vacancies on General Assembly entities;
2. submits to the General Assembly for election, nominees from persons proposed by synods and presbyteries in consultation with the General Assembly Nominating Committee for rotation vacancies or for middle governing body representation on General Assembly entities; and
3. transmits to the General Assembly the names of persons from General Assembly entities for their representatives (linkages) to other General Assembly entities.

As a commissioning service in the *Book of Occasional Services* beautifully puts it, “the call of Christ is to willing, dedicated discipleship. Our discipleship is a manifestation of the new life we enter through baptism. Discipleship is both a gift and a commitment, an offering and a responsibility.”

The General Assembly Nominating Committee works continuously to broaden and deepen the pool of persons interested in and capable of serving General Assembly entities. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is blessed with a wealth of faithful disciples of Christ. The Spirit calls Presbyterians to service at all levels of the church’s life—congregations, synods, and presbyteries, and the General Assembly.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) guarantees full access to the participation in the decision-making processes of the church (G-4.0403). This commitment to the ministry of the whole people of God moves Presbyterians to respond to God’s call for service—to use their gifts for the life and mission of the church. In cooperation and consultation with the General Assembly Committee on Representation, the General Assembly Nominating Committee gives careful consideration to *Book of Order* mandates that persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions, be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the church (G-4.0403 and G-13.0108). The GANC follows, whenever possible, *Book of Order* guidelines, G-13.0111, that consideration shall be given to the nomination of equal numbers of ministers, laymen, and laywomen, except where other membership is mandated by the *Book of Order*. The GANC also encourages synods, presbyteries, and other linking entities to keep *Book of Order* mandates in mind as they submit persons for nomination.

#### 1. *Accomplishments in 2006–2008*

The GANC works to inform Presbyterians of the many and diverse opportunities for service. Individuals, congregations, presbyteries, and synods can find a listing of positions open for election on the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s Website, [www.pcusa.org/nominations](http://www.pcusa.org/nominations), along with information on the General Assembly nominations process and descriptions of each entity to which the committee makes nominations. These descriptions, prepared by the specific entity, contain information on the purpose of the entity, skills, and expertise needed, and time requirements for service. In addition a brochure, with a slimmed down version of the descriptions is available at most major Presbyterian conferences, offered at no cost upon request to the General Assembly nominations office in Louisville and disseminated to all middle governing bodies.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee encourages those wishing to be considered for service on a General Assembly level committee to apply online via its Website. The online application is an easy to use, safe and secure, and relatively fast way to file. While this is the preferred way to apply, women and men who find that they are not able to use this method are able to obtain either an electronic or paper version of the application form for their use.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee solicits applications for nomination to at-large positions from all governing bodies, other official Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) groups, and individual Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) members. Presbyteries and synods provide the names of persons to be considered for nomination to middle governing body positions on the various committees, boards, and commissions where such membership is mandated.

The nominating committee maintains a rotation system by which synods and/or presbyteries nominate persons to serve on the Mission Development Resources Committee, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the National Committee on the Self-Development of People, as well as a rotation system for presbytery representation on the General Assembly Council, as outlined in the *Organization for Mission*. It is important to remember that nominations for these middle governing body positions, as well as for positions on the General Assembly Committee on Representation and the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, are made from proposals received from presbyteries or synods—through their regular nominating process.

Members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee relate actively to middle governing bodies and General Assembly entities throughout the year. Each General Assembly Nominating Committee member serves as a liaison to the nomi-

nating committee of the synod in which the member resides. Each member attends at least one synod or synod nominating committee meeting every other year to explain the nominations process.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee invites all General Assembly entities to send a written report biennially concerning the specific needs of the entity regarding nominees presented to the General Assembly. In addition, the General Assembly Nominating Committee's liaison member is available to meet with the entity or be in contact by telephone or mail at the entity's invitation, so that the nominating process may be explained and that the skills and expertise needed by the entity are identified. This information, along with advice and counsel received from the General Assembly Committee on Representation, assists the General Assembly Nominating Committee in its work.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee continues to be concerned about the needs of persons with disabilities, persons with children and/or other dependents, and youth and young adults on entities of the General Assembly. The General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation are committed to working together to discover persons with disabilities, youth, and young adults who are willing to be considered for service on General Assembly committees and agencies. The General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation note that many applicants do not identify themselves as persons with disabilities even when a disability does exist. Thus, the number of persons with disabilities serving the church on committees at the General Assembly level is actually higher than reported. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will continue to seek ways to encourage persons living with disabilities to make this information available.

During the past two years, the General Assembly Nominating Committee has noticed an increase in the number of persons who have been elected but have faced a variety of issues that prevent their continued service and result in their resignation. This issue was discussed at the February, 2007 joint meeting of the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

Through participation at conferences, conversations, and engagement with the General Assembly Committee on Representation, racial ethnic caucuses, affinity groups, individual contact at all middle governing body levels as well as with pastors and elders across the denomination, the General Assembly Nominating Committee strives to increase the number of racial ethnic persons and persons with differing theological perspectives in its pool of applicants.

Most persons serving on General Assembly agencies, committees, or entities are members of a congregation or a presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Several committees include within their membership persons who are not Presbyterian: the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations, the National Committee on the Self-Development of People, and the Review Committees on General Assembly Agencies.

About a year before it meets to make nominations, the GANC publishes on its Website and mails to each presbytery and synod a list of vacancies to be filled. Additionally the GANC Website provides instructions, committee descriptions, and information about the nominations process.

Persons interested in being considered for service on a General Assembly level committee and persons who wish to suggest persons for consideration may do so by submitting an application for nomination form either online at the GANC's Website, electronically via an email version of the application form, or by completing and returning a printed version of the form. As of February 1, 2008, approximately 300 applications were received for about 75 at-large vacancies. Applications remain active for two General Assembly cycles.

The application process requires that applicants ask three evaluators to complete a reference form regarding the applicant's abilities, gifts, and experience. A reference is also solicited from the governing body for each applicant. The references are treated in confidence and are critical in the discernment process the members of the GANC use. All application forms are shared with each General Assembly Nominating Committee member. Each member of the General Assembly Nominating Committee has access to the confidential appraisal materials for all applicants.

The *Organization for Mission* provides that terms for most agencies, committees, or entities are four years, with eligibility to serve an additional four-year term. Re-nomination to a second term is not automatic. The GANC uses several factors in determining whether or not to re-nominate a person. Key in this discernment process is an evaluation instrument completed by the agency, committee, or entity on which the member serves, diversity issues, special skills and expertise needed by the agency, committee, or entity to respond to assigned mandates.

During 2005–2006, the General Assembly Council (GAC) engaged in a substantive transformation of composition as a result of their Governance Task Force report. In response to the General Assembly Council's request, the 217th General Assembly (2006) "froze" the membership of the General Assembly Council and allowed the General Assembly Nominating Committee latitude in adhering to the constitutional mandate of the General Assembly Council so that the GANC could bring



to the 218th General Assembly (2008) a slate of nominees in compliance with the *Book of Order* and the new GAC structure approved by the presbyteries.

Since the 217th General Assembly (2006), there have been three meetings of the nominating committee: February 2007 in Albuquerque, New Mexico; October 2007 in Snowbird, Utah; and March 2008 in Dallas, Texas. New members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee participated in an intensive orientation meeting in Portland, Oregon, in August 2006.

## 2. *Membership*

There are sixteen members on the General Assembly Nominating Committee—one member residing in each of the sixteen synods. The General Assembly, upon the nomination of the General Assembly Moderator, elects the members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee; members serve a six-year term. The following officers were elected and served in 2006–2008: Janet Schlenker, minister, Synod of the Rocky Mountains, moderator; A. Jarrell (Jerry) Tankersley, minister, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, vice-moderator; James Madson, elder, Synod of Mid-America, secretary. The other members of the committee are David H. Bennett, minister, Synod of the Northeast; Frank Deming, minister, Synod of Mid-Atlantic; Cindy Edwards, church member, Synod of Alaska-Northwest; W. Gregory Elmore, elder, Synod of Living Waters; Carnell Hampton, minister, Synod of the South Atlantic, Richard Kampa, elder, Synod of the Southwest; William King, minister, Synod of the Trinity [moderatorial appointment after the resignation of Scott Collins-Jones, minister]; Robert Lucy, elder, Synod of the Sun; Emily McGinley, church member, Synod of Lincoln Trails; Mike Reyes, elder, Synod of the Pacific; Cynthia Schweitzer Vives, elder, Sinodo Presbiteriano Boriquen en Puerto Rico; Elona Street-Stewart, elder, Synod of Lakes and Prairies; and Laura VanDale, elder, Synod of the Covenant.

The office of the General Assembly Nominating Committee is located in the Office of the General Assembly, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396. Assistant Stated Clerk Valerie Kiriishi Small, elder, serves as the manager for General Assembly Nominations.

*Grace be with all of you!*

## C. *General Assembly Per Capita Payments by Presbytery*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) is grateful to the presbyteries for their continued level of faithfulness in the payment of per capita apportionments. During the year 2005, the percentage of total per capita paid to the General Assembly was about 97 percent, and during 2006, 96.5 percent. Improvement of the level of giving is encouraged in the future.

“Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, p. 301).

Full participation in per capita giving preserves the connectional nature of our Presbyterian system and provides a strong witness to good stewardship as believers of the Reformed Theology, based on the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The following pages contain a statement of all per capita payments to the General Assembly for the last five years (2003–2007) by presbytery, indicating the total annual per capita apportionment, the amount paid, and the unpaid balance. It can be observed that the total unpaid per capita for 2007 (as of May 6, 2008) stands at about \$615,000. The Office of the General Assembly (OGA) will continue to receive further payments for 2007 from a few presbyteries, which will hopefully reduce the level of unpaid per capita to be closer to last year’s level.

We are grateful that the vast majority of our congregations continue to be faithful and support our denomination by participating in per capita giving, even when they may have disagreements with our governing bodies. Each member’s share of these costs for the year (2008) is \$5.79.

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORNTN-03	AMT. PAID 03	BAL 03	APPORNTN-04	AMT. PAID 04	BAL 04	APPORNTN-05	AMT. PAID 05	BAL 05	APPORNTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BAL 06	APPORNTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BAL 07
SYNOD OF ALASKA/NORTHWEST PRESBYTERY															
ALASKA	7,180.80	7,180.80	-	7,278.71	7,278.71	-	7,335.69	7,335.69	-	7,430.38	7,430.38 -	-	7,469.10	7,469.10	-
CENTRAL WASHINGTON	41,556.16	41,556.16	-	41,617.03	41,617.03	-	41,780.57	41,780.57	-	42,198.32	42,198.32 -	-	42,515.97	24,463.17	18,052.80
INLAND NORTHWEST	50,918.40	50,918.40	-	51,171.37	51,171.37	-	50,714.85	50,714.85	-	50,202.41	49,240.83	961.58	51,502.05	51,351.51	150.54
NORTH PUGET SOUND	41,822.72	41,822.72	-	42,812.70	42,812.70	-	43,936.16	43,936.16	-	43,540.69	43,540.69 -	-	43,425.00	43,425.00	-
OLYMPIA	60,601.60	60,601.60	-	60,411.64	60,411.64	-	61,810.29	61,810.29	-	61,827.00	61,503.00	324.00	62,532.00	62,423.44	108.56
SEATTLE	113,293.44	113,293.44	-	115,781.63	115,781.64	(0.01)	116,223.62	116,223.62	-	114,853.40	114,853.40 -	-	117,838.08	114,303.38	3,534.70
YUKON	18,066.24	18,066.24	-	17,753.22	17,753.22	-	17,434.10	17,434.10	-	16,982.93	16,293.99	688.94	17,497.38	16,393.48	1,103.90
SYNOD OF COVENANT PRESBYTERY															
CINCINNATI	109,072.00	109,072.00	-	106,381.57	106,381.57	-	103,941.77	103,941.77	-	102,220.64	102,220.64 -	-	101,689.77	101,689.77	-
DETROIT	207,971.20	207,971.20	-	208,250.45	208,250.45	-	204,831.18	204,831.18	-	201,154.98	198,285.20	2,869.78	205,400.25	201,080.67	4,319.58
EASTMINSTER	78,395.84	78,395.84	-	76,335.54	76,335.54	-	72,772.05	72,772.05	-	69,435.62	60,094.84	9,340.78	67,036.62	57,901.65	9,134.97
LAKE HURON	71,998.40	71,998.40	-	71,244.30	71,244.30	-	69,129.27	69,129.27	-	67,586.38	67,586.38 -	-	68,223.57	68,223.57	-
LAKE MICHIGAN	116,176.64	116,176.64	-	114,988.19	114,988.19	-	111,962.57	111,962.57	-	110,113.33	110,113.33 -	-	110,762.70	110,762.70	-
MACKINAC	40,397.44	40,397.44	-	41,198.27	41,198.27	-	40,510.61	40,510.61	-	40,059.44	40,059.44 -	-	40,883.19	40,883.19	-
MAUMEE VALLEY	79,489.28	79,489.28	-	76,886.54	76,886.54	-	75,490.21	75,490.21	-	71,173.46	71,173.46 -	-	70,996.98	70,996.98	-
MIAMI	90,706.56	90,706.56	-	89,620.15	89,620.20	(0.05)	88,284.50	88,284.50	-	83,711.53	83,711.53 -	-	82,524.87	82,524.87	-
MUSKINGUM VALLEY	79,364.16	79,364.16	-	78,164.86	78,164.86	-	76,158.61	76,158.61	-	72,354.30	69,886.13	2,468.17	72,722.40	58,992.32	13,730.08
SCIOTO VALLEY	143,349.44	138,930.15	4,419.29	137,551.64	131,366.58	6,185.06	137,038.71	129,560.77	7,477.94	136,648.81	126,267.80	10,381.01	138,612.60	125,720.38	12,892.22
WESTERN RESERVE	86,011.84	86,011.84	-	83,630.78	83,630.78	-	83,382.90	83,382.90	-	81,338.71	81,338.71 -	-	82,229.58	82,229.56	0.02
SYNOD OF LAKES AND PRAIRIES PRESBYTERY															
CENTRAL NEBRASKA	39,086.40	39,086.40	-	37,258.62	37,259.00	(0.38)	36,149.30	36,149.30	-	36,266.27	36,266.27 -	-	37,108.11	37,108.08	0.03
DAKOTA	4,972.16	-	4,972.16	5,036.14	-	5,036.14	5,090.98	-	5,090.98	5,090.98	2,737.13	2,353.85	5,292.06	0.00	5,292.06
DES MOINES	62,848.32	62,848.32	-	62,086.68	62,086.68	-	61,041.63	61,041.63	-	59,599.00	59,599.00 -	-	60,754.47	60,754.47	-
EAST IOWA	96,478.40	96,478.40	-	94,061.21	94,061.21	-	92,506.56	89,501.83	3,004.73	91,214.32	86,560.30	4,654.02	93,427.44	86,815.43	6,612.01
HOMESTEAD	62,951.68	62,952.00	(0.32)	62,687.27	62,687.27	-	62,378.43	62,378.43	-	60,055.74	60,056.00	(0.26)	61,379.79	61,380.00	(0.21)
JOHN KNOX (THE)	62,054.08	62,054.08	-	60,962.64	60,962.64	-	60,935.80	60,935.80	-	60,779.84	60,779.84 -	-	62,086.17	62,086.17	-
MILWAUKEE	64,648.96	64,648.96	-	64,152.93	64,152.93	-	63,743.08	63,743.08	-	63,603.83	63,603.87	(0.04)	65,311.20	65,311.20	-
MINNESOTA VALLEYS	64,344.32	64,344.32	-	62,736.86	62,736.86	-	61,231.01	61,231.01	-	60,072.45	60,072.45 -	-	59,694.90	59,676.90	18.00
MISSOURI RIVER	71,797.12	71,797.12	-	69,971.49	69,971.49	-	69,463.47	69,463.47	-	68,566.70	68,566.70 -	-	69,757.92	69,757.92	-
N.CENTRAL IOWA	55,618.56	55,618.56	-	55,160.61	55,160.61	-	54,630.56	54,630.56	-	52,307.87	52,307.87 -	-	53,545.92	53,546.52	(0.60)

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORNTN-03	AMT. PAID 03	BAL 03	APPORNTN-04	AMT. PAID 04	BAL 04	APPORNTN-05	AMT. PAID 05	BAL 05	APPORNTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BAL 06	APPORNTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BAL 07
NORTHERN PLAINS	45,059.52	45,059.52		44,201.22	43,920.11	281.11	44,030.85	44,030.85	-	41,179.01	41,179.00	0.01	41,120.58	30,840.45	10,280.13
NORTHERN WATERS	45,005.12	45,005.12		44,410.60	44,410.60		43,980.72	43,981.00	(0.28)	42,939.13	42,939.13	-	43,795.56	43,796.00	(0.44)
PROSPECT HILL	52,849.60	52,849.60		52,284.39	52,284.39		51,845.56	51,845.56	-	50,285.96	50,285.96	-	50,760.93	50,760.96	(0.03)
SOUTH DAKOTA	51,794.24	51,794.24		51,843.59	51,843.59		50,542.18	50,542.18	-	48,821.05	48,821.05	-	50,564.07	50,564.07	-
TWIN CITIES	144,807.36	144,807.36		143,067.15	143,067.16	(0.01)	142,291.22	142,291.22	-	143,962.22	143,962.22	-	148,727.73	149,862.35	(1,134.62)
WINNEBAGO	47,920.96	47,920.96		48,636.77	48,636.77		46,977.38	46,977.38	-	45,651.72	45,651.72	-	46,696.35	46,696.35	-
SYNOD OF LINCOLN TRAILS PRESBYTERY															
BLACKHAWK	102,190.40	102,190.40		101,064.42	101,064.42		100,003.78	100,003.78	-	96,606.08	59,169.19	37,436.89	97,949.43	80,916.82	17,032.61
CHICAGO	222,289.28	222,289.28		221,402.82	221,402.82		222,649.61	222,649.61	-	219,781.06	219,781.06	-	223,899.30	223,899.25	0.05
MIDWEST HANMI	20,448.96	20,449.00	(0.04)	22,194.28	22,194.28		23,043.09	23,043.09	-	25,833.66	25,833.66	-	26,518.20	26,519.00	(0.80)
GREAT RIVERS	123,939.52	123,939.52		120,261.26	120,261.26		118,217.68	118,217.68	-	113,132.27	110,930.13	2,202.14	114,746.22	105,765.24	8,980.98
OHIO VALLEY	52,175.04	52,175.04		51,479.93	51,479.93		50,230.26	50,041.00	189.26	48,965.87	48,965.88	(0.01)	49,145.52	49,146.00	(0.48)
SOUTHEASTERN ILLINOIS	72,069.12	72,069.12		70,533.51	70,533.51		68,588.98	68,588.98	-	67,636.51	67,636.51	-	66,926.61	66,926.61	-
WABASH VALLEY	114,702.40	101,164.86	13,537.54	111,450.77	98,846.26	12,604.51	107,896.47	93,646.18	14,250.29	99,775.41	79,668.56	20,106.85	98,354.73	85,846.02	12,508.71
WHITEWATER VALLEY	134,368.00	134,368.00		134,796.64	134,796.64		132,527.01	132,527.01	-	131,680.37	131,680.37	-	135,422.31	135,422.31	-
SYNOD OF LIVING WATERS PRESBYTERY															
EAST TENNESSEE	86,914.88	77,052.16	9,862.72	88,688.96	72,703.12	15,985.84	90,161.59	69,103.61	21,057.98	88,601.99	75,551.48	13,050.51	89,102.31	87,081.60	2,020.71
HOLSTON	49,351.68	49,351.68		49,986.72	49,986.72		49,043.85	49,043.85	-	48,130.37	48,130.37	-	48,444.93	48,444.90	0.03
MID-KENTUCKY	62,549.12	61,397.58	1,151.54	62,213.41	62,217.93	(4.52)	61,999.67	61,949.15	50.52	61,041.63	60,491.06	550.57	61,669.29	60,600.25	1,069.04
MEMPHIS(Mid-South)	66,253.76	66,253.76		66,428.56	66,428.56		65,954.37	65,954.37	-	63,614.97	63,614.97	-	63,823.17	56,921.49	6,901.68
MIDDLE TENNESSEE	99,872.96	99,872.96		101,477.67	101,478.00	(0.33)	103,518.45	104,468.45	(950.00)	104,136.72	104,487.63	(350.91)	110,073.69	110,074.00	(0.31)
MISSISSIPPI	36,638.40	33,716.73	2,921.67	35,820.51	32,475.24	3,345.27	35,959.92	23,851.94	12,107.98	34,929.47	18,176.55	16,752.92	35,926.95	21,041.33	14,885.62
NORTH ALABAMA	32,302.72	32,302.72		32,773.48	32,773.48		33,102.51	33,102.51	-	31,771.28	31,771.28	-	32,487.69	32,487.69	-
SOUTH ALABAMA	32,128.64	31,083.21	1,045.43	31,137.01	29,545.65	1,591.36	30,740.83	30,183.83	557.00	30,796.53	28,221.92	2,574.61	30,449.61	27,921.51	2,528.10
SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY	82,524.80	70,908.37	11,616.43	81,636.16	72,957.25	8,678.91	80,753.86	72,438.55	8,315.31	77,757.20	71,491.85	6,265.35	79,543.02	72,756.39	6,786.63
ST. ANDREW	38,150.72	39,901.00	(1,750.28)	37,093.32	37,093.32		36,522.49	36,522.49	-	36,494.64	36,495.00	(0.36)	37,403.40	37,403.00	0.40
TRANSYLVANIA	65,644.48	65,644.48		64,522.10	64,522.10		65,107.73	65,107.73	-	65,258.12	65,258.16	(0.04)	64,958.01	64,958.04	(0.03)
WESTERN KENTUCKY	24,703.04	24,703.04		24,073.19	24,073.19		23,260.32	23,260.32	-	22,820.29	22,820.29	-	23,362.65	23,362.65	-
SYNOD OF MID-AMERICA PRESBYTERY															
GIDDINGS-LOVE JOY	135,276.48	135,276.48		134,708.48	134,708.48		129,920.25	129,920.25	-	124,010.48	124,010.48	-	126,685.20	126,685.20	-
JOHN CALVIN	51,892.16	51,892.16		49,601.02	49,403.00	198.02	48,776.49	49,403.00	(626.51)	49,032.71	49,032.72	(0.01)	49,880.85	49,881.00	(0.15)
HEARTLAND	152,037.12	152,037.12		150,869.31	150,869.31		143,951.08	143,951.08	-	141,277.48	142,277.48	(1,000.00)	142,758.24	142,758.24	-

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORNTN-03	AMT. PAID 03	BAL 03	APPORNTN-04	AMT. PAID 04	BAL 04	APPORNTN-05	AMT. PAID 05	BAL 05	APPORNTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BAL 06	APPORNTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BAL 07
MISSOURI UNION	44,934.40	44,934.40		45,176.49	45,176.49		45,250.68	45,250.68		45,233.97	45,233.97		46,690.56	44,916.18	1,774.38
NORTHERN KANSAS	60,536.32	60,536.32		59,855.13	59,855.13		58,512.85	58,512.85		57,638.36	57,638.36		57,100.98	57,100.98	
SOUTHERN KANSAS	66,678.08	66,678.08		65,535.94	65,535.94		63,776.50	63,777.00	(0.50)	63,158.23	63,158.23		64,737.99	64,737.99	
SYNOD OF MID-ATLANTIC PRESBYTERY															
ABINGDON	26,454.72	26,454.72		26,227.60	26,227.60		26,162.29	26,162.29		25,666.56	25,666.56		26,900.34	26,900.34	
ATLANTIC KOREAN	6,843.52	2,000.00	4,843.52	7,262.18	2,000.00	5,262.18	7,976.24	3,000.00	4,976.24	8,160.05	3,000.00	5,160.05	8,540.25	3,000.00	5,540.25
BALTIMORE	111,759.36	111,759.36		111,577.50	111,577.50		109,729.00	109,729.00		103,251.09	103,251.09		104,752.68	104,752.68	
CHARLOTTE	237,336.32	237,337.37	(1.05)	238,004.45	238,004.45		240,507.03	240,512.25	(5.22)	235,482.89	235,486.71	(3.82)	239,590.20	239,008.00	582.20
COASTAL CAROLINA	168,302.72	168,303.00	(0.28)	171,261.82	171,262.00	(0.18)	173,199.15	173,199.15		172,074.01	172,074.00	0.01	177,278.22	177,277.92	0.30
EASTERN VIRGINIA	102,881.28	105,915.66	(3,034.38)	104,690.00	104,650.34	39.66	104,097.73	100,779.14	3,318.59	103,106.27	103,106.00	0.27	106,397.04	107,496.37	(1,099.33)
JAMES	156,024.64	156,024.64		158,583.31	158,583.31		159,251.87	159,251.87		157,714.55	157,715.00	(0.45)	163,619.61	163,619.61	
NATIONAL CAPITAL	200,670.72	200,670.72		200,222.38	200,222.38		203,266.01	203,266.01		200,787.36	200,787.36		204,855.99	205,006.53	(150.54)
NEW CASTLE	71,710.08	71,710.08		70,153.32	70,153.32		69,597.15	69,597.15		67,714.49	67,714.50	(0.01)	70,035.84	70,962.46	(926.62)
NEW HOPE	177,534.40	177,534.40		178,584.61	178,585.00	(0.39)	182,618.02	182,618.02		182,322.81	182,322.81		188,921.91	188,921.91	
PEAKS(THE)	116,176.64	114,547.16	1,629.48	115,423.48	110,398.74	5,024.74	109,918.38	107,127.81	2,790.57	109,004.90	106,598.00	2,406.90	110,212.65	107,502.93	2,709.72
SALEM	193,120.00	193,120.00		193,593.85	193,593.85		196,387.06	196,387.06		195,200.65	195,051.50	149.15	202,192.59	202,193.00	(0.41)
SHENANDOAH	100,237.44	100,297.28	(59.84)	99,549.17	99,245.34	303.83	98,817.37	98,817.37		98,382.91	98,382.91		105,389.58	105,390.00	(0.42)
WESTERN NO. CAROLINA	116,671.68	116,671.68		117,418.10	117,418.10		114,792.13	114,792.13		113,700.41	114,126.41	(426.00)	115,435.23	115,435.00	0.23
SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST PRESBYTERY															
ALBANY	58,175.36	58,175.36		57,601.54	57,601.54		56,574.49	56,575.12	(0.63)	54,045.71	54,045.71		53,962.80	53,962.80	
BOSTON	16,918.40	16,918.40		17,097.53	17,097.53		17,389.54	17,389.54		17,294.85	17,294.85		17,873.73	17,873.73	
CAYUGA-SYRACUSE	39,129.92	39,129.92		38,647.14	38,647.14		37,151.90	37,151.90		36,956.95	36,956.95		37,380.24	37,380.29	(0.05)
EASTERN KOREAN	12,658.88	13,159.36	(500.48)	15,416.98	17,036.92	(1,619.94)	17,768.30	20,075.08	(2,306.78)	21,060.17	19,308.41	1,751.76	24,422.22	23,388.75	1,033.47
ELIZABETH	89,324.80	89,324.80		88,209.59	88,209.59		88,178.67	88,178.67		86,106.63	86,106.32	0.31	87,353.73	87,353.73	
GENESEE VALLEY	95,705.92	95,543.00	162.92	93,416.54	92,913.00	503.54	90,584.91	90,584.91		88,401.47	88,401.47		89,241.27	89,241.00	0.27
GENEVA	48,492.16	48,492.16		46,636.64	46,636.64		46,130.74	46,130.74		44,615.70	44,615.70		45,011.46	45,011.46	
HUDSON RIVER	99,111.36	94,331.26	4,780.10	95,780.33	95,322.53	457.80	93,436.75	93,436.75		92,133.37	92,133.37		91,829.40	91,829.40	
LONG ISLAND	76,616.96	76,616.96		77,878.34	77,878.34		75,768.71	75,763.55	5.16	73,975.17	74,389.43	(414.26)	73,961.46	73,838.23	123.23
MONMOUTH	88,019.20	88,019.20		86,022.12	86,022.12		83,421.89	83,421.89		82,369.16	82,368.96	0.20	84,904.56	84,904.56	
NEWARK	45,929.92	45,929.92		44,906.50	44,906.52	(0.02)	45,868.95	46,268.96	(400.01)	44,515.44	44,515.44		45,167.79	45,167.80	(0.01)
NEW BRUNSWICK	64,991.68	67,387.60	(2,395.92)	65,447.78	66,120.00	(672.22)	65,352.81	65,352.90	(0.09)	65,531.05	65,531.32	(0.27)	65,357.52	65,357.52	
NEWTON	85,935.68	85,935.68		85,575.81	85,575.81		84,825.53	84,825.53		83,466.45	83,466.45		84,348.72	84,348.72	

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORNTN-03	AMT. PAID 03	BAL 03	APPORNTN-04	AMT. PAID 04	BAL 04	APPORNTN-05	AMT. PAID 05	BAL 05	APPORNTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BAL 06	APPORNTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BAL 07
NEW YORK CITY	100,406.08	100,406.08		100,651.17	100,651.17		100,466.09	100,466.09		98,600.14	98,600.00	0.14	100,688.10	100,688.08	0.02
NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND	22,945.92	23,109.00	(163.08)	22,750.79	22,750.79		22,603.06	22,603.06		23,065.37	22,280.00	785.37	23,901.12	17,765.16	6,135.96
NORTHERN NEW YORK	20,138.88	20,138.88		19,031.54	19,031.54		18,904.58	18,904.58		18,447.84	18,447.84		19,089.63	19,089.63	
PALISADES	52,039.04	52,039.04		51,887.67	51,887.68	(0.01)	50,007.46	50,007.48	(0.02)	49,751.24	49,751.24		51,357.30	51,357.32	(0.02)
SO. NEW ENGLAND	51,255.68	51,255.68		51,276.06	51,276.06		51,355.40	51,355.40		49,522.87	49,522.87		51,559.95	52,132.05	(572.10)
SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY	41,458.24	41,469.86	(11.62)	39,550.78	39,551.34	(0.56)	38,471.99	38,471.99		37,185.32	37,047.71	137.61	37,391.82	37,391.78	0.04
UTICA	26,960.64	26,960.64		26,541.67	26,541.67		25,672.13	25,672.13		25,432.62	25,432.56	0.06	25,105.44	25,105.04	0.40
WESTERN NEW YORK	87,148.80	72,205.00	14,943.80	85,779.68	68,476.56	17,303.12	86,401.84	69,381.24	17,020.60	84,040.16	84,040.16		84,788.76	84,788.76	
WEST JERSEY	83,971.84	83,600.16	371.68	83,371.81	83,371.81		81,210.60	79,905.43	1,305.17	78,575.99	76,870.35	1,705.64	80,214.66	77,771.23	2,443.43
SYNOD OF THE PACIFIC PRESBYTERY															
CASCADES	151,971.84	151,971.84		151,971.31	151,971.31		150,846.74	150,846.74		146,457.58	146,457.58		149,978.37	149,978.37	
BOISE	16,336.32	16,336.32		16,260.01	16,260.01		15,946.91	15,946.91		15,545.87	15,545.87		16,773.63	16,773.63	
EASTERN OREGON	6,800.00	6,800.00		6,826.89	6,826.89		6,355.37	6,355.37		6,500.19	6,500.19		6,438.48	6,438.48	
KENDALL	13,708.80	13,708.80		13,775.00	13,775.00		13,535.10	13,535.10		12,721.88	12,721.88		12,425.34	12,425.34	
NEVADA	29,691.52	29,691.52		30,293.98	30,293.98		28,769.05	28,769.05		28,824.75	28,824.75		30,947.55	30,947.55	
REDWOODS (THE)	49,781.44	49,781.44		48,961.86	48,961.86		47,902.00	47,902.00		46,158.59	45,974.78	183.81	45,839.43	44,197.95	1,641.48
SACRAMENTO	86,539.52	86,539.52		88,000.21	88,000.21		88,702.25	88,702.25		89,170.13	89,170.13		92,298.39	57,195.40	35,102.99
SAN FRANCISCO	159,571.52	159,571.52		161,156.48	161,156.48		163,880.54	163,880.54		159,652.91	159,652.91		162,884.28	162,884.28	
SAN JOAQUIN	46,038.72	46,038.72		45,237.10	44,737.10	500.00	44,476.45	32,434.11	12,042.34	44,075.41	31,086.17	12,989.24	46,204.20	25,178.28	21,025.92
SAN JOSE	65,840.32	65,840.32		65,960.21	65,960.21		65,503.20	65,503.20		63,915.75	63,916.00	(0.25)	66,411.30	66,411.00	0.30
STOCKTON	22,668.48	22,668.48		23,406.48	23,406.48		23,483.12	23,483.12		23,182.34	23,182.34		24,057.45	15,945.65	8,111.80
SYNOD OF PUERTO RICO PRESBYTERY															
NORTHWEST	21,243.20	24,265.00	(3,021.80)	21,130.85	21,130.85		22,296.71	22,296.71		22,759.02	22,579.02	180.00	23,849.01	23,849.01	
SAN JUAN	10,939.84	5,000.00	5,939.84	10,656.34	5,328.17	5,328.17	10,544.01		10,544.01	10,388.05	9,405.14	982.91	10,757.82	10,757.82	
SOUTHWEST (THE)	13,518.40	13,518.40		14,193.76	14,193.76		14,058.68	14,058.68		14,197.93	14,197.93		14,897.67	14,897.67	
SYNOD OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS PRESBYTERY															
PLAINS AND PEAKS	67,771.52	67,771.52		66,836.30	66,836.30		64,266.66	64,266.66		62,378.43	62,378.43		62,682.54	62,682.54	
DENVER	78,406.72	78,406.72		78,291.59	78,291.59		79,272.24	79,272.24		78,241.79	78,241.79		81,146.85	81,146.85	
GLACIER	19,698.24	19,698.24		19,836.00	19,836.00		19,662.10	19,662.10		19,545.13	19,545.13		18,898.56	18,898.56	
PUEBLO	51,484.16	51,484.16		51,876.65	51,876.65		51,878.98	51,878.98		50,441.92	50,441.92		51,577.32	51,577.32	
UTAH	23,549.76	23,549.76		23,489.13	23,489.13		22,887.13	22,887.13		22,268.86	22,268.86		23,212.11	23,212.11	
WESTERN COLORADO	14,921.92	14,921.92		15,124.95	15,124.95		14,448.58	14,448.58		14,192.36	14,192.36		14,052.33	14,052.25	0.08

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORNTN-03	AMT. PAID 03	BAL 03	APPORNTN-04	AMT. PAID 04	BAL 04	APPORNTN-05	AMT. PAID 05	BAL 05	APPORNTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BAL 06	APPORNTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BAL 07
WYOMING	28,924.48	28,924.48		28,949.54	28,949.54		29,203.51	29,203.51		29,075.40	29,075.40		28,185.72	28,185.72	
YELLOWSTONE	18,033.60	18,033.60		17,455.68	17,455.68		17,461.95	17,461.95		17,305.99	17,305.99		16,767.84	16,767.84	
SYNOD OF SOUTH ATLANTIC PRESBYTERY															
CENTRAL FLORIDA	177,344.00	143,941.87	33,402.13	176,782.84	139,770.52	37,012.32	175,115.23	136,799.72	38,315.51	169,834.87	160,274.18	9,560.69	173,149.95	170,525.01	2,624.94
CHARLESTON-ATLAN	96,832.00	88,763.07	8,068.93	99,356.32	99,356.32		98,321.64	98,321.64		100,644.33	95,609.72	5,034.61	104,712.15	97,070.88	7,641.27
CHEROKEE	66,416.96	66,416.96		66,797.73	62,644.94	4,152.79	66,205.02	66,522.42	(317.40)	61,938.40	61,938.40		63,898.44	61,691.28	2,207.16
FLINT RIVER	39,004.80	37,443.95	1,560.85	38,322.05	36,267.92	2,054.13	38,009.68	36,245.99	1,763.69	37,786.88	35,936.02	1,850.86	38,578.77	34,841.22	3,737.55
FLORIDA	50,009.92	50,009.92		49,799.38	49,799.38		50,224.69	50,224.69		48,715.22	48,715.22		49,892.43	49,892.43	
FOOTHILLS	126,632.32	100,123.20	26,509.12	127,787.92	100,601.58	27,186.34	128,371.79	100,254.34	28,117.45	125,001.94	97,993.01	27,008.93	128,630.64	101,539.23	27,091.41
GREATER ATLANTA	265,624.32	265,624.32		267,323.16	260,149.14	7,174.02	261,873.55	254,231.51	7,642.04	261,706.45	209,836.62	51,869.83	270,914.10	191,203.17	79,710.93
NEW HARMONY	75,431.04	75,431.04		76,396.15	76,397.00	(0.85)	75,406.66	75,407.00	(0.34)	75,072.46	75,072.00	0.46	77,533.89	77,534.00	(0.11)
NORTHEAST GEORGIA	51,516.80	51,516.80		51,507.48	51,507.48		51,260.71	51,260.71		50,759.41	50,759.41		52,196.85	52,196.85	
PEACE RIVER	124,984.00	124,990.25	(6.25)	125,457.19	104,834.84	20,622.35	125,536.66	99,677.97	25,858.69	122,840.78	91,959.06	30,881.72	124,085.49	117,903.49	6,182.00
PROVIDENCE	48,127.68	48,127.68		49,149.20	49,149.20		49,500.59	49,461.60	38.99	50,013.03	50,013.04	(0.01)	51,832.08	51,832.08	
ST. AUGUSTINE	112,161.92	109,308.53	2,853.39	111,841.98	110,184.84	1,657.14	112,530.71	111,160.38	1,370.33	107,450.87	106,529.26	921.61	111,781.74	104,059.15	7,722.59
SAVANNAH	36,159.68	36,159.68		35,109.72	35,109.72		34,784.65	34,784.65		34,495.01	36,199.27	(1,704.26)	36,725.97	33,665.50	3,060.47
TAMPA BAY	148,691.52	146,161.92	2,529.60	147,717.59	147,718.00	(0.41)	145,443.84	145,443.84		140,993.41	138,770.98	2,222.43	143,713.59	143,713.59	
TRINITY	107,200.64	107,200.64		111,450.77	111,450.77		112,881.62	112,881.62		113,265.95	113,266.00	(0.05)	106,304.40	105,575.53	728.87
TROPICAL FLORIDA	96,516.48	91,983.80	4,532.68	96,325.82	92,645.75	3,680.07	93,280.79	86,438.31	6,842.48	91,125.20	90,103.09	1,022.11	93,954.33	91,670.40	2,283.93
SYNOD OF S. CALIF. & HAWAII PRESBYTERY															
HANMI	30,224.64	30,224.64		29,456.46	29,456.46		29,782.79	326.33	29,456.46	29,626.83	0.00	29,626.83	16,883.64	16,883.64	
LOS RANCHOS	123,515.20	123,515.20		126,234.10	126,234.10		126,650.66	126,650.66		125,141.19	125,141.19		127,142.61	127,142.61	
PACIFIC	84,407.04	84,407.04		85,008.28	84,078.98	929.30	87,231.77	87,231.77		88,446.03	88,446.03		88,679.64	88,685.43	(5.79)
RIVERSIDE	42,121.92	42,121.92		41,539.89	39,793.16	1,746.73	42,772.03	42,604.16	167.87	39,329.77	38,548.00	781.77	40,958.46	36,367.18	4,591.28
SAN DIEGO	103,126.08	103,126.08		102,706.40	102,706.40		103,524.02	63,358.40	40,165.62	92,272.62	75,981.40	16,291.22	96,669.84	64,655.50	32,014.34
SAN FERNANDO	49,906.56	49,906.56		49,072.06	49,072.06		47,957.70	47,957.70		47,645.78	47,645.78		49,203.42	49,203.42	
SAN GABRIEL	57,440.96	57,440.96		57,215.84	57,215.84		56,524.36	56,524.36		56,663.61	56,663.61		58,374.78	58,374.78	
SANTA BARBARA	55,863.36	55,863.36		55,783.24	55,783.24		55,382.51	55,382.51		54,652.84	54,652.84		54,298.62	48,213.33	6,085.29
SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST PRESBYTERY															
DE CRISTO	49,808.64	49,808.64		50,003.25	50,003.25		49,957.33	49,957.33		49,901.63	49,901.63		51,270.45	51,270.45	
GRAND CANYON	94,384.00	94,384.00		94,755.47	94,755.47		93,247.37	93,247.37		92,205.78	92,205.78		94,243.83	94,243.83	
SANTA FE	40,457.28	40,457.28		40,294.63	40,294.63		40,415.92	40,415.92		39,702.96	39,702.96		41,213.22	41,213.22	

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORTN-03	AMT. PAID 03	BAL 03	APPORTN-04	AMT. PAID 04	BAL 04	APPORTN-05	AMT. PAID 05	BAL 05	APPORTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BAL 06	APPORTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BAL 07
SIERRA BLANCA	14,056.96	14,056.96		13,962.34	13,962.34		13,039.37	13,039.37		12,521.36	12,521.36		12,512.19	12,512.19	
SYNOD OF THE SUN PRESBYTERY															
ARKANSAS	91,152.64	91,316.08	(163.44)	91,499.06	91,500.00	(0.94)	89,415.21	89,415.21		88,652.12	88,652.12		91,534.11	91,534.11	
CIMARRON	15,585.60	15,585.60		15,246.17	15,246.17		14,832.91	14,832.91		14,704.80	14,704.80		14,891.88	14,891.88	
EASTERN OKLAHOMA	73,652.16	73,652.16		73,260.96	73,761.62	(500.66)	73,551.85	73,552.00	(0.15)	73,524.00	73,524.00		75,883.74	63,231.30	12,652.44
GRACE	265,678.72	265,678.72		264,964.88	264,964.92	(0.04)	265,260.11	265,260.12	(0.01)	253,941.87	253,941.87		260,781.60	260,781.60	
INDIAN NATIONS	61,656.96	61,656.96		61,574.25	61,575.00	(0.75)	61,114.04	61,114.04		60,724.14	60,730.08	(5.94)	62,120.91	60,724.20	1,396.71
MISSION	174,787.20	174,787.20		174,606.39	174,606.39		175,622.10	175,622.10		179,604.65	179,604.65		185,198.94	185,198.94	
NEW COVENANT	221,707.20	221,707.20		222,510.33	222,510.33		222,738.73	222,000.00	738.73	223,496.25	223,496.25		228,218.64	228,457.32	(238.68)
PALO DURO	56,026.56	55,352.81	673.75	56,284.65	56,275.65	9.00	55,716.71	55,716.71		54,218.38	54,218.38		54,952.89	55,633.47	(680.58)
PINES(THE)	38,226.88	38,226.88		38,112.67	38,112.67		36,684.02	36,684.02		35,274.81	35,274.81		35,585.34	35,643.00	(57.66)
SOUTH LOUISIANA	60,987.84	60,987.84		59,959.82	60,046.77	(86.95)	60,267.40	60,267.40		59,197.96	49,125.93	10,072.03	59,822.28	43,039.21	16,783.07
TRES RIOS	44,553.60	44,553.60		44,983.64	44,983.64		44,799.51	44,799.51		43,562.97	43,562.97		42,788.10	43,952.00	(1,163.90)
SYNOD OF THE TRINITY PRESBYTERY															
BEAVER-BUTLER	93,323.20	77,806.80	15,516.40	91,499.06	88,268.82	3,230.24	89,147.85	44,573.92	44,573.93	87,816.62	70,727.96	17,088.66	88,754.91	40,390.45	48,364.46
CARLISLE	89,352.00	87,928.79	1,423.21	88,832.22	78,776.61	10,055.61	89,236.97	89,533.16	(296.19)	87,259.62	80,258.69	7,000.93	88,146.96	86,717.75	1,429.21
DONEGAL	130,897.28	122,254.77	8,642.51	130,113.14	118,890.51	11,222.63	130,956.27	116,057.27	14,899.00	130,126.34	128,806.94	1,319.40	132,139.38	121,849.29	10,290.09
HUNINGDON	44,618.88	44,618.88		44,708.14	44,708.14		44,058.70	44,058.70		41,724.87	41,724.87		41,323.23	41,323.23	
KISKIMINETAS	72,983.04	72,983.04		72,269.16	72,269.16		71,981.11	71,981.11		69,613.86	69,613.86		69,920.04	69,920.04	
LACKAWANNA	50,853.12	41,369.87	9,483.25	51,088.72	40,323.95	10,764.77	48,342.03	36,076.89	12,265.14	46,832.56	35,805.86	11,026.70	48,323.34	37,338.87	10,984.47
LAKE ERIE	67,847.68	67,847.68		67,062.21	67,062.21		65,542.19	65,543.00	(0.81)	64,528.45	64,528.45		65,340.15	65,340.00	0.15
LEHIGH	65,998.08	65,998.08		65,954.70	65,954.70		65,764.99	65,764.99		63,486.86	63,486.86		65,427.00	65,427.00	
NORTHUMBERLAND	32,797.76	32,797.76		31,654.95	31,694.95	(40.00)	31,370.24	31,370.24		31,308.97	31,308.97		31,607.61	31,115.46	492.15
PHILADELPHIA	239,419.84	239,422.59	(2.75)	237,062.24	237,062.24		233,717.20	234,813.77	(1,096.57)	229,077.39	209,680.11	19,397.28	233,557.02	212,984.11	20,572.91
PITTSBURGH	265,852.80	265,852.80		264,931.82	264,788.56	143.26	262,023.94	262,023.96	(0.02)	253,234.48	253,234.48		253,920.45	253,920.45	
REDSTONE	96,434.88	96,434.88		93,763.67	93,763.67		93,899.06	93,899.06		91,955.13	91,955.13		94,307.52	94,307.52	
SHENANGO	92,414.72	74,565.99	17,848.73	91,675.38	62,692.20	28,983.18	89,560.03	70,415.77	19,144.26	88,412.61	52,469.03	35,943.58	86,601.03	55,526.32	31,074.71
UPPER OHIO VALLEY	61,515.52	58,667.62	2,847.90	59,519.02	59,519.02		57,916.86	57,916.86		56,429.67	56,480.30	(50.63)	55,225.02	35,225.02	20,000.00
WASHINGTON	68,174.08	60,917.52	7,256.56	68,301.96	60,736.78	7,565.18	66,533.65	49,966.97	16,566.68	65,246.98	51,183.09	14,063.89	66,289.71	50,239.83	16,049.88
WEST VIRGINIA	87,050.88	87,050.88		84,391.16	83,027.83	1,363.33	82,190.92	82,315.22	(124.30)	76,593.07	76,340.07	253.00	76,775.40	75,678.63	1,096.77
TOTALS	13,561,196.48	13,346,960.88	214,235.60	13,503,125.58	13,237,873.15	265,252.43	13,395,772.02	12,989,866.31	405,905.71	13,147,311.03	12,698,614.66	448,696.37	13,380,058.89	12,765,053.10	615,005.79

## PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2005

PRESBYTERY	AMOUNT	FOR YEAR
Long Island	1,219.75	2003
Philadelphia	2,068.21	2003
Redstone	382.47	2003
Redstone	2,510.57	2003
Riverside	558.11	2003
Riverside	98.89	2003
Riverside	626.74	2003
Riverside	71.73	2003
Total Past Payment	7,531.47	2003

## PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2007

PRESBYTERY	AMOUNT	FOR YEAR
Pacific	1,292.04	2005

## PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2008

PRESBYTERY	AMOUNT	FOR YEAR
Pueblo	12,830.96	2005

NOTE: Since outstanding accounts for 2003 through 2006 have been closed, the above payments have been credited to the prior years' adjustments account in 2008.

This report is based on receipts as of March 31, 2008.

#### **D. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Agency Summary to the 218th General Assembly (2008)**

##### *1. Committee Description and Leadership*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) oversees and supports the ministry of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the staff of the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) as OGA helps the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) fulfill its call to be the church of Jesus Christ. The committee partners with OGA in carrying out work assigned by the assembly and exercises the General Assembly's accountability for OGA between sessions of the assembly. The COGA is composed of sixteen members, which include fourteen persons nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (and elected at the General Assembly meeting), and the current Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the Executive Director and the Vice-Moderator of the General Assembly Council (the Reverend Clifton Kirkpatrick, Elder Linda Bryant Valentine, and Elder Charles Easley, respectively, during this period) serve as corresponding members of the committee. For 2006–2007, the Reverend Cathy Ulrich served as moderator and Elder John (Jack) Baugh as vice-moderator. Committee leadership for the upcoming term will be provided by the Reverend Dennis Hughes as moderator and Elder Barbara Corwin as vice moderator.

In addition to the committee leadership mentioned previously, COGA members were Elders James Babcock, Charles Easley, Steve Grace, Kent Grimes, Kathy Walker, and Robert Wilson, and the Reverends Helen Baily Cochrane, Barbara Campbell Davis, Joan Gray, Jerrod Lowry, John Purcell, Martha Sadongeti, and John Wilkinson.

##### *2. 2006–2007 Highlights and Accomplishments*

The biennial period of the 217th General Assembly (2006) was a significant period from beginning to end. The theme of the assembly—"So Great a Cloud of Witnesses" (from Heb. 12:1)—was held concurrently with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America. Several milestones were recognized during the assembly meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, including 300 years of American Presbyterianism, fifty years of the ordination of women to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and twenty-five years of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. The three denominations worshipped together, shared exhibit space, and held a joint forum on the future of the church. The planning partnership of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, the Committee on Local Arrangements, the General Assembly Council, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and the Office of the General Assembly resulted in an assembly that both celebrated a rich heritage and worked toward a promising future for this part of the larger body of Christ. The myriad actions taken by the assembly, detailed in the *Minutes*, are evidence of a gathering of commissioners and advisory delegates who took their responsibilities very seriously and prayerfully.

The General Assembly Breakfast continued its tradition of being a major highlight during the assembly. Odessa Woolfolk, founder and administrator of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, spoke to the more than 1,500 participants,



telling them that “God calls us to be agents of peace, justice, and reconciliation in our world.” In 2008, singer and songwriter David LaMotte will speak at the breakfast.

Since the assembly meeting, commissioners and advisory delegates to the 217th General Assembly (2006) have received issues of “Continuing the Journey,” an occasional publication to update them on the follow-up work that resulted from the actions they took in Birmingham. As a result of this and other efforts, commissioners have been instrumental in interpreting the work of the assembly to congregations and presbyteries throughout the last two years.

A new Office of Vocation, a shared ministry of OGA and the General Assembly Council (GAC), was developed with the vision of creating a “culture of call” in the PC(USA). Activities over the past two years have included a conference for racial ethnic seminarians to equip them for entering their first call; revitalization of the Presbyterian Leadership Search Effort to help young people with vocational discernment; and administration of Church Leadership Connection, which provides service to congregations, presbyteries, and individuals using the PC(USA) call system.

The Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS) finished consolidating its offices into one location in Philadelphia. The historical society celebrated news of the Center for Study of Presbyterian and Reformed History that was launched by Columbia Theological Seminary (CTS) in Decatur, Georgia. Some of the material that was held formerly at the PHS office in Montreat, North Carolina, is now among the archives at CTS.

The first consultation on the ecumenical stance of the PC(USA) since the 1983 reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America to form the PC(USA) was held in Louisville. Hosted by the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations, the event drew nearly sixty-five individuals from a cross-section of the PC(USA) and its ecumenical partners. A new policy statement on the ecumenical stance of the PC(USA), based on results of the consultation, is being submitted to the 218th General Assembly (2008) for approval.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved a new task force, the Form of Government Task Force, to undertake a revision of the Form of Government that is found in the PC(USA) *Book of Order*. The task force was charged with preserving our “foundational polity,” while “providing leadership to congregations as ‘missional communities.’” The task force will present its final report and recommendations to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In addition to the proposed new Form of Government itself, the task force is recommending “Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” to replace the current first four chapters of the Form of Government.

In addition to partnering with the other PC(USA) agencies to support the National Pastors Sabbath, OGA anchored the effort to hold the first-ever National Elders Conference, held in Nashville, Tennessee. More than 300 elders from almost every state in the nation gathered to hear preachers and other speakers and attend workshops aimed at helping elders know what the ministry of being an elder is about and claiming that ministry for their own.

Significant ecumenical breakthroughs have taken place over these last two years through bilateral ecumenical dialogues between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other churches. These have led to four very significant ecumenical agreements that will be before the 218th General Assembly (2008)—with the Catholics, the Episcopalians, the Moravians, and the Korean Presbyterian Church in America.

In addition, Christian Churches Together (CCT), the largest ecumenical body in terms of its comprehensive nature, was inaugurated early in 2007. The PC(USA) is a provisional member of CCT, which consists of five Christian “families”—Catholics, evangelicals and Pentecostals, Orthodox, mainline Protestants, and racial ethnic churches—that represent more than 100 million Christians. Participants hope to address common issues, such as poverty and evangelism.

Other significant breakthroughs in the area of social witness was the successful boycott of Taco Bell that ended with an agreement between the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and Taco Bell. Furthermore, in the spring of 2007, a voluntary agreement on the part of Yum! Brands included all other brands in this agreement.

In partnership with the Committee on Local arrangements (COLA), much time was spent on the planning and preparations of the 218th General Assembly (2008) that will be held in San Jose, California, in June 2008. The theme of the assembly, “Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly with our God” comes from Micah 6:8.

A significant amount of time was devoted to the self-study and other items related to the review of the Office of the General Assembly by a committee established by the 217th General Assembly (2006) for that purpose.

Following a process similar to the one used in the recent past to engage presbyteries and synods in a serious reflection of what it means to be a New Testament church in this century, a new round of consultations was held with PC(USA) seminaries. The focus of the gatherings was unique to each seminary, based on what each theological institution had identified as its

particular emphasis for preparing future ministers of the Word and Sacrament. The consultations were only the beginning step of a process to lift up the significant work of the “crown jewels” of the PC(USA).

More recently, a new Web site on per capita was launched. Focusing on the General Assembly portion of per capita, the site is designed to provide materials to interpret and share information related to what per capita is and what the dollars support.

#### **E. *Moderator’s Report to the General Assembly***

I am very thankful for the privilege of being able to serve God and the PC(USA) as Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006).

As I have traveled the church I have seen a number of encouraging things:

- Small churches and presbyteries doing extraordinary mission against the odds in spite of challenges relating to demographic shifts, funding, and distance.
- Young people in college fellowships and youth groups who are excited about God, the church, and specifically the PC(USA).
- Congregations and presbyteries reinventing themselves in creative, God-honoring ways to face the challenges of the post-modern age.
- Amazing and inspiring mission work being done by congregations, presbyteries, and our own PC(USA) missionaries and mission partners around the world. I have been especially impressed with the Young Adult Volunteer program participants I have met.
- The passion and love Presbyterians have for their church.
- Groups gathering in some presbyteries to struggle with the divisive issues of our day, trying to find common ground in the midst of our theological differences. I have seen evidence that the method of meeting together put forth by the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church does bear good fruit if it is tried.
- The presence of immigrant and multicultural churches in our denomination and the passion they bring to our churches.
- The willingness of elders to rise to the challenge of spiritual leadership when challenged, trained, and encouraged.
- The excellent ministry of trained commissioned lay pastors.

As I have listened to Presbyterians over these last two years, I have heard the following concerns raised a number of times:

- Distress over our continuing loss of thousands of members each year.
- Frustration and grief that we are not reaching young people in greater numbers.
- Desire for the PC(USA) denominational mission program to send more long-term missionaries overseas.
- Frustration on the part of pastors of immigrant fellowships over the obstacles they see in the way of their ministries.
- Desire on the part of PC(USA) military chaplains for their voices to be heard in the denomination.
- Continuing sense of distance, even estrangement, between many “people in the pew” and the denominational structures and leadership.
- Struggle to come to terms on all levels of the church above the session with new patterns of mission funding.
- Desire to hear the “good news” about things happening in the PC(USA) reach a wider audience.

- Confusion on the part of church members about the changes that are impacting church life today and lack of understanding as to how to respond in constructive ways.
- Continuing deep divisions about how to interpret the Bible around controversial issues such as homosexuality, abortion, war, etc.

Highlights of my term as Moderator included:

- Leading fifteen prayer retreats in Nevada, Minnesota, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Texas, Alaska, New York, South Carolina, Delaware, Idaho, West Virginia, Illinois, and Georgia.
- Participating in the celebration of 200 years of African American Presbyterianism.
- Participating in the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the first presbytery meeting.
- Attending the first national Elders' Conference held in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Participating in the celebrations of the 50th anniversaries of the Presbyterian Church of the Cameroon and the Eglise Presbyterienne Camerounaise, including a six-hour worship service.
- Attending a 6 a.m. prayer meeting at Myung Sung Presbyterian church in Soeul, Korea.
- Listening to the stories of those persecuted for their faithful ministries with the poor on Good Friday in Manila, Philippines.
- Preaching at a sunrise service with 3,000 people in attendance in Manila, Philippines.
- Visiting with Presbyterians in Nebraska.
- Listening to college students talk about how they experience God and what they want from the church
- Meeting with three executive presbyter collegiums
- Attending the dedication of the First Presbyterian Church of Honolulu, Hawaii's, new facility at Kolau golf and conference center.
- Observing the work of the Holy Spirit at the Mission Consultation held in Dallas in January 2008.
- Meeting many dedicated people who uphold the life of the church by their work at the national headquarters in Louisville.
- Meeting and hearing about the work of many PC(USA) missionaries around the world.

As my term comes to an end, I want to thank my husband Bill Gray for his encouragement, constant support, and patient endurance of my being away from home 342 days in the last two years. I want to thank all those who showed me hospitality, shared their lives with me, and supported me with faithful prayers since I was elected. Though the names are too many to list here, the kindness and care of this great cloud of witnesses has kept me going through thick and thin. I have experienced the faithfulness of God and the power of prayer in profound ways during these two years, and I am hopeful about the future of the PC(USA) because I believe God is faithful and is able, through the power at work within us, to do more than we could ever ask or imagine.

#### **F. Office of the General Assembly Report on Compliance**

In response to *Commissioners' Resolution 99-9. An Annual Opportunity for Congregations to Hear from Racial Ethnic Minority Preachers*, the Office of the General Assembly has collected statistical information annually from the Clerk's Annual Questionnaire with the help of Research Services. Below is a compilation of the data received from 1999 through 2006.

Did your congregation invite a racial ethnic minister (other than your pastor if he or she is a racial ethnic minister) to preach during the year?

03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Year	Total Congregations	Total Reporting	% Reporting	Invite R/E Preacher?
1999	11,216	9,524	84.9%	27.6%
2000	11,178	9,116	81.6%	29.1%
2001	11,141	8,581	77.0%	31.1%
2002	11,097	8,190	73.8%	30.4%
2003	11,064	7,965	72.0%	30.0%
2004	11,019	7,165	65.0%	30.0%
2005	10,980	7,055	64.0%	29.0%
2006	10,903	6,977	64.0%	29.0%

If yes, on how many Sundays did a racial ethnic minister serve as preacher?

Year	Number Sundays	Mean Sundays	Median Sundays
1999	6749	2.83	1
2000	6397	2.62	1
2001	5890	2.46	1
2002	5567	2.42	1
2003	2275		
2004	1958	2.7	1
2005	1959	3	1
2006	1963	2.47	1

If no, when was the last time a racial ethnic guest preacher was asked?

Year	Number Responding	In the Last Year	2-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-9 Years	> 9 Years	Never
2001	4298	20.2%	20.6%	11.9%	4.9%	15.3%	27.1%
2002	4085	20.1%	21.3%	12.4%	5.2%	14.6%	26.4%
2003	5376	16.0%	19.0%	11.0%	4.0%	9.0%	41.0%
2004	4687	17.0%	18.0%	13.0%	4.0%	8.0%	40.0%
2005	4852	19.0%	21.0%	15.0%	6.0%	10.0%	29.0%
2006	4798	15.0%	18.0%	13.0%	5.0%	9.0%	39.0%

**G. General Assembly Agency Minister Salary Report**

In accordance with the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on Item 08-01 (2.e.), the attached report is submitted by the Stated Clerk.

e. That at each assembly, beginning in 2008, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall receive from each entity, report to the assembly, and include in its *Minutes*, a list of the positions in each entity that are called positions, whether occupied by a minister of Word and Sacrament or a chief administrative officer, along with their full terms of call for the two years prior to the year of the assembly, including bonuses and all other financial provisions. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 623)

G. 2006 & 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCY MINISTER SALARY REPORT

Name	Position	Presbytery	2006	2006	2006	2007	2007	2007
			Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other	Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other
<b><u>Board of Pensions</u></b>								
Badillo Jr, Ernesto	Regional Representative	West Jersey	\$85,700	\$26,884	\$1,032	\$88,700	\$28,259	\$534
Fleming, Steven R	Education Specialist	Carlisle	\$75,600	\$24,355	\$2,907	\$77,900	\$25,170	\$2,996
Forbes, William Ross	Vice President, Church Relations & Corporate Secretary	Elizabeth	\$168,100	\$43,143	\$43,579	\$174,800	\$45,214	\$46,434
Frey, Mark	Regional Representative	The Cascades	\$81,400	\$25,291	\$2,504	\$85,100	\$27,586	\$2,291
Genhman, Philip	Regional Representative & Assistant Corporate Secretary	Salem	\$99,100	\$29,867	3,252	\$103,100	\$31,456	\$3,119
Kelly, Douglas A	Regional Representative	Southern Kansas	\$27,081	\$8,072		\$83,800	\$26,490	
Locklear, Helen	Regional Representative	Coastal Carolina	\$28,387	\$8,687		\$87,900	\$27,683	
Maggs Jr, Robert W (Elder)	President & CEO		\$303,100	\$88,064	\$148,331	\$315,300	\$45,672	\$161,682
McLachlan, Alexander S	Assistant to the President	Grace	\$100,800	\$30,208	\$3,877	\$104,800	\$31,725	\$4,031
Mills, Arthur W	Regional Representative	San Jose	\$76,800	\$23,810		\$82,734	\$26,115	
Serovy, Mary	Director, CREDO	Milwaukee	\$93,000	\$26,158		\$96,700	\$30,286	
Sewell, Rodney	Education Specialist	Denver	\$67,000	\$20,772	\$1,646	\$69,000	\$22,245	\$265
Sime, Peter C S	Vice President, Assistance & Funds Development	Philadelphia	\$140,000	\$38,706	\$36,131	\$146,300	\$40,947	\$38,813
Smith, Elliot M	Vice President, Funds Development	Mission				\$7,532	\$2,094	
Young, Richard E	Regional Representative	Grace	\$82,200	\$27,515	\$3,277	\$85,500	\$27,943	\$3,782
<b><u>Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation</u></b>								
Beckhusen, Elizabeth	Development Officer	Genesee Valley	\$72,911	\$22,603		\$74,702	\$23,531	
Chavis, Eric	Development Officer	North Puget Sound	\$77,454	\$24,011		\$79,528	\$25,051	
Goodwin, Jean	Development Officer	St Augustine	\$45,079	\$13,975		\$75,300	\$23,719	
Herbert, George	Development Officer	Sacramento	\$81,820	\$25,364		\$83,673	\$26,357	
Langfitt, John	Associate, Church Relations	San Fernando	\$43,846	\$19,822		\$45,144	\$20,823	
Leech, Robert (Elder)	President & CEO		\$214,967	\$28,830		\$235,614	\$30,177	
Pilutti, John	Development Officer	New Hope	\$68,323	\$21,180		\$69,326	\$21,839	
<b><u>Presbyterian Publishing Corporation</u></b>								
Berquist, Jon	Senior Editor, Biblical Studies	Temporary Member of New Brunswick	\$67,000	\$21,580		\$71,779	\$23,061	
Lewis, Marc (Elder)	Acting Chief Executive Officer		\$126,500	\$40,025		\$142,605	\$45,018	

2006 & 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCY MINISTER SALARY REPORT

Name	Position	Presbytery	2006	2006	2006	2007	2007	2007
			Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other	Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other
Maxwell, David	Senior Editor, Geneva Press	Mid-Kentucky	\$62,500	\$20,185		\$65,144	\$21,005	
McClure, Ann	Sales Representative	Middle Tennessee	\$53,040	\$17,252		\$27,476	\$9,328	
McKim, Donald	Editor, Academic & Reference	Mid-South	\$73,645	\$23,650		\$88,919	\$28,375	
<b>General Assembly Council</b>								
Aja, Antonio J	Associate Director, People in Mutual Mission	Mid-Kentucky	\$40,238	\$12,028				
Andrus, Charles L	Associate, Worship	Arkansas	\$40,220	\$12,186				
Boots, Steven A	Associate, Congregational Development	Minnesota Valleys	\$53,128	\$21,379		\$7,969	\$2,092	
Bradley, Leah E	PW Senior Associate Editor	Southeastern Illinois	\$51,868	\$16,088		\$36,103	\$11,085	
Brown, Jonathan M	Director, Mission Interpretation	Western North Carolina				\$63,058	\$19,931	
Browne, William C	Associate Director, Ecumenical Partnership	Mid-Kentucky	\$81,243	\$25,201		\$90,993	\$26,382	
Broyles, Vernon S	Associate Director, Social Justice	Sheppards & Lapsley						
Busse, Durwood Allen	Term Professional	San Francisco	\$41,064	\$0				
Campbell, Donald G	Director, Congregational Ministries	Mission	\$106,750	\$30,493		\$50,552	\$5,251	
Casteel, Molly	Associate, Women's Advocacy	Eastern Oklahoma	\$47,353	\$19,188		\$48,774	\$19,666	
Chai, David H	Associate, Asian American Leadership	Mid-Kentucky	\$59,456	\$18,442		\$61,239	\$19,301	
Chapman, Jon T	Coordinator, South & East Africa	Cayuga-Syracuse	\$72,917	\$22,619				
	Coordinator, Europe, Ecumenical Councils & Agencies					\$74,437	\$23,448	
Clark, Brian H	Term-Professional	National Capital	\$4,527	\$0		\$10,740	\$0	
Cook, Gary R	Associate Director, Global Service	St Augustine	\$78,781	\$24,436		\$66,774	\$19,519	
Craft, Richard H	Associate, Stewardship Training	Denver	\$50,847	\$15,772		\$55,263	\$16,667	
Craig, Robert H	Director, Ghost Ranch	Ohio Valley	\$77,887	\$24,178		\$62,319	\$18,499	
Craxton, Edward	Coordinator, Christian Education & Leader Development	Mid-Kentucky	\$61,489	\$18,552				
Curry, Belinda	Associate, Policy Development	St Andrew	\$54,922	\$17,043		\$56,595	\$17,837	
Denison, Charles	Term-Professional	Whitewater Valley	\$16,849	\$4,951				
Detterick, John J (Elder)	Executive Director		\$112,403	\$42,474				
DeYoung, Arthur J	Coordinator, Congregational Ministries	Transylvania	\$68,721	\$21,325		\$38,628	\$5,538	
Ellis, Robert L	Coordinator, International Health Ministries	New Hope	\$59,843	\$18,564		\$62,250	\$19,623	
Enders Odom, Emily J	MIJHH/Communications Associate	Salem	\$50,454	\$15,641		\$53,449	\$16,884	
Ensign-George, Barry A	Associate, Theology	East Iowa	\$53,987	\$16,754		\$56,104	\$17,683	
Farrell, Bennett H	Director, World Mission	Grace				\$29,624	\$9,815	
Fortel, Deborah G	Associate, Ministry Support	Mid-Kentucky	\$50,838	\$15,368				
Fox, Edward Q	Term-Professional	Pueblo				\$5,436	\$0	
Galvan-Valle, Marissa I	Associate, Resources Hispanic	San Juan	\$47,353	\$14,688		\$48,774	\$15,372	

2006 & 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCY MINISTER SALARY REPORT

Name	Position	Presbytery	2006	2006	2006	2007	2007	2007
			Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other	Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other
Gambrell, David P	Associate, Worship	Central Florida				\$24,562	\$8,002	
Gilliss, Martha S	Associate, Curriculum for Adults	Mid-Kentucky	\$49,565	\$15,376		\$41,824	\$10,156	
Girgis, Raafat S	Associate, Evangelism, Racial & Cultural Diversity Associate, Evangelism	Temporary Member of New Hope	\$50,754	\$15,743		\$52,279	\$16,477	
Gnatuk, Wayne A	Associate, Churchwide Relations	Transylvania	\$49,903	\$15,479		\$51,890	\$16,357	
Godwin, Wm C	Associate Director, Mission Funds	New Hope	\$83,078	\$25,780		\$67,169	\$13,098	
Green, Bridgett A	Leader, Women & Racial Justice	Charlotte	\$40,954	\$12,736		\$48,558	\$15,354	
Haig, Kristine	Associate, Spiritual Formation	Mid-Kentucky	\$12,366	\$3,666				
Harding, Edward P	Term-Professional	National Capital				\$10,494	\$0	
Hargleroad, Roberta W	Editor, Church & Society Magazine	de Cristo	\$51,829	\$16,073		\$29,320	\$8,939	
Harper, Cheri V	PW Program Assoc Synod Support PW, Program Associate	Mid-Kentucky	\$45,295	\$14,295		\$47,098	\$14,847	
Hawbecker, David M	Term-Professional	San Francisco	\$10,500	\$0		\$12,206	\$0	
Hawkins, Annie Vanessa	Associate, Black Congregational Enhancement Leader, Racial Ethnic Ministries	Savannah	\$49,550	\$15,376		\$55,571	\$17,546	
Hay, Judy L	Term-Professional	Genesee Valley	\$10,710	\$0		\$12,210	\$0	
Herrinton-Hodge, Elizabeth	Associate, Curriculum for Youth	Northern New England				\$14,115	\$4,756	
Hertig, Young L	Term-Professional	Pacific				\$5,962	\$0	
Hinds, Mark D	General Editor, Curriculum Development	Mission				\$49,658	\$16,013	
Hinson-Hasty, Gerald L	Coordinator, Theological Education & Seminary Relations Coordinator Theological Education	Coastal Carolina	\$59,746	\$18,532		\$61,538	\$19,396	
Hockenberry, Judith M	Associate, Curriculum Develop-Child	Mid-Kentucky	\$47,776	\$14,819		\$31,029	\$9,435	
Hoey, Eric	Program Director, Evangelism & Church Growth	San Gabriel				\$56,319	\$18,151	
Holman, Jo E	Associate, Education, Training & Events	New Hope	\$59,795	\$18,569		\$62,761	\$19,623	
Hunter, Rhashell D	Program Director, Women & Racial Ethnic	Lake Huron				\$54,785	\$17,653	
Iosso, Christian T	Coordinator, ACSWP	Hudson River	\$59,864	\$18,569		\$62,250	\$19,623	
Ivory, Elenora G	Director, DC Office	National Capital	\$92,033	\$28,559		\$83,158	\$24,909	
Jackson, Stephany D	Associate, Congregational Leadership, African American Associate, Congregational Leadership	Baltimore	\$54,693	\$16,972		\$56,358	\$17,763	
Kearns, Curtis A	Director, National Ministries Executive Administrator	National Capital	\$112,232	\$31,156		\$115,690	\$32,572	
Kim, Insik	Coordinator East Asia/Pacific	Midwest Hanmi	\$73,264	\$22,712		\$73,968	\$23,313	
Kim, Sun B	Associate, Korean Congregation Enhancement	Midwest Hanmi	\$61,734	\$19,137		\$61,765	\$19,456	
Klouw, Robert F	Associate, Communications/Criminal Justice Term-Professional	Mid-Kentucky	\$43,970	\$16,739		\$47,510	\$15,007	

2006 & 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCY MINISTER SALARY REPORT

Name	Position	Presbytery	2006	2006	2006	2007	2007	2007
			Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other	Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other
Koenig, William M	Associate, Peacemaking Resources & Publications	Western Reserve	\$54,420	\$16,895		\$59,899	\$18,908	
Lee, James H	Term-Professional	Mission				\$5,962	\$0	
Lee, Unzu S	Leadership Develop For Women	Newton	\$51,257	\$15,899		\$52,794	\$16,640	
Locklear, Helen	Deputy Director	Coastal Carolina	\$73,471	\$20,368				
Long, Kimberly B	Associate, Worship	Monmouth	\$48,569	\$13,845		\$30,478	\$9,225	
Lugo, Ana L	Campaign Consultant	National Capital	\$55,945	\$17,366		\$57,668	\$18,176	
Madden, Angela	Associate, Relating to the Middle East	Southern Kansas	\$37,493	\$10,250				
Makari, Victor E	Coordinator Middle East	Scioto Valley	\$72,515	\$22,480		\$73,198	\$23,070	
Mangrum, William L	Associate, Spiritual Formation	Redwoods	\$19,914	\$6,054				
Martin, Louis E	Campaign Consultant	Twin Cities Area	\$60,074	\$18,623		\$60,641	\$19,113	
McClure, Marian	Director, Worldwide Ministries	Mid-Kentucky	\$113,020	\$31,248		\$57,447	\$15,771	
Milligan, Fred D	Associate, Stewardship Training	Lackawanna	\$50,847	\$22,739		\$55,263	\$16,667	
Murphy, Danny C	Term-Professional	Trinity	\$10,500	\$0		\$12,206	\$0	
Myers, Marcia C	Associate Director, Leadership & Vocation		\$76,971	\$23,885				
Nabors, Truman D	Term-Officials & Managers	National Capital	\$28,764	\$10		\$28,907	\$9	
Niles-McCrary, Rose E	Associate, Theological Education & Seminary Relations	Hudson River				\$14,961	\$5,057	
Pindar, William H	Director, Stony Point Center	New York City	\$72,907	\$22,601		\$72,907	\$22,966	
Reeves, Kathy	Associate, Ecumenical & Mission Partnership	Denver	\$58,286	\$18,069				
	Term-Professional					\$28,074	\$11,953	
Robinson, John A	Associate, Disaster Response in US	Shenandoah	\$59,896	\$18,616		\$65,416	\$20,175	
Rock, Jay T	Coordinator, Interfatih Relations	San Francisco	\$59,240	\$18,372		\$61,016	\$19,231	
Rodrigue, Kimberly L	Term-Professionals	Santa Fe				\$2,562	\$2,616	
Rodriguez, Hector L	Associate, Hispanic Congregations	Central Florida	\$53,875	\$16,711		\$55,492	\$17,490	
Sauceda, Teresa C	Assoc Racial Justice /Advocacy	San Francisco	\$52,062	\$16,152		\$53,634	\$16,904	
Sauer, Leslie L	Coordinator, Ecumenical & Mission Partnership	Stockton	\$71,617	\$18,414				
	Term-Professional					\$58,635	\$17,988	
Small, Joseph D	Associate Director, Theology & Worship	Mid-Kentucky	\$79,920	\$24,789				
	Program Director, Theology, Worship, Education					\$87,180	\$27,506	
Smith, Alexa A	Assoc Join Hand Against Hunger	Ohio Valley	\$52,049	\$16,144		\$53,611	\$16,897	
Sorge, Sheldon W	Assoc Theology & Worship	Abingdon	\$60,688	\$18,832		\$1,986	\$0	
Suarez-Valera, Angel	Associate, Immigrant Groups	Suroeste	\$53,034	\$16,447		\$54,625	\$17,216	
Taylor, Thomas F	Deputy Executive Director, Mission	San Gabriel				\$125,977	\$33,734	
Tedrow, Tricia	Associate, Curriculum for Youth	Mission	\$25,037	\$7,482				
Thomas, James A	Associate Director, Evangelism	Charlotte	\$77,005	\$23,896		\$67,893	\$19,088	



2006 & 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCY MINISTER SALARY REPORT

Name	Position	Presbytery	2006	2006	2006	2007	2007	2007
			Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other	Salary & Housing	Medical Pension & Benefits	Other
Tom, Phil	Associate, Urban Ministry Associate, Small Community Ministries	Mid-Kentucky	\$62,264	\$19,302		\$62,296	\$19,623	
Troy, Nancy K	Associate, Social Welfare Org	Mid-Kentucky	\$57,541	\$17,862		\$59,314	\$18,695	
Uriarte, Mienda A	Associate, Christian Education	Pacific	\$54,636	\$16,937		\$6,035	\$1,468	
Valentine, Linda B (Elder)	Executive Director					\$160,000	\$59,080	
Van Marter, Jerry	Coordinator News Services	San Francisco	\$69,474	\$21,537		\$69,513	\$21,896	
Wang, Shun C	Associate, Asian Congregations	New Covenant				\$61,765	\$19,456	
Wiens-Sorge, Tammy L	Associate, Curriculum Development Associate, Spiritual Formation	Mid-Kentucky	\$50,510	\$15,669		55,878	17,636	
Wiley, Charles A	Coordinator Theology & Worship	New Hope				\$62,250	\$19,623	
Wilson, Douglas A	Associate, Presbyterian Evangelism Coordinator, NMD Mission Initiative	Mid-Kentucky	\$67,480	\$20,919		\$10,043	\$2,636	
Wilson, Sylvia J	Associate For Collegiate Min	Greater Atlanta				\$13,602	\$4,597	
Young, Rebecca B	Mission Co-Worker	Western North Carolina	\$23,692	\$10,679		\$12,185	\$5,620	
Zaki, Raafat L	Coordinator, Central, South & Se Asia	Mid-Kentucky	\$59,819	\$18,561		\$7,833	\$1,992	
<b><u>Office of the General Assembly</u></b>								
Broyles, Vernon S	Term-Professional	Sheppards & Lapsley				\$28,190	\$8,457	
Clements, Kerry S	Director, Communication & Technology	Heartland	\$82,488	\$25,586		\$84,963	\$26,778	
Cobb, Dennis L	Manager, Assembly Services	Winnebago	\$63,145	\$19,586		\$63,851	\$18,278	
Davies, Lesley A	Manager, Examination Services	Utah	\$62,206	\$19,295		\$64,072	\$20,194	
Hudson, Jill M	Coordinator, Governing Body Relations	Ohio Valley				\$21,696	\$7,890	
Kirkpatrick, Clifton	Stated Clerk	Mid-Kentucky	\$129,899	\$33,267		\$133,796	\$34,746	
Malave, Carlos L	Associate, Ecumenical Relations	Mid-Kentucky	\$53,788	\$16,684		\$55,402	\$17,461	
Moorhead, James H	Editor	New Hope	\$7,995	\$0		\$8,236	\$0	
Myers, Marcia C	Director, Office Of Vocation	Mid-Kentucky				\$81,977	\$25,855	
Parsons, Gradye M	Director, Strategic Operations	Holston	\$98,111	\$29,450		\$101,054	\$30,814	
Tammen, Mark A	Director, Constitutional Services	Blackhawk	\$87,989	\$27,264		\$90,535	\$28,535	
Torrens, Gary D	Coordinator, Governing Body Relations	Mid-Kentucky	\$82,487	\$25,585		\$78,422	\$22,389	
Winbush, Robina M	Director, Ecumenical & Agency Relations	New York City	\$87,989	\$27,264		\$90,535	\$28,535	
Youngs, Sharon K	Coordinator, Communications	West Virginia	\$61,868	\$19,190		\$63,725	\$20,084	

2006 & 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCY MINISTER SALARY REPORT

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Presbytery</u>	<u>2006</u> <u>Salary &amp;</u> <u>Housing</u>	<u>2006</u> <u>Medical</u> <u>Pension &amp;</u> <u>Benefits</u>	<u>2006</u> <u>Other</u>	<u>2007</u> <u>Salary &amp;</u> <u>Housing</u>	<u>2007</u> <u>Medical</u> <u>Pension &amp;</u> <u>Benefits</u>	<u>2007</u> <u>Other</u>
<b><u>Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program</u></b>								
Choie-Hoe, Mickie	Development Specialist	Riverside				\$57,972	\$18,272	
Hudson, James L	President & CEO	Ohio Valley	\$125,308	\$32,730		\$131,875	\$34,521	

## Item 04-01

[The assembly approved Item 04-01 with amendment. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Amending G-6.0401 by Replacing the Word “Sympathy” with the Word “Empathy”—From the Presbytery of Albany.*

~~[The Presbytery of Albany overtures]~~ [That] the 218th General Assembly (2008) ~~[to]~~ direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment~~[s]~~ to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

[1.] Shall G-6.0401 of the *Book of Order* be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The office of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of ~~sympathy~~ *[empathy]* [compassion], witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, of exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, ~~warm sympathies sincere~~ *[empathy]* [compassion], and sound judgment should be chosen for this office.

[2.] Shall G-6.0202b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. The permanent pastoral offices of ministers of the Word and Sacrament are pastors and associate pastors. When a minister of the Word and Sacrament is called as pastor or associate pastor of a particular church or churches, she or he is to be responsible for a quality of life and relationships that commend the gospel to all persons and that communicate its joy and its justice. The pastor is responsible for studying, teaching, and preaching the Word, for administering Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for praying with and for the congregation. With the elders, the pastor is to encourage the people in the worship and service of God; to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world; to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying; to participate in governing responsibilities, including leadership of the congregation in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision making of the church, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole. With the deacons the pastor is to share in the ministries of ~~sympathy~~ *compassion*, witness, and service. In addition to these pastoral duties, he or she is responsible for sharing in the ministry of the church in the governing bodies above the session and in ecumenical relationships.”]

### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms the belief that as Christ’s faithful evangelists we demonstrate “by the love of its members for one another and by the quality of its common life the new reality in Christ; sharing in worship, fellowship, and nurture, practicing a deepened life of prayer and service under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0300c(2)); “participating in God’s activity in the world through its life for others by ... ministering to the needs of the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the powerless, ... giving itself and its substance to the service of those who suffer (*Book of Order*, G-3.0300c(3)(b, d)). “It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith. ...” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0402).

Sympathy, as defined in the Merriam Webster Dictionary, is “an affinity, association, or relationship between persons or things wherein whatever affects one similarly affects the other.” This implies a degree of equal feeling or suffering together. It is our belief that a more appropriate response to those in need is one of empathy. Empathy, as defined in the Merriam Webster Dictionary, is “the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner.” An empathic person recognizes but does not share other’s suffering.

In an article entitled, “Don’t Forget Your Dispatchers,” Wendy Norris makes the differences between sympathy and empathy quite clear. With sympathy, advice is offered; whereas with empathy, questions are asked with appropriate listening to empower the person to make their own decisions. With sympathy, we feel responsible for others, in empathy we feel responsible to others. When we show sympathy, we want to fix, protect, rescue, and carry others feelings. When we show empathy, we are a helper-guide, concerned more with the person and feelings rather than solutions. With sympathy we expect the person to live up to our expectations and in empathy we expect the person to be responsible for himself/herself. Suffering can aid to the growth of those in need and by using empathy, we can be there for others and help them reach their own conclusions and solutions to life problems (Norris, 2007).

Empathy is more directly related to serving others. Service to others is indicated throughout the Bible. Luke 6:31 states “Do to others as you would have them do to you” (NRSV). Romans 12:15–16 states “Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are” (NRSV). By participating in the emotions rather than actually feeling the emotion, we are being empathic toward others, helping them process their own emotions, feelings, and grief rather than fixing their problems.

Deacons are often called to tend to the sick, elderly, lonely, grieving, and those in need. In such cases, if a deacon truly acted in a sympathetic manner, he or she would be taking on other’s emotions and carry feelings to a level that would be unhealthy, over burdensome, and emotionally exhausting. By taking on a more empathic role, deacons can tend to others by considering another’s feelings and responding to their needs, helping them move through various stages of emotion at their own pace and comfort level, with autonomy and grace.

#### References

*Book of Order*, The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) (Part II ed.). (2007–2009). Louisville, KY: Office of the General Assembly.

*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. (n.d.). Merriam Webster. Retrieved July 17, 2007, from <http://www.webster.com/dictionary/sympathy>

*New Revised Standard Version Bible*. (1989). Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Norris, W. C. (n.d.). *Sympathy vs. Empathy*. Retrieved February 27, 2007, from Federation of Fire Chaplains Web site: <http://www.firechaplains.org/templates/System/details.asp?id=41096&PID=524780>

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-01

#### *Advice on Item 04-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2001) to disapprove Item 04-01.

#### *Rationale*

The overture seeks to replace the word “sympathy” with “empathy” and “warm sympathies” with “sincere empathy” in G-6.0401. A review of linguistic authorities shows that “sympathy” and “empathy” have semantic fields that significantly overlap, so that the very arguments used for “empathy” could just as easily be applied to “sympathy.” Therefore, neither increased clarity nor precision of meaning is gained by the substitution.

The use of “sympathy” is to be preferred for the following reasons:

- *History*: The use of “sympathy” as a qualification for the office of deacon has a long history of use in predecessor denominations, dating back at least to 1911 in the UPCNA *Book of Government and Worship*; at least to 1923 in the PCUS *Book of Church Order*; and to 1958 in the UPCUSA *Book of Order*.
- *Biblical attestation*: The word “sympathy” is a direct transliteration of the Greek word “συμπαθής” (*sympathēs*), which occurs as a noun or verb three times in the New Testament, most notably in the list of Christian virtues in 1 Peter 3:8, and in Hebrews 4:15 in which Christ is proclaimed as a Great High Priest who is able “to sympathize with us in our weaknesses” (NRSV). By contrast, the word “empathy,” from the Greek “εμπαθειος” (*empatheios*) does not occur in the New Testament.

Should the assembly seek an alternative word for “sympathy” in G-6.0401, the committee would find amendment to “compassion” as proposed by the Form of Government Task Force to be a preferred alternative. The committee also advises the assembly that for clarity and consistency in Chapter Six of the Form of Government, any amendment to G-6.0401 should be accompanied by a parallel amendment to G-6.0202b, which states, “With the deacons, the pastor is to share in the ministries of sympathy, witness, and service.”

*Should the proposed revision to the Form of Government be approved, this overture would amend the language found in the first sentence of G-2.0202, which would read:*

*“The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of [~~compassion~~] [empathy], witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, [~~warm sympathies~~] [sincere empathy], and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry....”*

## Item 04-02

[In response to Item 04-02, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Amending G-5.0200 to Add the Vows of Membership to the Book of Order—From the Presbytery of Mission.*

The Presbytery of Mission overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-5.0000\* be amended by inserting new text as G-5.0200 and renumbering the remaining items in G-5.0000 (G-5.0200–.0500 becomes G-5.0300–.0600) as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“G-5.0200

“2. *Membership Vows*

*“At the time member-candidates present themselves to the session for reception into membership, whether by profession of faith, transfer of letter, or reaffirmation of faith, the following questions shall be addressed to the member-candidates for their answer as indicated. Sessions may make the determination, on an individual basis, to exempt certain persons from answering these specific questions due to physical or mental disability. In such a case, appropriate alternative questions and their presentation should be devised, still meeting the requirements of G-5.0101a.*

*“Who is your Lord and Savior?”*

*“Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.*

*“Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?”*

*“I do, by God’s grace.*

*“Will you be Christ’s faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love?”*

*“I will, with God’s help.*

*“Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, share in its worship and ministry through your prayers and gifts, your study and service, and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?”*

*“I will, with God’s help.”*

### Alternate Resolution

Shall G-5.0000\* be amended by inserting new text as G-5.0200 and renumbering the remaining items in G-5.0000 (G-5.0200–.0500 becomes G-5.0300–.0600) as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

*“After new members are examined, affirming their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and are received by the session, whether by profession of faith, certificate of transfer, or reaffirmation of faith, they shall be presented to and welcomed by the congregation during a service of worship where they shall make a public profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, as do confirmands (W-4.2003a, b, and c).”*

\*Should the assembly send a revised Form of Government to the presbyteries for their positive or negative vote, the vows contained here should be inserted and included in the appropriate membership section.

### Rationale

Chapter IV of the Directory for Worship describes confirmands’ reaffirmation of baptismal vows taken on their behalf (W-4.2003). They do this by

“a. professing their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,

“b. renouncing evil and affirming their reliance on God’s grace,

“c. declaring their intention to participate actively and responsibly in the worship and mission of the church.”

The same chapter (W-4.2004) highlights the reception of other new members into the congregation as an appropriate opportunity, as well, for reaffirmation of baptismal commitments, public profession of faith, and commitment to participation in the worship and mission of the church.

While these professions are described in the Directory for Worship, the actual reception of new members takes place in the context of a session meeting, directed by the Form of Government (G-10.0102b).

The *Book of Order* lists the constitutional questions prescribed for those being ordained or installed to service in the offices of the church. These questions are now found in the Directory for Worship; the questions are posed in the context of worship as the act of the congregation or presbytery. In contrast, the *Book of Order* does not presently contain a corresponding set of constitutional questions for those wishing to enter into active church membership, an act of the session. The proposed amendment parallels the outlined statements contained in the Directory for Worship. The specific language comes from the *Book of Common Worship*, a liturgical resource that is valuable but optional.

It is desirable that the *Book of Order* be amended to include constitutional questions for those seeking active membership since

1. having common, standardized, questions for use throughout the denomination will emphasize the fact that membership is not solely in the local church, but in the larger, connectional, whole as well;
2. it will provide a resource of readily accessible, doctrinally sound, and well-constructed questions for use by the local churches;
3. it will provide guidance and clarification to member-candidates in the step they are taking as outlined in G-5.0101a (“One becomes an active member of the church through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and acceptance of his Lordship in all of life.”); and
4. its placement in G-5.0000 appropriately emphasizes the promises and responsibilities of membership along with the meaning and privileges of membership.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-02

*Advice on Item 04-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 04-02.

#### ***Rationale***

The meaning of membership is contained in Chapter V of the Form of Government. In becoming a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a person professes (or reaffirms) faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and acceptance of his Lordship in all of life (G-5.0101). Membership means accepting Christ’s call to involvement in the ministry of the Church, especially as defined in G-5.0102a–i.

The Directory for Worship presently contains language that largely accomplishes the goal of the overture. The vows required of persons being received into active membership in W-4.2003 (and of parents who present their children for baptism, W-3.3603a–d) deal with the same subjects as questions 1, 2, and 4 proposed in the overture, although not in precisely the same terminology. The overture would add a question concerning faithful discipleship that is not explicitly covered by language in W-4.2003. As the rationale accompanying the overture notes, the aim of the overture is to create “common standardized questions” that are “readily accessible, doctrinally sound, and well-constructed.”

The principal difference between the existing language in W-4.2003 and that proposed here is that the overture proposes specific formulae with which the confirmand must respond to catechetical questions posed by the liturgist. Section W-4.2003 does not specify the precise terms of response, leaving open the possibility that the language employed in this section could be used as questions to which the confirmand responds, “I do.” The language of W-4.2003 also leaves open the possibility that affirmations of faith in Christ, renunciations of evil, and declarations of intent to participate in the life of the church might be made in language that is nontraditional. Whether the language of affirmation constitutes an affirmation of faith, renunciation of evil, or declaration of intent, is a matter for sessions to determine on a case-by-case basis.

The Advisory Committee notes that antecedent polities to the present *Book of Order* did contain such questions as this overture contemplates. For example, the PCUS *Book of Church Order*, Directory for the Worship and Work of the Church, Part I, chapter 10, required that

- (c) The Minister shall then address those seeking confirmed membership, using the following or like form:

(All of you) being present to make a public profession of your faith, are to assent to the following declarations and promises, by which you enter into a solemn covenant with Christ and his Church:

(1) Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God justly deserving his displeasure, and without hope save in his sovereign mercy?

(2) Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and depend upon him alone for salvation as he is offered in the Gospel?

(3) Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?

(4) Do you promise to serve Christ in his Church by supporting and participating in its worship and work to the best of your ability?

(5) Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to further its purity and peace? (Section 210-5).

In 1990–1992, a series of overtures were proposed that would have placed affirmations very nearly identical to these in the Directory for Worship, at W-4.2003. The overtures were referred to the (then) Theology and Worship Ministry Unit (TAW) for response. The TAW advised the 205th General Assembly (1993) to disapprove the overtures, and the assembly agreed. As part of the rationale for its advice, TAW noted:

The session has responsibility in regard to forms of words. The . . . session is responsible for ordering an act of worship so significant as the reception of members. It is a crucial part of that ministry to determine the form of avowals a person should make in order to profess faith, present children for baptism, or be received into membership. A notably strong element of our Presbyterian tradition has refused to restrict the sessions and pastors in the important work of formulating such wording, while an outline or statement of the substance of confession and commitments has always been provided. (*Minutes*, 1993, Part I, p. 727–28).

As it considers this overture, the General Assembly may wish to consider the degree to which the inclusion of particular language for profession of faith invites forms of subscriptionism. While language is the primary, if indeed not the only, tool we have by which to express the nature of our faith, the church must be on guard against assuming that profession of faith can be reduced to subscription to formulae. The present overture is careful to provide for alternative means of profession for those limited by physical or mental disability. But it does not provide for the possibility that there may be other, more meaningful language not herein contemplated by which a believer—and not necessarily one who is disabled—might make acceptable profession. In the end, it seems to us that the essence of faith is not to be found in the intellectual constructions to which we give assent but in the One in whom we repose our ultimate confidence and trust.

## Item 04-03

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-03 with comment. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Amending G-10.0101, G-10.0401, and D-10.0401b Regarding Accounting Practices of the Church—From the Presbytery of the Pacific.*

The Presbytery of the Pacific overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Amend G-10.0101 as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“The session of a particular church consists of the pastor or co-pastors, the associate pastors, and the elders in active service. All members of the session, including the pastor, co-pastors, and associate pastors, are entitled to vote. *Although pastors, co-pastors, and associate pastors are members of the session, they shall not be corporate officers or trustees nor shall they act as agents of the corporation.*”

2. Amend G-10.0401a–d as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. The counting and recording of all offerings by at least two duly appointed, *unrelated* persons, or a fidelity bonded person;

“b. The keeping of adequate books and records to reflect all financial transactions, open to inspection by authorized church officers at reasonable times;

*“c. Any changes in accounts, designated or operating, or drawing on funds designated for other purposes, shall be by session action only and duly recorded in the session minutes;*

*“d. Periodic reporting of the financial activities to the board or boards vested with financial oversight at least annually, preferably more often; and there shall be an annual published report of financial activity presented to the congregation;*

*“e. A full financial review or audit of all books and records relating to the finances once each year by a public accountant or public accounting firm or a committee of members versed in accounting procedures and Presbyterian polity. Such auditors should shall not be related to the treasurer (or treasurers) and not related to pastors or any individual related to persons having to do with the finances of the church. While terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community, it is expected that the accounting practices of a church shall minimally conform to the standards of not-for-profit organizations for their state.”*

3. Amend D-10.0401b as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

*“b. For instances of sexual abuse of another person, the three-year time limit shall not apply. Charges may be brought regardless of the date on which an offense is alleged to have occurred. For instances of alleged financial misconduct regarding church funds, the three-year time limit shall begin from the time of discovery of the alleged offenses.”*

**Comment: It is expected that the accounting practices of a church shall minimally conform to the standards of not-for-profit organizations for their state.**

#### *Rationale*

The financial and management practices of many churches are very lax, due in part to the church being a “voluntary association”; with many of those exercising fiscal responsibilities being trained or untrained volunteers.

The increasing evolution of the church along lines of a corporate management model has resulted in the pastoral staff assuming responsibility for, and control of the financial and corporate matters of churches. The reporting of financial activity to the congregation on at least an annual basis serves as both information and as a form of accountability.

All sorts of voluntary organizations in our time have shown themselves to be susceptible and vulnerable to fiscal mismanagement resulting in disregard for fund designations, i.e. those set up for specific purposes by session action and those restricted due to donor designation leading to the unauthorized shuffling and mixing of the funds of the organization (church); or the embezzlement of funds by those responsible for the finances of an organization (church).

When appropriate accounting and reporting procedures are not in place, it may be some time before financial misconduct is discovered. The statute of limitations period should start when the alleged misconduct is discovered, rather than when it occurred.

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-03**

*Advice on Item 04-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 04-03.

Item 04-03 from the Presbytery of the Pacific proposes amendments to G-10.0101, G-10.0401, and D-10.0401b, relating to financial and management practices within congregations.

The proposed amendment to G-10.0101 would prohibit pastors, co-pastors, and associate pastors from being trustees or corporate officers.

The proposed amendments to G-10.0401 would require that counting of congregational collections be conducted by two unrelated persons, that changes in accounts and drawing on funds designated for other purposes be with session approval only, that an annual financial report be presented to the congregation, that persons who serve on a congregational audit committee be versed in Presbyterian polity as well as accounting procedures, and that accounting practices of congregations conform to standards established for non-profit corporations.

The proposed amendment to D-10.0401b would provide that the three-year statute of limitations for bringing an accusation of alleged financial misconduct regarding church funds not begin until the time of the discovery of the alleged offense.



*Rationale*

With respect to the proposed amendment to G-10.0101, the second sentence of G-7.0401 is dispositive of the issue: “Only members on the active roll of the particular church shall be members of the corporation and eligible for election as trustees.” While the pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor is a member of session, he or she is not a member of the congregation and, therefore, not eligible to be a trustee. Since the pastor cannot be a trustee, he or she cannot moderate the meetings of the board of trustees. The trustees will have to elect one of their elder members as president of the corporation who will have to preside when the session is meeting as the board of trustees.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that sessions and presbyteries have the authority to institute the procedures set forth above as amendments to G-10.0401 if they believe that stricter measures are needed to prevent mismanagement and mishandling of church finances. In order to prevent financial misconduct in congregations it is important that the session be diligent in its oversight of church officers and employees. The session can put in place whatever rules and procedures it believes it needs to assist in that obligation. Presbyteries can use administrative review or can suggest or require new rules and procedures to sessions to assist in preventing financial misconduct. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that an amendment to the Form of Government is unnecessary to solve the problems.

With respect to the proposed amendment to D-10.0401b, the statute of limitations for bringing an accusation in a matter involving financial misconduct in a congregation is three years from the time of the commission of the offense. There should be a review of financial matters at least annually. If misconduct is not discovered within the three-year period, that is an indication that the session is not exercising due diligence. Changing the statute of limitations is not a way to respond to lax management of the church’s financial affairs. Furthermore, the term “time of the discovery of the alleged offense” is vague. Does the time of discovery occur when suspicion is aroused that some misconduct may have occurred, is it when an audit is completed and some evidence of misfeasance is uncovered, or is it when more evidence has been accumulated?

If, however, the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the problems addressed by this overture are so serious or severe that amendment of the Form of Government is the best way to respond to them, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the proposed language is clear and consistent for accomplishing the intent of the overture. In that event, the General Assembly may approve amendments to either G-10.0401 or D-10.0401b or both.

**Item 04-04**

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-04. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Amending G-7.0301, “Meetings of the Congregation”—From the Presbytery of Denver.*

The Presbytery of Denver respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to

1. Pursue equality, justice, and inclusiveness, consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the commitment of the PC(USA) to preserving the same, by “giving rights to those who have no power to claim rights for themselves” (W-7.4002).
2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Amend G-7.0301 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The congregation is made up of all members on the active roll of a particular church. All such members who are ~~present at a congregational meeting~~ *listed on the active roll* are entitled to vote.”

*Rationale*

When the congregation meets for the purpose of electing officers, establishing representative committees, and so on, there are many members who, by necessity or circumstances, must be absent. One of the few rights of an active congregation member is the right to vote, but when active members lose this right because they are physically absent, equality, justice, and inclusiveness are being denied.

While it is in community that we make decisions, God’s perspective of the beloved community is inherently more inclusive than our own. From a biblical perspective, what makes God’s people ‘the people of God’ is not simply the *visible* gathering together of the saints. The community of God is inclusive of *both the visible and the invisible members* who, together,

have been called to serve the invisible God who has made God's self visible in Jesus Christ. It was "all the saints" to whom the Apostle Paul repeatedly sent greetings, and it was the prayers of "all the saints" which, together with the smoke of the incense, went up before God (Revelation).

Our system of representation is so structured that ministers, elders, women, men, youth, and people of every race and ethnicity are encouraged to speak to and vote on those issues that are before and in the church. Thankfully, reforms previously made by the church put an end to a time when the only persons voting in both the nation and our church were white men.

How, then, do we justify the failure of the PC(USA) to extend voting rights to those active members of the church who have

- Made a profession of faith in Christ.
- Been baptized.
- Been received into membership of the church.
- Voluntarily submitted to the government of this church.
- Participated in the church work and worship (through such manifestations as faithfully supporting the church through their prayers and financial contributions, sending cards and making telephone calls, knitting and sewing for the poor, receiving the Sacraments at home, and otherwise participating as their health, condition, and time allow)?

Are we not failing to "do justly," as the Prophet Micah says, and failing to affirm *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda* when we fail to give full voting privileges to those active members of the church who, through no fault of their own, are physically unable to come into the House of the Lord?

An ordinance that requires a member be present to vote intentionally excludes certain people, most notably the aged, the physically challenged, health-care workers, and minimum wage earners (who often are forced to work during the worship hour), and is inconsistent with the church's affirmation of inclusiveness.

If this overture is embraced and approved, presbyteries and sessions can work collaboratively to develop appropriate guiding principles and policies for implementing a fair and secure method for absentee voting. Such policies and guidelines would speak to such issues as eligibility, electronic voting, and time limits for casting votes, to name just a few.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has faithfully and progressively witnessed to, and worked on behalf of, equality, justice, and inclusiveness for all peoples. In these changing times, may the wisdom, power, and Spirit of the God who is always doing a new thing, move us to a new way of holding fast to our unity as the body of Christ.

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-04**

*Advice on Item 04-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 04-04.

#### *Rationale*

The overture seeks to permit congregations to create rules whereby active members unable to attend the congregational meeting shall be permitted to vote. The ACC commends the concern of the overture for including the whole community of active members in the decision-making process of the congregation. The constitutional mandate for inclusion and diversity, however, is directed at prohibiting categorical exclusion from the decision-making process and does not provide a guarantee for universal accommodation. The ACC believes provisions already in the Form of Government setting forth requirements for the call of the meeting and notification of members provide reasonable and sufficient accommodation for members to fulfill their responsibilities of membership without violating the mandate for inclusion.

In addition, the particular remedy proposed would constitute a major departure from the Principles of Presbyterian Government (G-4.0301), and the biblical and theological precepts on which they are founded.

Our Presbyterian form of governance emphasizes that decision-making is a spiritual exercise in seeking the will of Christ together. The model for this is found in the practice of the apostolic church, in which apostles and elders gathered together in

prayer for the purpose of discerning God's will (Acts 1, Acts 15). Central to this practice is the belief that God speaks through the gathered community, and that the shared wisdom of the body can serve to counter and correct the power of self-interest in individuals (Mt. 18:15–20). Inherent to the very concept of “congregation” is the physical gathering of the people of God, both for worship and governance (Heb. 10:24–25).

While the “Principles of Presbyterian Government” address governing bodies and not congregations, where applicable, they also apply to decision-making in congregations. Hence, G-4.0301e: “Decisions shall be reached in governing bodies by vote, following opportunity for discussion, and a majority shall govern” is generally applicable to congregations. It provides that there be opportunity for discussion before voting takes place. In any voting system where the voting parties are not able to participate in simultaneous communication, there has been no opportunity for discussion. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 10th edition (Perseus Publishing) also emphasizes the importance of simultaneous communication in group decision-making: “The opportunity for simultaneous communication is central to the deliberative character of the meeting, and is what distinguishes it from attempts to do business by postal or electronic mail or by fax” (p. 482).

The General Assembly has historically resisted attempts to permit absentee voting except in corporate matters in jurisdictions where proxy votes must be permitted by civil law (G-7.0404). Similarly, *Robert's* discourages absentee voting: “It is a fundamental principle of parliamentary law that the right to vote is limited to the members of an organization who are actually present at the time the vote is taken in a legal meeting.” *Robert's* specifies flaws in voting systems where all members are not present to vote at the same time: “The votes of those present could be affected by debate, by amendments, and perhaps by the need for repeated balloting, while those absent would be unable to adjust their votes to reflect these factors. Consequently, the absentee ballots would in most cases be on a somewhat different question than that on which those present were voting, leading to confusion, unfairness, and inaccuracy in determining the result.” (408f.).

In some circumstances, governing bodies (as opposed to congregations) may provide for votes via electronic meetings and email for certain types of business in emergencies. The business of congregations, however, is limited to those essential functions that require the gathering of God's people (G-7.0304). The election of officers and the call of a pastor each may require the body to exercise judgment about individuals and may require the evaluation of a candidate's response to questions that can only be conducted in person. When congregations gather in their places of worship to deliberate, their decisions related to the purchase, sale, or encumbrance of real property assume a different perspective.

The practical matter of providing for equal participation by absent members while preserving the integrity of the process of discussion, discernment, and decision-making is daunting. To honor the intent of the overture, all non-present members would need to be afforded equal access to the process. In some congregations, those not present might exceed the number of those present. Even if by technological means, absent members were able to participate in the discussion and vote on an equal basis with those present, issues such as verification of identity and the provision for secure, written, secret ballots (if electing a pastor, conducting a contested election, or requested by the body) would need to be addressed.

If approved, the overture could adversely impact the ability of a presbytery to exercise oversight of congregations through congregational meetings which it may call under G-7.0303a.(2). In conflicted congregations, extending votes to those not present in congregational meetings invites expansion of the conflict and increases the likelihood of challenges to the outcome in both civil and ecclesiastical courts.

Ours is a covenant faith. Throughout our *Book of Order*, decisions are vested in groups, gathered in the presence of the Holy Spirit. That very presence changes the nature of the gathering, and often the outcome is different than it would have been as the sum of the many individuals. While the ACC is sympathetic with the realities expressed in the rationale of this overture, it finds that the amendment is inconsistent with provisions of the Constitution.

*If the proposed revised Form of Government is approved, this overture would amend the last sentence of G-1.0501 to read as follows:*

*“1.0501 Annual and Special Meetings*

*“The congregation shall hold an annual meeting and may hold special meetings as necessary. At least annually, the congregation shall review the adequacy of the compensation of the pastor or pastors, shall elect ruling elders, and may elect deacons and persons to other positions of elected service as determined by the congregation. Special meetings may be called for any or all of the purposes appropriate for congregational consideration. The business to be transacted at special meetings shall be limited to items specifically listed in the call for the meeting. Adequate public notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at a regular service of worship; congregations shall provide by their own rule for minimum notification requirements. Congregations shall also provide by rule the quorum necessary to conduct business. All active members [~~of the congregation present at either annual or special meetings~~] are entitled to vote.*

## Item 04-05

*On Amending D-12.0103 to Specify that Presbytery Pronounces Censure—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.*

[WITHDRAWN]

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## Item 04-06

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-06. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Amending D-7.0402c and D-8.0404c. Regarding Permanent Judicial Commission Written Decisions—From the Presbytery of Stockton.*

The Presbytery of Stockton overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall D-7.0402c and D-8.0404c be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown in italics.]

*“c. The questions presented for decision shall be fully debated and voted upon while all participating commission members are present. A written outline of a decision shall be prepared while in session, ~~and shall become the~~. The final decision, with dissents, shall be reviewed by all members of the panel, which may take place by conference call within ten days of the meeting, and when a copy of the written decision is signed by the moderator and clerk of the permanent judicial commission. A copy of the written decision shall immediately be delivered to the parties to the case by personal service or by certified delivery.”*

### *Rationale*

Permanent judicial commissions of presbyteries and synods are called upon to decide cases that affect the lives of individuals and the health of our church. These decisions are not to be made lightly or in great haste. But given the current situation, these commissions are sometimes placed under duress to make a decision within a short period of time. They would be better served if they would be allowed to use their time together to go through the evidence and the facts presented and together prepare an outline of a decision that deals with all of the issues presented to them. Then, a completely typed decision with all pertinent references noted may be made by the moderator and clerk, e-mailed to the members of the panel, and finalized in a conference call within ten days of the meeting. In this manner, the time together is spent reflecting on the issues of the trial, not in trying to quickly prepare a written document.

The context for this is that many of the synod permanent judicial commissions (and some of the presbyteries) are spread out geographically. The members of these commissions are volunteers and usually have travel plans made in advance, such that extending a meeting to complete a written decision is not always an option. It is costly to have them return to work on a decision together. Very often, writing a decision involves wordsmithing a decision, typing quotations from the trial record, inserting pertinent *Book of Order* references and portions of the parties' arguments. All of this takes time, which might better be spent making sure all of the allegations are given careful deliberation. If a member wishes to dissent from the majority decision, they must be working on their dissent, rather than fully participating in all portions of the ongoing decision. Allowing them the time they need to craft their response to the majority decision would be helpful to higher governing bodies who review the case on appeal.

The current process does not make use of the technology available (i.e. e-mail and conference calls) and should be updated to reflect the best use of time and resources of the commissioners.

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### **Concurrence to Item 04-06 from the Presbyteries of San Francisco and San Joaquin.**

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-06**

*Advice on Item 04-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 04-06 with the following comment.

Item 04-06 from the Presbytery of Stockton proposes amending D-7.0402c and D-8.0404c to permit permanent judicial commissions to approve a written outline of decisions in remedial cases, and then vote on the final decision during a conference call within ten days of the meeting. The overture cites the challenge of completing a written decision “while in session.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the overture would not amend similar language in D-11.0403c and D-13.0404c, limiting the effect of the proposed change to one type of case.

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in *Hope, et al., v. Presbytery of San Francisco* (Remedial Case 217-1, *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 455), held:

D-7.0402c states that “A written decision shall be prepared while in session . . .” The SPJC concluded the trial on February 7, 2004, but did not reconvene in a face-to-face meeting to complete the writing of its decision. A permanent judicial commission must meet in person for consideration and adoption of a final decision. A fundamental reason for this requirement rests upon the Reformed understanding of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the midst of the covenant community which is the Body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:12–13; *The Book of Confessions*, 5.124–.141)

On the other hand, the denomination places great burdens on an ecclesial judicial system that is dependent upon elected volunteers to handle a wide variety of matters. Many issues presented in remedial cases can be complex. Issues may arise in the course of the trial of a remedial case that are not fully anticipated, and that may require additional research of church precedent. Further, the pressures of drafting a decision in a limited period of time immediately after hearing the trial of a case may limit a permanent judicial commission’s ability to review, revise and reconsider a decision thoroughly.

Accordingly, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the proposed amendment should be considered in light of these competing concerns. If the assembly believes that greater flexibility is needed in the writing and adoption of permanent judicial commission decisions in the trial of a remedial case, the Advisory Committee advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) submit to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote the overture’s proposal amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“c. *The questions presented for decision shall be fully debated and voted upon while all participating commission members are present. A written outline of a decision shall be prepared while in session, and shall become the. [The final] [A written] decision, with dissents, shall be reviewed by all members of the panel, [which may take place] [either while the participating commission members are present or by meeting within ten days either in person or] by conference call[.] [within ten days of the meeting, and] [The decision shall become the final decision of the commission]* when a copy of the written decision is signed by the moderator and clerk of the permanent judicial commission. A copy of the written decision shall immediately be delivered to the parties to the case by personal service or by certified delivery.”

This revision would allow a permanent judicial commission the flexibility to finalize its decision either at the conclusion of trial while all members are still present or within ten days thereafter. This revision is also intended to make clear that the permanent judicial commission may find it feasible to meet again in person.

If the proposed amendment is approved by the presbyteries, the use of “conference call” for approving the final decision would be subject to *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (10th edition), § 50, pages 482–83, (G-9.0302) which establishes the criterion of being able to hear (and see in videoconferences) all persons at all times, as well as requiring standing rules of the permanent judicial commission to establish the purpose and limits for using such means.

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## Item 04-07

**[In response to Item 04-07, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 48, 49.]**

*On Adding a New Section D-1.0104 to Limit the Abuse in Disciplinary Process by the Filing of Multiple Complaints and/or Allegations—From the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.*

The Presbytery of Los Ranchos overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall the Rules of Discipline be amended by adding a new Section “D-1.0104” in the Preamble to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“D-1.0104

“*When an individual persists in filing multiple ecclesiastical and/or civil complaints, simultaneously or serially, remedial or disciplinary, against a particular individual or individuals, one governing body or several, the governing body (or its*

*permanent judicial commission) with original jurisdiction or with jurisdiction over the governing body with original jurisdiction, may declare that individual NOT IN COMPLIANCE and may itself, or through its permanent judicial commission, refuse to accept additional remedial or disciplinary complaints authored by or initiated by or filed by that individual while that individual has another judicial matter (ecclesiastical and/or civil) pending. A NOT IN COMPLIANCE ruling means the individual does not have standing to file, directly or by proxy, any additional allegations or complaints. (Any complaints filed by that individual prior to such designation, are tolled while the original matter before the governing body declaring the person NOT IN COMPLIANCE is resolved.) The intent of this section is to practice good stewardship by requiring the use of the provisions for resolution of disagreements by those means provided in D-1.0103. This section is not intended to replace or limit the right to file disciplinary charges against such individual.”*

### **Alternate Resolution Approved**

**That the Stated Clerk be instructed to prepare an advisory opinion outlining existing remedies to address abuses of judicial process, and the Office of the General Assembly be instructed to prepare any necessary constitutional amendments for presentation to the 219th General Assembly (2010) in order to provide for responses following due process, for permanent judicial commissions and sessions to censure persons found guilty of abusing judicial process through frivolous and/or harassing complaints and/or allegations.**

### *Rationale*

One of the purposes of disciplinary process, as set forth in the opening of Chapter I, is “... the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings. ...”

There are individuals who, contrary to D-1.0103, move frequently and directly to judicial process whenever they have a disagreement with a governing body;

In doing so, such individuals do not make use of other options for resolving difference.

Such individuals use the Rules of Discipline for purposes other than those for which they were intended.

The filing of multiple complaints and allegations results in the need for extensive investment of human and financial resources to respond to such complaints and allegations.

This is poor stewardship of governing body resources.

Some individuals refuse non-judicial attempts to respond to their concerns—and reject efforts to be more judicious in the use of judicial process.

Such abuse of the judicial process undermines the need for trust, mutual forbearance, and good will.

Such abuse of the judicial process erodes the ability of governing bodies to engage in mission and diverts resources to activities that detract from the primary mission of Christ’s Church.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-07**

*Advice on Item 04-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 04-07.

### *Rationale*

Item 04-07 seeks to grant governing bodies and permanent judicial commissions the ability to limit an individual’s standing to file remedial complaints or disciplinary accusations, if the individual “persists in filing multiple ecclesiastical and/or civil complaints, simultaneously or serially, remedial or disciplinary, against a particular individual or individuals, one governing body or several. ...”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises disapproval of the overture for the following reasons:

*The overture would permit governing bodies and permanent judicial commissions to deprive a person of constitutional rights without affording the individual due process. Essential to our exercise of discipline is the protection of the individual from the arbitrary and capricious abuse of power. The Preamble to the Rules of Discipline underscores the importance of due*

process in the exercise of judicial authority: “In all respects, all participants are to be accorded procedural safeguards and due process, and it is the intention of these rules so to provide” (D-1.0101). The proposed overture would empower governing bodies and courts of the church to limit an individual’s access to the courts of the church for redress of grievances *a priori*, apart from any hearing or process to address the relevance or truthfulness of the complaints. It would go so far as to empower governing bodies and courts to abridge the constitutional rights even of those persons who might, in the judgment of the governing body or permanent judicial commission be acting as “proxy” for one suspected of filing multiple complaints. In this way, the overture would violate the Historic Principle of Church Order that states, “no Church governing body ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority” (G-1.0307).

*The overture would permit a higher governing body to intervene in the judicial proceedings of a lower governing body independently of the lower governing body’s right or ability to exercise its own judgment.* The overture seeks to provide an overbroad authority to higher governing bodies (or judicial commissions) to intervene in matters under the jurisdiction of lower governing bodies (or judicial commissions). The overture does not identify any process of review, referral, or appeal by which a higher governing body or its permanent judicial commission is invited to participate in the issues before the lower governing body or judicial commission. Section G-4.0301f recognizes that the hierarchical use of power may not be exercised arbitrarily, but only when matters of controversy arise through an orderly process of review, or upon reference, complaint, or appeal: “A higher governing body shall have the right of review and control over a lower one and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal.”

*The overture would potentially hinder justice through the delay of judicial process.* The overture would automatically “toll” or suspend action on pending items while the original item before the governing body is being adjudicated. The Preamble of the Rules of Discipline calls for the “just, speedy, and economical” determination of proceedings (D-1.0101). The proposed overture, however, could delay action on duly filed complaints or accusations for months if not years. In cases in which suspended disciplinary accusations allege sexual abuse, it could have the effect of delaying the determination of whether an accused person should be put on administrative leave, and/or extending that leave for unreasonably long duration (D-10.0106).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution is sympathetic to the concerns for the stewardship of human and financial resources in the face of multiple, potentially groundless, complaints and accusations.

The committee reminds the assembly of existing remedies it cited in its response to Item 05-20 to the 217th General Assembly (2006):

The polity of the PC(USA) currently provides means to protect the denomination and its members from abuse of the system. Currently that protection exists through

1. the ability of an investigating committee to determine that charges will not be filed;
2. the ability of the investigating committee to choose to file allegations against an individual who inappropriately files allegations against another;
3. the ability of a session/permanent judicial commission that tries a disciplinary case to include in its opinion the statement that the allegations were frivolous. Investigating committees and sessions/permanent judicial commissions are strongly urged to avail themselves of these means as they seek to protect the integrity of our judicial system. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 428)

In addition, the committee notes that permanent judicial commissions of higher governing bodies may instruct parties in its decisions that it will take original jurisdiction of cases in lower governing bodies filed by specific individuals when there has been a pattern of multiple complaints and appeals. This would have the remedy of reducing the time and money spent on multiple appeals. There is precedent for this by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Veldhuizen v. Presbytery of San Francisco* (Remedial Case 210-6, *Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 136).

*This overture has no implications for the proposed revised Form of Government.*

## Item 04-08

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-08. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding the Definition of Marriage—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall W-4.9000 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown in italics.]

“W-4.9000 9. Marriage

“W-4.9001

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a ~~civil contract~~ *covenant between a woman and a man* ~~two people and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.~~ For Christians marriage is a covenant through which ~~a man and a woman~~ *two people* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made ~~by a woman and a man to each other~~ *between two people*, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

“W-4.9002

“a. In preparation for the marriage service, the minister shall provide for a discussion with the ~~man and the woman~~ *two people* concerning [The remainder of this section (Items (1)–(7)) remains the same.]

“W-4.9002b [No changes.]

“W-4.9003 [No changes.]

“W-4.9004

“The service begins with the scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The ~~man and the woman~~ *two people* shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the ~~woman and the man~~ *two people* are now joined in marriage. [The remainder of this paragraph remains the same.]

“W-4.9005 [No changes.]

“W-4.9006

“A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage *or civil union* and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of vows by the ~~husband and wife~~ *couple*, and the public declaration by the minister reflect the fact that the ~~woman and man~~ *two people* are already ~~married to one another~~ *united* according to the laws of the state.”

### ***Rationale***

Currently in our churches and communities same gender couples are living together in loving, committed, monogamous relationships. They are raising children, caring for aging parents, and making positive contributions to their communities. These couples include new and long-time members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Their relationships are equivalent to a marriage in every way but formal recognition by the church and by most states in which they live, though some states are recognizing their relationships as marriages or civil unions.

By changing the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship, we would recognize committed, lifelong relationships that are already being lived out by our members. We would honor and support the love and commitment they practice in their lives every day. We would bear witness to the love of God as it is expressed between these couples and as we offer that love to them on behalf of the church.

In addition, as the legal recognition of same gender relationships goes through transitions throughout the country, PC(USA) clergy and sessions are faced with complex decisions regarding ecclesiastical authority and property use. Ministers of Word and Sacrament currently can face ecclesiastical charges if they perform marriage ceremonies or civil unions that may be legal in their state. Same gender couples who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can come to their minister and request that minister to perform their marriage as an agent of the state, only to be denied that important time of pastoral care and ministry because of church law. Broadening the language to offer marriage to any two people removes the religious barriers faced by ministers, sessions, church members, and other Christians while continuing to honor the laws of each state. Changing the language in this way emphasizes that the Directory for Worship defines marriage within the bounds of our denomination and does not determine what is legal or illegal in civil law.

For the good of loving, monogamous, same-gender couples in our church and for the community and for the greater ministry of our clergy, sessions, and churches we propose these changes to the Directory for Worship.



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**Concurrence to Item 04-08 from the Presbytery of Hudson River.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-08**

*Advice on Item 04-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution offers the following advice to the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 04-08.

***Rationale***

The overture proposes removing language in W-4.9000 identifying marriage as a relationship between “a man and a woman” in favor of language that is not gender-specific as to the parties involved. In addition, it would reverse the order of the terms by which marriage is defined so that it refers to marriage first as a “covenant” and second as “a civil contract.”

The understanding of Christian marriage is set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies three distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is received, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response. First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.” Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.” These three sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overture, and which divide the church as to its understanding of what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. While the church can always define marriage more narrowly than the state, and restrict marriage in the church by enforcing its own limits and conditions, if the gift of marriage to the church were independent of the state and not fully subsumed by the civil contract definition, then it would have a basis for performing marriages as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow.

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community.

However, the church, on the basis of its historic interpretation of the standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-sex unions, which it has permitted within the church, and homosexual marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River*, (Remedial Case 212-11, *Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 586). This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

...since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony. (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-sex unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The Book of Order makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: "In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage." This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has not extended to its own liturgical practice and theological understanding of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church's faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors. For example, in some civil jurisdictions, same-sex unions are automatically accorded the legal status of marriage. In others, the state will not sanction a marriage unless both parties present valid social security cards. The Baltimore overture seeks to provide greater options to pastors facing these questions.

Should the assembly consider such a definition more faithful to the service of Christ in the church, the ACC finds the language proposed in the overture to be clear and consistent with that intent. However, in light of the Preface to the Directory for Worship, the ACC believes it would be incumbent on the assembly to clarify the biblical and confessional warrant for, as well as the ecumenical impact of, any alteration to the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship.

Were the assembly to approve and the church adopt the overture as presented, it would have the effect of negating the authoritative interpretation of 1991 and the *Benton* decision, as each is predicated on the constitutional definition of marriage as between "a man and a woman" exclusively. The ACC advises the assembly, however, that changing the definition of marriage in W-4.9001 would leave intact the language relating to the standards for church officers contained in G-6.0106b that calls for "fidelity in the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman," although the accompanying citation to W-4.9001 would no longer apply.

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#### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 04-08

*Comment on Item 04-08—From the General Assembly Council.*

The Directory for Worship states that marriage, both as a civil contract and as a Christian covenant, is a commitment made by a woman and a man. Item 04-08 seeks to change the definition of marriage in the *Book of Order* from "a man and a woman" to "two people."

This overture has theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications. All aspects of this issue need to be considered. Because the church's understanding of marriage is expressed in its services for Christian marriage, the overture's liturgical implications are particularly significant.

Any change in the theology of marriage must be reflected in the *Book of Common Worship* services of Christian marriage. The current forms of marriage liturgy reflect (and shape) a particular theology of marriage. The *Book of Common Worship* grounds God's gift of marriage in the complimentary creation of male and female, given by God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

The church's Statement on the Gift of Marriage would not make sense if "two persons" were substituted for "a man and a woman." The change called for by the overture would require a new understanding and a different statement of what constitutes God's gift of marriage.

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### \*Item 04-09

[The assembly approved Item 04-09. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Establishing the Star Valley United Church in Thayne, Wyoming as a Union Church—From the Presbytery of Wyoming.*

**The Presbytery of Wyoming overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA) to approve the action taken by the Presbytery of Wyoming and the Eastern Washington Idaho Synod of the Evangelical Church in America**

**(ELCA) to establish the Star Valley United Church in Thayne, Wyoming, to form a union church. The Star Valley United Church will be responsible and accountable to both denominations.**

*Rationale*

The Presbytery of Wyoming and the Eastern Washington Idaho Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seek to manifest more visibly the unity of the church of Jesus Christ and strengthen the witness of our Lord and Savior in the Star Valley area, by this action (*Book of Order*, G-15.0101).

The Presbytery of Wyoming approved this action at its September 16, 2006, meeting.

The Regional Office of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's approval was received on February 17, 2006.

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**GACER COMMENT ON ITEM 04-09**

*Comment on Item 04-09—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER).*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve Item 04-09.

*Rationale*

“The unity of the Church is a gift of its Lord and finds expression in its faithfulness to the mission to which Christ calls it” (*Book of Order*, G-4.0201). In 1998, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America entered into full communion with the prayer that our mutual ministries would be strengthened. The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations affirms the establishment of Star Valley United Church as a witness to visible unity we seek in Christ for the sake of the Church's mission in a local community.

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**\*Item 04-10**

[The assembly approved Item 04-10. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Establishing Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh, N.Y., as a Union Church—From the Presbytery of Albany.*

**The Presbytery of Albany overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to consent to the formation of a union church between The First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh and the United Methodist Church of Lansingburgh, both in the city of Troy, county of Rensselaer, State of New York. This new union congregation will be known as The Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh. The Cornerstone Community Church will be responsible and accountable to both denominations.**

*Rationale*

The Presbytery of Albany and the Troy (Regional) Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church seek to manifest more visibly the unity of the church of Jesus Christ and strengthen the witness to our Lord and Savior in the community of Lansingburgh, New York, by this action (*Book of Order*, G-15.0101).

All of the needed legal and ecclesiastical steps have been taken to assure a full and joyful union according to the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) and the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.

The congregations of The United Methodist Church of Lansingburgh, New York, and The First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh, New York, have each approved a Plan of Union at their respective congregation meetings on the Day of Pentecost, June 4, 2006.

The Presbytery of Albany approved this action at its stated meeting at Hebron Center, Salem, New York, on November 14, 2006.

The Troy United Methodist Annual Conference approved this union at its meeting at Burlington, Vermont, on May 4, 2007.

**GACER COMMENT ON ITEM 04-10**

*Comment on Item 04-10—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER).*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve Item 04-10.

*Rationale*

“The unity of the Church is a gift of its Lord and finds expression in its faithfulness to the mission to which Christ calls it” (*Book of Order*, G-4.0201). The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Methodist Church share ecumenical relationships through several ecumenical agencies including Churches Uniting in Christ. The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations affirms the establishment of Cornerstone Community Church as a witness to visible unity we seek in Christ for the sake of the Church’s mission in a local community.

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**\*Item 04-11**

[The assembly approved Item 04-10. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Establishing Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church as an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Union Church—From the Presbytery of Nevada.*

**The Presbytery of Nevada respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA) to consent to the action taken by the Presbytery of Nevada and the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to establish the Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church in Truckee, California, as a union church. Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church will be responsible and accountable to both denominations (*Book of Order*, G-16.0301).**

*Rationale*

The Presbytery of Nevada and the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seek to manifest the ties that bind us in our Reformed traditions and to bear witness to a more visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ and to thereby strengthen the witness to our Lord and Savior in the community of Truckee, California by this action (*Book of Order*, G-15.0204).

The Presbytery of Nevada approved this action at its stated meeting on February 26, 2008. The Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will affirm its approval of this union/federated church in May of 2008, prior to the meeting of the San Jose assembly.

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**GACER COMMENT ON ITEM 04-11**

*Comment on Item 04-11—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER).*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve Item 04-11.

*Rationale*

“The unity of the Church is a gift of its Lord and finds expression in its faithfulness to the mission to which Christ calls it” (*Book of Order*, G-4.0201). In 1998, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America entered into full communion with the prayer that our mutual ministries would be strengthened. The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations affirms the establishment of Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church as a witness to visible unity we seek in Christ for the sake of the Church’s mission in a local community.

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## Item 04-12

[The assembly answered Item 04-12 by the action taken on Item 04-13. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Equal Rights for Families of Same-Gender Partners—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick.*

The Presbytery of New Brunswick respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Renew and strengthen the long-standing Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) commitment to equal protection under the law for lesbian and gay persons.
  - a. Recognize that married couples enjoy more than 1,000 protections, benefits, and responsibilities that are denied to committed couples in same-gender partnerships and their children.
  - b. Declare that equality under the law requires that same-gender partners have access to all protections, benefits, and responsibilities of civil marriage.
  - c. Urge state legislatures and the federal government to apply the principle of equal protection to same-gender couples and their children.
2. Direct the Moderator of the General Assembly to appoint a fifteen-member special committee, representing the broad diversity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to explore the following, and report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), including any policy recommendations growing out of the study:
  - a. The history of the laws governing marriage and civil union, including current policy debates.
  - b. How the theology and practice of marriage have developed in the Reformed and broader Christian tradition.
  - c. The relationship between civil marriage and Christian marriage.
  - d. The effects of current laws on same-gender partners and their children.
  - e. The place of covenanted same-gender partnerships in the Christian community.
3. Support congregations, sessions, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are seeking to extend pastoral care to same-gender couples and their families.

### *Rationale*

The Government Accountability Office has issued a report in which it identifies “a total of 1,138 federal statutory provisions classified to the United States Code in which marital status is a factor in determining or receiving benefits, rights, and privileges” (GAO-04-353R, January 23, 2004; see <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04353r.pdf> ). These include survivor benefits, family visitation rights, tax considerations, insurance and other employment benefits, and a host of provisions designed to protect families with children, which are taken for granted by married couples. State laws are not included in this total.

The Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church identified the need for continued attention to the theological issues underlying our struggles:

Having heard a presentation to the task force ... , many believe that, instead of beginning with the question of ordination, it would be more profitable first to explore a more basic theological question: How does God’s gracious drama of creation, reconciliation, and redemption work itself out in the lives of baptized gay and lesbian persons who are committed to exclusive, covenanted relationships?<sup>25</sup>

[Footnote]

<sup>25</sup>Johnson’s presentation demonstrated the wide range of responses to the question in current biblical scholarship and theological writing. Johnson says the question arises because the church’s current standards specifically address heterosexual persons who are married and all single persons, but have no specific word for gay or lesbian persons in partnership. [Report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, *A Season of Discernment*, p. 21]

The prevalence of controversy about same-gender relationships in both the church and the civil sphere demonstrates the urgent need to engage in the biblical and theological work that will help us move forward. This issue is so important that it needs the focus of an appointed body that represents the wide spectrum of views within the church.

The overture's recommendations are consistent with the PC(USA)'s historic championing of the civil rights of gay and lesbian persons, as expressed in the following statements from the Social Witness Policy Compilation:

In 1977, the PCUS General Assembly expressed "... the need for the Church to stand for just treatment of homosexual persons in our society in regard to their civil liberties, equal rights, and protection under the law from social and economic discrimination which is due all citizens ..." (PCUS, 1977, p. 174). The PCUS General Assembly reaffirmed that decision in 1978 and in 1979 (PCUS, 1978, p. 190; PCUS, 1979, p. 208). In 1978, the UPCUSA declared that "... there is no legal, social, or moral justification for denying homosexual persons access to the basic requirements of human social existence ..." (UPCUSA, 1978, p. 264). In 1987, the PC(USA) General Assembly called "... for the elimination ... of laws governing the private sexual behavior between consenting adults [and the passage] of laws forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, and public accommodations ..." (PC(USA), 1987, p. 776)

On the basis of the previous policy statements, the 204th General Assembly (1992) declared "... its support for the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination, as amended in January 1992," which "... added the criteria of 'affectional or sexual orientation' to the New Jersey Law ..." The Assembly further directed "... the Stated Clerk to explore possibilities for filing a 'friend of the court' brief in support of this law," which was challenged by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (PC(USA), 1992, p. 918).

The 205th General Assembly (1993) took two actions with regard to the legal rights of homosexuals: The first action was a resolution in response to an overture urging condemnation of the discriminatory legislation in Colorado's Amendment Two which repealed laws protecting against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. In the resolution, the Assembly noted its previous position on homosexuals and society, and "... unequivocally condemn[ed] all discriminatory legislation, such as [Amendment 2 of the Colorado Constitution]..." (PC(USA), 1993, p. 119). The second action this General Assembly took was to adopt a Commissioners' Resolution which affirmed its commitment to end discrimination based on sexual orientation and encouraged the United States military to do the same, saying: that it "... commend[s] [the] Stated Clerk ... for joining with other national religious leaders in urging an end to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the U.S. military ..." (PC(USA), 1993, p. 946). 1978 Statement—UPCUSA, 1978, pp. 265–66

The 208th General Assembly (1996) approved the following resolution:

Affirming the Presbyterian church's historic definition of marriage as a civil contract between a man and a woman, yet recognizing that committed same-sex partners seek equal civil liberties in a contractual relationship with all the civil rights of married couples, we urge the Office of the Stated Clerk to explore the feasibility of entering friend-of-the-court briefs and supporting legislation in favor of giving civil rights to same-sex partners. (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p. 122)

The 216th General Assembly (2004) stated that it:

- Offers prayerful thanks for the Scriptures informing us that all persons are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27)
- Affirms the Presbyterian church's historic definition of the meaning of marriage as a "civil contract between a woman and a man" (W-4.9001, as quoted in a resolution of 208th General Assembly (1996), *Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p. 122).
- Declares that all persons are entitled to equal treatment under the law (Constitution of the United States of America); therefore
- Urges state legislations to change state laws to include the right of same-gender persons to civil union and, thereby, to extend to them all the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities of civil union, and urges all persons to support such changes in state laws.
- Urges the Congress of the United States of America to recognize those state laws that allow same-gender union and to change federal laws to recognize all civil unions licensed and solemnized under state law to apply in all federal laws that provide benefits, privileges, and/or responsibilities to married persons. (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 59)

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 04-12 urges equal rights for families of same-gender partners.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 04-13.

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## Item 04-13

[The assembly approved Item 04-13 with amendment. See pp. 48, 49.]

*On Equal Rights for Families of Same-Gender Partners—From the Presbytery of Denver.*

**The Presbytery of Denver respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

1. Renew and strengthen the long-standing Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) commitment to equal protection under the law for lesbian and gay persons and the 216th General Assembly (2004)'s affirmation of the right of same-gender persons to civil union and, thereby, to all the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities of civil union.

a. Recognize that married couples enjoy more than 1,000 protections, benefits, and responsibilities that are denied to committed couples in same-gender partnerships and their children.

b. Recognize that equality under the law does not discriminate against some committed couples but sees that same-gender partners also have access to all protections, benefits, and responsibilities of civil union.

c. Request the Stated Clerk, the General Assembly Council, and other representatives of the PC(USA) to urge state legislatures and the federal government to apply the principle of equal protection to same-gender couples and their children.

2. Direct the Moderator of the General Assembly to appoint a special committee, representing the broad diversity [and theological balance] of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to study the following, and report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), including any policy recommendations growing out of the study:

a. The history of the laws governing marriage and civil union, including current policy debates.

b. How the theology and practice of marriage have developed in the Reformed and broader Christian tradition.

c. The relationship between civil union and Christian marriage.

d. The effects of current laws on same-gender partners and their children.

e. The place of covenanted same-gender partnerships in the Christian community.

3. Support congregations, sessions, and ministers of Word and Sacrament who are seeking to extend pastoral care as well as outreach and evangelism to same-gender couples and their nontraditional families who are more and more our neighbors on our streets and our fellow members in our pews.

**[4. This overture seeks to renew and strengthen the commitment of the PCUSA to equal protection under the law, encourage steps to reinforce this commitment and to affirm the importance of pastoral care and outreach to non-traditional families, including those same-gender commitment partners. This overtures advocates for equal rights and does not seek to redefine the nature of Christian marriage.]**

### *Rationale*

This overture seeks to renew and strengthen the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to equal protection under the law, encourage steps to reinforce this commitment, and to affirm the importance of pastoral care and outreach to non-traditional families, including those of same-gender committed partners. This overture advocates for equal rights and does not seek to redefine the nature of Christian marriage.

The prevalence of controversy about same-gender relationships in both the church and the civil sphere demonstrates the urgent need to engage in the biblical and theological work that will help the church find right and faithful steps to engage with God's love the growing number of same-gender relationships and families in our time. This issue is so important that it needs the focus of an appointed body that represents the wide spectrum of views within the church.

The Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church identified the need for continued attention to the theological issues underlying this struggle:

many believe that, instead of beginning with the question of ordination, it would be more profitable first to explore a more basic theological question: How does God's gracious drama of creation, reconciliation, and redemption work itself out in the lives of baptized gay and lesbian persons who are committed to exclusive, covenanted relationships? (*Report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity and Purity of the Church*, PC(USA), 2005, p. 21, lines 592-96)

The overture's recommendations are consistent with the PC(USA)'s historic championing of the civil rights of gay and lesbian persons, as expressed in the following statements from the Social Policy Compilation:

- In 1977, the PCUS General Assembly expressed "... the need for the Church to stand for just treatment of homosexual persons in our society in regard to their civil liberties, equal rights, and protection under the law from social and economic discrimination which is due all citizens . . ." (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1977, Part I, p. 174). In 1978, the UPCUSA declared that "... there is no legal, social, or moral justification for denying homosexual persons access to the basic requirements of human social existence ..." (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1978, Part I, p. 264). In 1987, the General Assembly called "... for the elimination ... of laws governing the private sexual behavior between consenting adults ... [and the passage] of laws forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, and public accommodation" (*Minutes*, 1987, Part I, p. 776).

- The 205th General Assembly (1993) adopted a resolution in response to an overture urging condemnation of the discriminatory legislation in Colorado's Amendment Two, which repealed laws protecting against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

- The 216th General Assembly (2004) did the following:

- Offers prayerful thanks for the Scriptures informing us that all persons are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). ...
- Declares that all persons are entitled to equal treatment under the law (Constitution of the United States of America); therefore
- Urges state legislations to change state laws to include the right of same-gender persons to civil union and, thereby, to extend to them all the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities of civil union, and urges all persons to support such changes in state laws.
- Urges the Congress of the United States of America to recognize those state laws that allow same-gender union and to change federal laws to recognize all civil unions licensed and solemnized under state law to apply in all federal laws that provide benefits, privileges, and/or responsibilities to married persons.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-13

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 04-13 urges equal rights for families of same-gender partners.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be approved.

#### *Rationale*

"The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life" (*Book of Order*, G-4.0403).

The church in its emerging life is continuously discerning how and working toward becoming a truly diverse, Christian community of faith making visible the Reign of God. The church continues recognizing injustice and responding with mercy to the cries of God's children while building justice. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is Reformed and always reforming, necessitating that we recognize instances of injustice and act to bring justice for all people. Women and men in same-gender, monogamous, committed relationships face extra barriers. They do not currently benefit from the blessings of church and society that contribute to the strengthening of families and communities. Presbyterians are committed to equal protection under the law and have a history of repudiating discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Approval of this overture would move the church toward a clearer recognition of the inequalities and discrimination that same-gender couples experience. These actions would serve to appreciate the contributions that women and men in same-gender relationships make to our congregations and communities.

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## **\*Item 04-14**

[The assembly approved Item 04-14. See pp. 48, 49.]

*Moderator Discretion—Stated Clerk, Dr. W. Keith Geckeler, The Presbytery of Los Ranchos.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 04-14 with the following recommendation:**

#### *Ordination as an Act of the Whole Church*

**The request points to the inherent tension in our polity between individual conscience and corporate decision-making. The 1979 Report of Task Force on Polity & Reconciliation to the 190th General Assembly of the United Pres-**



byterian Church in the United States of America recognized that, “The moderator of any judicatory is a member of that judicatory, chosen by the members to represent, in a person, the unity of the body, which is in tension between individual conscience and majority opinion” (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1979, Part I, p. 316).

In the case of a session, the moderator has been installed or appointed by the presbytery with the additional responsibility of representing the whole church, not merely the majority opinion of the session (*Request 97-5, Minutes*, 1997, Part I, p. 186). In exercising this responsibility, the moderator has the responsibility to see that the business of the session is conducted in a manner that conforms to the Constitution. When a governing body conducts an examination for ordination or installation, it shall apply the standards of the church to those elected to office, and determine whether a candidate has departed from scriptural and constitutional standards for fitness for office, and if so, whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, 523, Item 06-01). This determination is the responsibility of the governing body on behalf of the whole church, and any decision is the act of the whole church unless upon review a higher governing body finds the examination or ordination and installation decision defective. In this regard, both session and moderator are called to exercise judgment that is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church (G-6.0108b).

The request does not suggest that the moderator or any other person has challenged the examination or ordination and installation decision of the session, but asks whether the moderator may refuse to perform the acts of ordination or installation when the moderator holds a conscientious objection or a minority opinion regarding the fitness of the candidate.

#### *The Constitutional Responsibilities of the Moderator and Session*

In responding to this question, it is important to consider the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in *Maxwell v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1975, p. 254), in which a candidate, Walter Wynn Kenyon, indicated during his examination his unwillingness to participate in the ordination of candidates regarding whose ordination he was conscientiously opposed. The decision underscored the role of the moderator in fulfilling the constitutional responsibilities of the office as a matter of “the candidate’s vows of ordination, particularly his endorsing the Church’s government and honoring its discipline.” However, the decision did not support its finding barring Kenyon’s ordination on his refusal to fulfill the role of moderator qua moderator, but rather on his rejection of “an explicit constitutional provision” to provide equal access to leadership opportunities regardless of sex, which therefore constituted a “rejection of its [the denomination’s] government and discipline.” This begs the question as to whether a moderator has a constitutional obligation by virtue of office to perform an otherwise constitutional ordination or installation contrary to conscience.

Section G-10.01021 states the session has the responsibility, “to instruct, examine, ordain, install, and welcome into common ministry elders and deacons on their election by the congregation and to inquire into their faithfulness in fulfilling their responsibilities.” A refusal to participate in the ordination or installation of duly elected elders or deacons by an installed pastor as a member of session could constitute a violation of this provision and call into question whether the moderator truly “welcomed them into common ministry.” Whether or not the moderator was a member of session, it could call into question whether the moderator was willing “to be a friend among ... colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God’s Word and Spirit” (G-4.4003e).

Furthermore, W-4.4003 suggests the moderator has a positive obligation to preside at the service of ordination and/or installation: “The moderator of the governing body of those to be ordained, installed, or commissioned shall ask them to stand before the body of membership and to answer the following questions ....” Section G-10.0103a offers remedies for the session to conduct its business in the absence of the installed or appointed moderator; and inasmuch as the act of ordination and installation is an act of the session, the remedies in this section would apply under those circumstances. No remedy explicitly provides for a refusal on the basis of conscience, and in no circumstance does the Constitution permit a moderator to invite another minister to serve as moderator without the concurrence of the session. Nevertheless, it does state, “When it may appear advisable for prudential reasons that some minister other than the pastor should preside, the pastor may, with the concurrence of the session, invite a minister of the same presbytery to do so.” Whether the specific circumstances of the pastor’s refusal constitute “prudential reasons” is left to the pastor and the session to determine.

#### *Mutual Forbearance*

Without the concurrence of the session, there is no provision on the basis of conscience for a moderator to refuse to fulfill the functions of the office of moderator in participating in the ordination and installation of duly elected, examined, and approved elders and deacons. That notwithstanding, the request highlights the importance of section “e”

of the authoritative interpretation approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, 523, Item 06-01), which states, “All parties should endeavor to outdo one another in honoring one another’s decisions, according the presumption of wisdom to ordaining/installing bodies in examining candidates and to the General Assembly, with presbyteries’ approval, in setting standards.” Moreover, the same assembly encouraged all members to exercise their biblical and constitutional responsibilities “to conciliate, mediate, and adjust differences without strife” prayerfully and deliberately (D-1.0103) and to institute administrative or judicial proceedings only when other efforts fail to preserve the purposes and purity of the church.

We encourage all members, and especially officers, to exercise mutual forbearance toward one another, respecting the conscience of those who disagree with the decision of the body. It is equally incumbent on the session to respect the conscience of the moderator and authorize the invitation to another minister to preside, as it is incumbent upon the moderator to fulfill the responsibilities of moderator on behalf of the whole church, and to welcome colleagues in ministry.

Whether the moderator in question would be considered to have committed an offense would be determined by a permanent judicial commission (PJC) relying on the specific facts in the incident referred to it.

### Question Received

If a moderator refuses to ordain an individual whom the session has approved for ordination, has this moderator committed an offense as defined by the Rules of Discipline?

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## \*Item 04-15

[The assembly approved Item 04-15. See pp. 48, 49.]

*Rules of Discipline Questions—Implementation of Alternative Forms of Resolution—From Stated Clerk, Dick McFail, Presbytery of National Capital.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer *Item 04-15* by directing the Stated Clerk to send the following amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Amend D-2.0103 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“To meet the goals of D-1.0103, the investigating committee may initiate if it deems appropriate, and with the written consent of ~~all parties involved~~ *the accused*, alternative forms of resolution conducted by professionally trained and certified mediators and arbitrators. The purpose of the process is to achieve justice and compassion for ~~all parties~~ *persons* involved through mediation and settlement.”

2. Amend the first paragraph of D-10.0202h as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“h. initiate, if it deems appropriate, alternative forms of resolution, ordinarily after the investigation has been completed, probable cause has been determined, but before the charges have been filed. The purpose of alternative forms of resolution will be to determine if agreement can be reached between ~~all parties involved~~ *the investigating committee and the accused* concerning any charges which may be filed.”

3. Amend D-10.0202h(3) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(3) The session or permanent judicial commission shall convene to receive the settlement agreement; vote to approve it by at least two-thirds of the members eligible to vote; make a record of its proceedings according to the provisions of D-11.0601d, including the name of the accused, the substance of the ~~accusation or~~ *charge(s)*, and censure; and transmit its decision to the clerk of session or the stated clerk, who shall report it according to the provisions of D-11.0701.”

4. Amend D-10.0202h(4): as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“All parties shall be provided an advocate~~ *The investigating committee shall provide an advocate for the accused throughout settlement negotiations, and may provide an advocate for other interested persons at its own discretion.*”

5. Amend D-10.0202h(5) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“If a settlement satisfactory to all parties involved~~ *both the investigating committee and the accused in the mediation alternative form of resolution is not reached, the investigating committee shall designate a prosecuting committee per D-10.0202j, and the case shall proceed to the filing of charges on the charges filed.*”

#### *Rationale*

1. With respect to questions one and five, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the questions point to a deficiency in the current language of the *Book of Order* best addressed by constitutional amendment.

Regarding question one, in the Rules of Discipline, the words “party” or “parties” have specific meanings. In nearly all occurrences, they refer exclusively to the persons identified at trial as the complainant (or complainants) and respondent (or respondents) in remedial cases (D-6.0201), or to the prosecuting committee and the accused in a disciplinary case (D-10.0402b). The use of “all parties” in D-2.0103 and D-10.0202h, however, creates the possibility of confusion as to who is intended. D-2.0103 and D-10.0202h refer to procedures preliminary to the filing of charges and the creation of parties in a disciplinary case.

While recent amendments have had the purpose of broadening the judicial process to take into consideration the rights and perspectives of persons alleged to have been harmed, nevertheless, in disciplinary cases, these rights and perspectives, while important, do not override the rights and responsibilities of the whole church to exercise discipline of offenders. The use of “parties” in the Rules of Discipline is specifically and intentionally limited to those persons representing the governing body (i.e., the investigating committee or prosecuting committee), and the accused. Presbyteries should exercise pastoral care towards all persons involved in disciplinary cases (persons alleged to have been harmed, the accused, and others as needed). And, while the interests of accuser(s) and/or person(s) alleged to have been harmed should be considered in the process of developing an alternative form of resolution (AFR), the only persons with the authority to agree to such a petition are the investigating committee on behalf of the larger church, and the accused. Therefore, no veto power over an AFR is accorded to an accuser.

With respect to question two, the ACC reminds the assembly of the advice it issued to the 212th General Assembly (2000) in response to *Overture 00-23* that “Removal of professional training and certification requirements increases the risk of misunderstandings.” This is true even in cases of self-accusation. As D-2.0103 makes no distinction between disciplinary cases initiated by self-accusation or the accusation of others, we believe the requirements for professional training and certification still apply if mediation or arbitration is pursued.

With respect to question three, while D-10.0202h(3) makes reference to “the substance of the accusation or charge,” the ACC reaffirms the authoritative interpretation issued in response to Item 04-06 (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 299) requiring that charges be filed along with the petition for an AFR. An AFR is an alternative to trial, not an alternative to filing charges. An AFR is not intended as a means of avoiding determinations of guilt, but as an aid to the efficient and compassionate dispensation of justice to achieve the purposes of discipline.

Similarly, with respect to question four, the purpose of an AFR is not whether or not to file charges, or which charges will be filed, but to seek to come to an agreement before charges are filed as to the appropriate degree of censure on the charges to be filed.

Item 04-15 from the Presbytery of National Capital presents numerous questions for constitutional interpretation concerning the implementation of alternative forms of resolution (AFR):

1. What is the meaning of “all parties” in D-2.0103 and D-10.0202h?
2. Where a person has come forward in self-accusation and the investigating committee proposes an AFR, is the requirement in D-2.0103 for a “professionally trained and certified” mediator still in effect?
3. What is the relationship between D-10.0301 and D-10.0303?
4. What is the meaning of D-10.0202h?
5. Do the Rules of Discipline give the accuser in a disciplinary proceeding veto power over an AFR?

## Item 04-16

[The assembly approved Item 04-16. See p. 49.]

*Interpretation of the Rules of Discipline: Status of Negotiated Settlements—From the Stated Clerk, Synod of the Trinity.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 04-16 with the advice set forth below.

1. The first question presents an issue upon which authoritative interpretation of the constitution by the 218th General Assembly (2008) is appropriate. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following authoritative interpretation of D-6.0310 and D-8.0104:

“Prior to or during trial, the parties may enter into a private resolution of a remedial case and advise the permanent judicial commission before which it is pending that the complaint is being withdrawn. The notice of withdrawal may, but need not, notify the permanent judicial commission of the terms of the settlement agreement between the parties. Such a withdrawal of the complaint terminates the remedial case without decision of the permanent judicial commission. No action or meeting of a permanent judicial commission is necessary or appropriate to receive such a withdrawal of the complaint.

“If a matter is pending on appeal, it may be withdrawn only pursuant to D-8.0104 by permission of the permanent judicial commission before which it is pending. The only determination made in such a decision is whether withdrawal of the appeal ‘would defeat the ends of justice.’ A permanent judicial commission must meet to determine whether withdrawal of the appeal would defeat the ends of justice. A decision granting or denying a request to withdraw an appeal has precedential value only as to the issue of what standard governs the determination of whether withdrawal of future appeals would defeat the ends of justice.

“This authoritative interpretation recognizes that remedial cases have a different status prior to a decision at trial and after trial during appeal. Nothing in the Rules of Discipline requires permission of a permanent judicial commission for a complaint to be withdrawn prior to (or during) trial. Notice from the complainant withdrawing the complaint, whether because of a settlement or because of a lack of interest in continuing, should therefore be sufficient to terminate a remedial case prior to a decision of the permanent judicial commission being rendered. Thus, there is no warrant for permanent judicial commissions ‘deciding’ to approve the settlement of a case before or during trial.

“On the other hand, on appeal, D-8.0104 requires a determination as to whether the appeal can be withdrawn either by settlement or because the appellant is unwilling to continue. In such circumstance, the permanent judicial commission is required to make a decision, with the only issue before it being whether the withdrawal of the appeal ‘would defeat the ends of justice.’ Such a decision can only have precedential value as to the question presented, i.e., whether withdrawal of the appeal would defeat the ends of justice. The decision has no precedential value as to the underlying issue presented on appeal.”

2. The second question does not present an issue upon which authoritative interpretation of the Constitution by the 218th General Assembly (2008) is necessary. In *Hope, et al. v. Presbytery of San Francisco, Minutes, 2006, Part 1, p. 455* (Remedial Case 217-1), the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission held that a permanent judicial commission must meet in person to render a decision. Receipt of a notice withdrawing a complaint does not require a meeting of the permanent judicial commission if received in writing by all complainants. Determination of whether withdrawal of an appeal would defeat the ends of justice does require a decision of the permanent judicial commission.

3. The third question does not present an issue upon which authoritative interpretation of the Constitution by the 218th General Assembly (2008) is necessary. A settlement agreement is a private contract between the parties, regardless of whether reported in a notice of withdrawal of a complaint before or during trial or if mentioned in a decision allowing the withdrawal of an appeal.

4. The fourth question presents an issue upon which authoritative interpretation of the Constitution by the 218th General Assembly (2008) is necessary. The authoritative interpretation recommended above addresses this question.

5. The fifth question does not present an issue upon which authoritative interpretation of the Constitution by the 218th General Assembly (2008) is necessary. Either a withdrawal of a complaint or a decision approving withdrawal of appeal terminate a case such that no further appeal is possible.

6. The sixth question does not present an issue upon which authoritative interpretation of the Constitution by the 218th General Assembly (2008) is necessary. The means of enforcing a settlement agreement depend upon the nature of the agreement the parties have entered into.

### Questions Received

Item 04-16 from the stated clerk of the Synod of the Trinity presents the following questions upon which she seeks constitutional interpretation:

1. If the parties to a remedial case agree to explore settlement possibilities and end up with a settlement agreement, is there a particular process the PJC must follow to approve, disapprove, or accept the agreement?
2. Must it occur in person or may this occur by teleconference?
3. If the Settlement Agreement is accepted, what is the affect of the Settlement Agreement? (on the parties, on precedent, on authoritative interpretation?)
4. Does an approved Settlement Agreement become a decision of the PJC?
5. If so, is this an appealable decision?
6. Who has the power to enforce a Settlement Agreement?

## Item 04-17

[The assembly approved Item 04-17 with comment. See p. 49.]

*Possible Conflict Between G-14.0730b and G-11.0407—From the Associate for Certification and Christian Vocation.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) interpret the provisions of G-14.0730 as follows:

1. “The provisions of G-14.0730b regarding the responsibility of the presbytery to establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for Certified Christian Educators, to provide access to the committee on ministry on the part of Certified Christian Educators, and to grant privilege of the floor with voice only to Certified Christian Educators shall apply to Certified Associate Christian Educators who have met the standards established by the Educator Certification Council (G-14.0722) and described in the handbook on the certification process for Christian Educators (G-14.0720).”

2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Amend G-14.0730c as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“c. grant the privilege of the floor to the ~~e~~Certified Christian ~~e~~Educator at all its meetings with voice only, and, in the case of ~~e~~Certified Christian ~~e~~Educators who are ordained as elders, voice and vote under the provisions of G-11.0101b. (G-11.0407)”

*Comment:* That the inclusion of Associate Christian Educators be examined by the appropriate General Assembly committee or entity.

### Question Presented

Item 04-17 from Martha Miller, associate for Certification and Christian Vocation presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

In view of the removal of reference to Certified Associate Christian Educators from G-14.0730, and in view of the continuing requirements of G-11.0103n and G-11.0407 that preserve reference to Certified Associate Christian Educators, shall the provisions of G-14.0730 b and c concerning Certified Christian Educators be interpreted to apply to Certified Associate Christian Educators also?

### *Rationale*

#### *For Recommendation 1:*

In its revision of Chapter XIV of the *Book of Order*, the General Assembly omitted reference to the Certified Associate Christian Educator in G-14.0720–.0731. However, the assembly did not act to strike references to Associate Christian Educator in G-11.0103n (minimum compensation standards), G-11.0407 (rolls of persons entitled to the privilege of the floor), and G-11.0503 (communication with the Committee on Ministry). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution concludes that it was not the intent of the assembly to eliminate the status of Certified Associate Christian Educators, but rather to leave to the Educator Certification Council the designations, standards, and examination procedures for Christian Educators (G-14.0722).

Since there was not an evident positive intent to eliminate the title of Certified Associate Christian Educator, the more general provisions of G-14.0730 may be interpreted to mean that the presbytery has a responsibility to provide support for all persons who are “certified Christian educators” (emphasis added). The committee notes that the lower-case initial “c” and “e” may be seen as an indication that the term “certified Christian educator” in this context is a general reference to persons who have met the standards for certification in G-14.0720 – 14.0721 and as defined by the Educator Certification Council (G-14.0722), rather than as part of a specific title, i.e., “Certified Christian Educator” as opposed to “Certified Associate Christian Educator.” Thus the language of G-14.0730 does not require the limitation of the provisions of the section to Certified Christian Educators. Under this interpretation, the existing requirements of G-11.0103n and G-11.0407 are controlling.

Unlike the provisions of G-11.0103n and G-11.0407, the access to the committee on ministry guaranteed to Certified Christian Educators in G-11.0503 does not explicitly include Certified Associate Christian Educators. However, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes there is practicality and wisdom in creating opportunity for the committee on ministry to be open to communication from Certified Associate Christian Educators, as it may assist the committee on ministry in exercising its responsibility to “serve as an instrument of presbytery for promoting the peace and harmony of the churches, especially in regard to matters arising out of the relations between ministers and churches” and “to mediate differences and reconcile persons” (G-11.0502i). In handling all such communications, including but not limited to those coming from Certified Associate Christian Educators, the committee on ministry is still bound by the requirement of G-11.0502j to “exercise wise discretion in determining when to take cognizance of information concerning difficulties within a church....”

#### *For Recommendation 2:*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the language of G-14.0730, as interpreted above, would create a new privilege of the floor with voice and, under certain conditions, vote to Certified Associate Christian Educators. In the previous version of G-14.0705c (prior to the revisions to G-14.0000 approved in 2007), the ability of the presbytery to grant the privilege of the floor with voice was limited to Certified Christian Educators, and there was no provision for the privilege of vote whatsoever. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution concludes that opening these privileges to Certified Associate Christian Educators was the intent of the 217th General Assembly (2006) in wording the present provisions of G-14.0230c. However, if the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to limit the privilege of the floor with voice and, under limited circumstances, vote to Certified Christian Educators only, it may accomplish that purpose by amending G-14.0730c to capitalize the words “certified” and “educator/s,” so that the section reads as above in Recommendation 2.

## **\*Item 04-18**

**[In response to Item 04-18, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 48, 50.]**

*Newly Amended G-13.0107—From the Assistant Stated Clerk, Manager for GA Nominations and Moderatorial Staff Services*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following interpretation, recommendation, and comments:

1. With respect to the first question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that interpretation of G-13.0107 is advisable and recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following authoritative interpretation of G-13.0107:

“Section G-13.0107 requires that the General Assembly elect an individual from each synod to each permanent committee of the General Assembly. A permanent committee of the General Assembly for the purposes of this section is a committee whose size or the means of nominating individuals for membership is not otherwise defined by the *Book of Order*. Accordingly, the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the Advisory Committee on the Constitution are not permanent committees within the meaning of G-13.0107. Section G-13.0107 requires coordination between the synods and the General Assembly Nominating Committee. Synods have responsibility for nominating individuals from within their synod to fill these positions on permanent committees. The General Assembly Nominating Committee, however, has the responsibility to coordinate this process, which includes the responsibility to assure that the diversity requirements of G-4.0403 and G-9.0104 are met. The General Assembly Nominating Committee may accomplish these responsibilities either by creating a rotational system among the synods for meeting these diversity requirements or by advising a synod that a nominee put forward does not have the characteristics required to assure such diversity. The General Assembly Nominating Committee may make recommendations to the General Assembly as to the appropriate size of permanent committees to assure the representation of all synods, and the election of at-large members, as appropriate.”

2. If the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to effect a change in G-13.0107 to facilitate a different model for nominating committee membership, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that this problem can be addressed by directing the Stated Clerk to submit the following amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-13.0107 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“Each synod will have a representative, nominated by the synods, on each permanent committee of the General Assembly. The General Assembly shall determine which of its permanent committees shall have permanent representation from each of the synods or have rotating representation from among the synods. Such representatives of the synod shall be nominated by those synods. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will coordinate this process, keeping in mind the need for synod representatives and members-at-large, and seeing that special attention is given to the principles of participation and representation expressed in G-4.0403, G-9.0104, G-13.0111, and G-13.0202.”~~

#### Alternate Resolution Approved

In response to Item 04-18, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved the following resolution:

**While the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has offered some relief to these concerns by proposing new language that would allow the General Assembly to determine which of its permanent committees shall have permanent representation from each of the synods or have rotating representation from among the synods, the General Assembly Nominating Committee believes that the former advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution provided to the 217th General Assembly (2006) is a more effective response. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution formerly advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) that**

4. Proposed amendments to G-13.0107: The proposed revision of this section should be assessed to determine whether all permanent committees of the General Assembly require representation from each synod. The term “permanent committees” is not specifically defined by the provision, but presumably would include all committees whose membership is not otherwise defined by *Book of Order*. The assembly should consider whether the size of permanent committees should be defined by the mission of the committee rather than a formalistic approach. (Section G-9.0402a: “Mission determines the form of structure and administration. All structures should enable the church to give effective witness to the Lordship of Christ in the contemporary world.”) [Underline added for emphasis.]

If the 217th General Assembly (2006) agrees with the restructuring of membership being proposed and wishes to address these concerns, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution suggests the following alternative resolution be presented to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

- a. Shall G-13.0107 be stricken.
- b. Shall G-13.0108 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“The General Assembly shall establish a permanent Committee on Representation as required by G-9.0105, which shall advise the General Assembly Nominating Committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation shall report to each meeting of the General Assembly (other than special or adjourned meetings) regarding progress toward fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403. *The committee shall consist of members equal in number to the synods of the church, each member resident in a different synod, and members distributed so that there are one third ministers (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen.*”

- c. Add to the proposed revision to G-13.0202 as proposed by this Item the following text:

“The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the manual of operations of the General Assembly Council. *The Council shall include members from each of the synods of the church.*” (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 644*)

The General Assembly Nominating Committee supports the 2006 advice of the ACC and suggests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) consider approving it.

Therefore, the 218th General Assembly (2008) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall G-13.0107 be stricken.
2. Shall G-13.0108 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“The General Assembly shall establish a permanent Committee on Representation as required by G-9.0105, which shall advise the General Assembly Nominating Committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation shall report to each meeting of the General Assembly (other than special or adjourned meetings) regarding progress toward fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403. *The committee shall consist of members equal in number to the synods of the church, each member resident in a different synod, and members distributed so that there are one third ministers (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen.*”

3. Shall G-13.0202a be amended as follows:

“The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council. *The Council shall include members from each of the synods of the church.*”

#### *Rationale*

As noted by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice to the 217th General Assembly (2006), the revision of G-13.0107 proposed by the General Assembly Council, approved by the 217th General Assembly and adopted by the presbyteries, requires each permanent committee of the General Assembly to have a member nominated by each synod. “Permanent committee” is not defined in this provision of the *Book of Order*, but logically would include all committees of the General Assembly whose work is continuing in nature and whose size or means of election is not otherwise defined inconsistently by specific provisions of the *Book of Order*. The size of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and means of electing the General Assembly Nominating Committee are set forth by separate provisions of the *Book of Order*, which control G-13.0107.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recognizes that the language of G-13.0107 would substantially expand the size of a number of permanent committees of the General Assembly. Indeed, the ACC advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) on this point, encouraging the assembly to “consider whether the size of permanent committees should be defined by the mission of the committee rather than a formalistic approach” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 644).

3. Moreover, the General Assembly Nominating Committee continues to have responsibility for assuring that the diversity requirements of the *Book of Order* are met. Because G-13.0107 does not specify how the General Assembly Nominating Committee is to carry out this responsibility, it retains significant discretion in determining how best to accomplish that goal. Likewise, because G-13.0107 places responsibility on the General Assembly Nominating Committee for coordinating the balance of synod representatives and at-large members on permanent committees, it is therefore appropriate for it to recommend the appropriate balance to the General Assembly as it elects committees.

4. With respect to the fourth question presented and its subparts, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that interpretation of G-13.0107 is advisable and suggests that the response to the first question addresses the issues raised. As noted, “permanent committee” is not defined in this provision or elsewhere in the *Book of Order*, but logically would include all committees of the General Assembly whose work is continuing in nature and whose size or means of election is not defined inconsistently by specific provisions of the *Book of Order*. The size of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and means of electing the General Assembly Nominating Committee are set forth by separate provisions of the *Book of Order*, which control over G-13.0107.

*This recommendation has no effect on the proposed Form of Government, since the proposed Form of Government mandates only one committee at the General Assembly level, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, whose membership is defined by constitutional provision (see proposed G-6.02).*



### Questions Received

Item 04-18 from the Assistant Stated Clerk, manager for General Assembly Nominations and Moderatorial Staff Services, presents the following questions upon which she seeks constitutional interpretation:

1. The General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) commented to the 217th General Assembly (2006) that the phrase “Each synod will have a representative, nominated by the synod...” can be interpreted to mean that synods directly nominate persons to serve on each permanent committee. Does the new wording of G-13.0107 imply this?
2. The GANC in its comment further noted that, “If synods directly nominate one person rather than providing several names to the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the pool of potential nominees is reduced limiting the possibility of ensuring the desired diversity of committee membership as required in G-4.0403.” What are the implications of G-13.0107 to G-4.0403 and G-9.0104?
3. What is required of the GANC when it is to coordinate the process of ensuring that each synod nominate a representative on each committee of the General Assembly “while keeping in mind the need for synod representatives *and* members-at-large” [emphasis added in question]?
4. What is a permanent committee? Who are they?
  - a. Is the General Assembly Committee on Representation a permanent committee? If yes, are there implications of G-13.0107 to G-9.0105a?
  - b. Is the General Assembly Nominating Committee a permanent committee? If yes, are there implications of G-13.0107 to G-13.0111?
  - c. Is the Advisory Committee on the Constitution a permanent committee? If yes, are there implications of G-13.0107 to G-13.0112a?
  - d. Is the General Assembly Council a permanent committee? If yes, are there implications of G-13.0107 to G-13.0202?

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#### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 04-18

*Comment on Item 04-18—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council proposes that to answer the concerns raised by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, that the text for Recommendation 2 be deleted and that new clarifying language to G-13.0107 “Synod Participation” be inserted as new Recommendation 2., to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[2. The 218th General Assembly (2008) directs the Stated Clerk to submit the following amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

“[Shall G-13.0107 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“[‘Each synod will have a representative, nominated by the synods, on each permanent committee of the General Assembly except instances in which the Book of Order, Organization for Mission, or Standing Rules of the General Assembly addresses a committee’s membership requirements and does not expressly require representation from each synod. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will coordinate this process, keeping in mind the need for synod representatives and members-at-large, and seeing that special attention is given to the principles of participation and representation expressed in G-4.0403, G-9.0104, G-13.0111, and G-13.0202.’]”

This suggested revision would ensure that membership on permanent committees of the General Assembly that have specific *Book of Order*, *Organization for Mission*, or *General Assembly Standing Rules* membership provisions will continue to conform with *Book of Order*, *Organization for Mission*, or *Standing Rules of the General Assembly* criteria delineating membership size and composition.

Another alternative that the 218th General Assembly (2008) can approve to address these concerns is to follow the recommendation of the General Assembly Nominating Committee in its Comment on Request 08-8.

The amendment to G-13.0107 of the *Book of Order* offered by the General Assembly Council to the 217th General Assembly (2006) was intended to only affect membership on the General Assembly Council. The Governance Task Force of the General Assembly Council recommended, and the General Assembly Council adopted, subject to the approval of the General Assembly and approved by affirmative votes of a majority of all presbyteries, a restructuring and downsizing plan of the General Assembly Council membership size and composition.

However, approval of the 2006 amended language by the General Assembly and the presbyteries has called into question whether the permanent committees of the General Assembly are now required to have representation from and be populated directly by each of the synods. One concern of the General Assembly Council is the lack of a defined term or specific description in the *Book of Order* for permanent committee of the General Assembly. Additional concerns arise from the resultant application of such an interpretation requiring synod representation as offered by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) and the General Assembly Nominating Committee: this would be extremely expensive to the denomination, would place an undue burden on the nominating process for synods to adhere to such a requirement, would greatly expand the membership size, and may alter the composition of such committees, and could change the face of the governance of the church to the extent that the General Assembly nominating process would no longer be able to ensure the diversity of committee membership.

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### GANC COMMENT ON ITEM 04-18

*Comment on Item 04-18—From the General Assembly Nominating Committee.*

Upon recommendation by the 217th General Assembly (2006), G-13.0107 of the *Book of Order* has been amended so that it now requires the General Assembly to elect an individual from each synod to each permanent committee of the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution's (ACC) proposed authoritative interpretation defines "permanent committee" as a committee whose size or the means of nominating individuals for membership is not otherwise defined by the *Book of Order*. The proposed authoritative interpretation also sets forth the implications of that interpretation for the General Assembly nominations process.

The GANC continues to be concerned about the impact on its mandate to "ensure careful nominations" (G-13.0111) as well as the potential burden on the synods if they are required to provide an increased number of nominations to permanent committees.

As it coordinates the nominations process for those committees with middle governing body representational slots, the GANC solicits no less than three names from each affected synod. These names are determined through the synod's own nominations process. This process provides the GANC with a pool of names from which it makes selections that ensure that constitutional mandates for clergy/lay balance, gender balance, as well as racial ethnic representation can be met.

Synods already are required to make proposals for five committees. The *Book of Order* requires that a member from each of the sixteen synods serve on the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission and the General Assembly Nominating Committee. In addition, because of membership requirements, a member from each of the sixteen synods serves on the General Assembly Committee on Representation, while persons from six synods serve on the GAC's Mission Development Resources Committee, and there is one synod position on the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

Given the ACC's interpretation, the following committees would be required to have representation from each of the sixteen synods nominated by those synods:

Committee	Current At-Large Members	Current Synod Position	Current Other Designated Positions	Additional Members Required During Transition
Advisory Committee on Litigation	6			12
Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy	9			9
Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns	6			11
Advocacy Committee on Women's Concerns	10			8
Board of Pensions	32			5
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly	14		1	7
Committee on Theological Education	11		12	6
General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations	12		4	10

04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

General Assembly Committee on Representation		16		none
General Assembly Council			36	none
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation	19		1	4
Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel	8		1	8
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	9			9
Review Committees on General Assembly Entity (a)	4		8	8
Review Committees on General Assembly Entity (b)	4		8	8
Self Development of People National Committee	22	3	6	2

The GANC believes that an undue burden would be placed on synod nominating committees if they were required to propose persons to be considered for all of the entities mentioned above.

Implementing the interpretation is not a simple matter of converting current positions to synod positions. Some committees require particular non-synod categories of membership that must be maintained.

In addition, implementing the ACC interpretation of G-13.0107 will have a major impact on the budget. Due to the current composition of the affected committees, a larger than normal number of members will have to be added in order to meet the new mandate. The financial implication during the transition period in 2009 is \$206,040 and \$205,305 in 2010.

For many of the affected committees, the complete transition to synod representation could occur by the 220th General Assembly (2012) and for some by the 221st General Assembly (2014). Even so, this would represent an increase of eighty-three persons over the current membership for these entities.

While the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has offered some relief to these concerns by proposing new language that would allow the General Assembly to determine which of its permanent committees shall have permanent representation from each of the synods or have rotating representation from among the synods, the General Assembly Nominating Committee believes that the former advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution provided to the 217th General Assembly (2006) is a more effective response. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution formerly advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) that

4. Proposed amendments to G-13.0107: The proposed revision of this section should be assessed to determine whether all permanent committees of the General Assembly require representation from each synod. The term “permanent committees” is not specifically defined by the provision, but presumably would include all committees whose membership is not otherwise defined by *Book of Order*. The assembly should consider whether the size of permanent committees should be defined by the mission of the committee rather than a formalistic approach. (Section G-9.0402a: “Mission determines the form of structure and administration. All structures should enable the church to give effective witness to the Lordship of Christ in the contemporary world.”) [Underline added for emphasis.]

If the 217th General Assembly (2006) agrees with the restructuring of membership being proposed and wishes to address these concerns, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution suggests the following alternative resolution be presented to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

- a. Shall G-13.0107 be stricken.
- b. Shall G-13.0108 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“The General Assembly shall establish a permanent Committee on Representation as required by G-9.0105, which shall advise the General Assembly Nominating Committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation shall report to each meeting of the General Assembly (other than special or adjourned meetings) regarding progress toward fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403. *The committee shall consist of members equal in number to the synods of the church, each member resident in a different synod, and members distributed so that there are one third ministers (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen.*”

- c. Add to the proposed revision to G-13.0202 as proposed by this Item the following text:

“The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the manual of operations of the General Assembly Council. *The Council shall include members from each of the synods of the church.*” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p.644)

The General Assembly Nominating Committee supports the 2006 advice of the ACC and suggests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) consider approving it.

## COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 04-18

*Comment on Item 04-18—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly concurs with the General Assembly Nominating Committee on Item 04-18.

**\*Item 04-19**

[The assembly approved Item 04-19. See pp. 48, 51.]

*On Moderating Services of Ordination and Installation—Manager for Polity Guidance and Training.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 04-19 with the following response.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the *Book of Order* provides ample guidance on this question. Ordination and installation are acts of governing bodies: for elders and deacons, the session; and for ministers of the Word and Sacrament, the presbytery. The person who asks the constitutional questions at ordination and/or installation is acting as the moderator of the governing body or its administrative commission. For the ordination/ installation of elders and/or deacons, that person does not have to be the appointed moderator of session, but may be another person duly invited or elected to preside as provided in the Form of Government. Section G-10.0103 provides several expedients for naming a moderator in the event that the moderator of session cannot be present for a session meeting:

“G-10.0103a. ... When it may appear advisable for prudential reasons that some minister other than the pastor should preside, the pastor may, with the concurrence of the session, invite a minister of the same presbytery to do so. ... In addition, the moderator of the session of a church with a vacant pulpit may request an elder who is a member of the presbytery’s committee on ministry, the stated clerk, executive presbyter, or associate executive presbyter, to preside; such elder may not moderate the session of the church of which that elder is a member.”

“G-10.0103b. When Without a Pastor

“When a church is without a pastor, the moderator of the session shall be the minister appointed for that purpose by the presbytery, or a minister of the same presbytery invited by the session to preside on a particular occasion. When it is impossible for such a minister to attend, the session may elect one of its own members to preside.”

In the event that the appointed moderator of session cannot be present at the ordination and/or installation of elders and/or deacons in a particular church, the moderator may invite another minister of the same presbytery to preside, or an elder who is a member of the presbytery’s committee on ministry, the stated clerk, executive presbyter, or associate executive presbyter, to preside as long as such elder may not moderate the session of the church of which that elder is a member. Or, should a minister be unavailable, or the invited minister be unable to attend, with the permission of the appointed moderator, the session may elect one of its own members to preside.

**Question Received**

Item 04-19 from the manager for Polity Guidance and Training presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

“When a particular church is without regular pastoral leadership and the presbytery has appointed a moderator who cannot be present at the time of the ordination/installation of officers, may the appointed moderator request that another minister preside at the ordination/installation of officers? Does this minister qualify as the ‘moderator’ for the purposes of W-4.4003?”

**\*Item 04-20**

[The assembly approved Item 04-20. See pp. 48, 51.]

*Does Presbytery Have Authority to Change Quorum for Congregational Meeting?—From the Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Eastern Virginia.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) to answer Item 04-20 with the following recommendation:

1. With respect to the first question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that interpretation of G-7.0305 of the *Book of Order* is advisable.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the General Assembly that the right to establish a quorum for meetings of the congregation is assigned to the congregation itself by G-7.0305. It is not a power assigned to the session, or to any other governing body.

The pattern of fact behind this question indicates that the presbytery has established a policy that requires that congregational meetings called to consider the matter of withdrawal from the PC(USA) will have “at least 75 percent of the active members of the congregation” present for the meeting.

Withdrawal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not a matter that can be considered at a congregational meeting. Section G-7.0304a lists five types of business that a congregation may consider at a congregational meeting:

“(1) matters related to the electing of elders, deacons, and trustees

“(2) matters related to the calling of a pastor or pastors;

“(3) matters related to the pastoral relationship, such as changing the call, or requesting or consenting or declining to consent to dissolution

“(4) matters related to buying, mortgaging, or selling real property (G-8.0500);

“(5) matters related to the permissive powers of a congregation, such as the desire to lodge all administrative responsibility in the session, or the request to presbytery for exemption from one or more requirements because of limited size.”

The presbytery, acting through an administrative commission it has appointed to settle differences within a church, is required to hold hearings that “afford to all persons to be affected by the decision fair notice and an opportunity to be heard on the matters at issue” (G-9.0503b2). Such hearings are for the advice of the presbytery, so that the commission may make informed decisions. No congregational business may be transacted at these hearings. The requirement of 75 percent of the active membership cannot be treated as the establishment of a quorum, since the hearing is not a congregational meeting. The absence of stated percentage attendance may, however, be regarded by the presbytery’s commission as contributory to its disposition of any request to withdraw made at the hearing.

2. With respect to the second question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that interpretation of G-7.0306 of the *Book of Order* is advisable.

According to the provisions of G-7.0306, the circumstances under which a presbytery may appoint a moderator of a congregational meeting who is other than the pastor or moderator of session are limited to the following:

a. when the congregation is without a pastor;

b. when the presbytery appoints a lay pastor who is already commissioned to the congregation.

Thus, in congregations where there is an installed pastor, the presbytery would be acting outside its authority to require that someone other than the pastor or session moderator be accepted by the congregation as its moderator for the meeting. In response to *Overture 00-39*, the ACC advised the 212th General Assembly (2000) that empowering the presbytery to name a moderator without the invitation of the pastor of the church would be

in conflict with the basic rights of ordination and installation of a pastor. It proposes to remove one of the rights that has been a cornerstone of Presbyterian polity; namely, that an installed pastor of a congregation, unless the right is removed by judicial process, is moderator of the session of that church (G-9.0202, G-10.0103a). Such a pastor is free to invite another pastor of the presbytery or even an elder to preside as moderator; but without an invitation this is not possible. (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I. p. 412)

In particularly tense or stressful congregational meetings, the presbytery may wish to suggest that the pastor or moderator to invite a minister named by the presbytery, in an effort to ensure that the congregational decision to be made is free of undue influence from the installed pastor, protecting both the process and the pastor. But an installed pastor is not bound to act on the suggestion.

In the fact pattern presented in the request for interpretation, the matter to be dealt with is the question of whether the congregation shall be permitted to vote to advise the presbytery of its desire to be dismissed. Since the meeting to consider such an action is not a congregational meeting but rather a hearing (see #1 above), the presbytery is free to name any moderator it wishes. Under most conditions, that person is likely to be the moderator of the administrative commission

appointed by the presbytery, but it is conceivable that the presbytery or the commission may wish to name other leadership for the hearing.

### Questions Presented

Item 04-20, a request from the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

1. Does the presbytery have the authority to change the requirement for a quorum for a church congregational meeting to be in excess of the one tenth of the members requirement of G-7.0305 in the *Book of Order*; and
2. Does the presbytery have the authority to require that someone other than the installed pastor be the moderator of that meeting (G-7.0306)?

## \*Item 04-21

[The assembly approved Item 04-21. See pp. 48, 51.]

*Member/Church Officer Renounces Jurisdiction—From the Stated Clerk, The Presbytery of Los Ranchos.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer the request with the following action on Item 04-21:

This question asks about potential abuse of our process and the rules that are generally applicable to members. In a more general form this question may be restated as:

Should the rules that apply to all members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) be applied in the same manner to members who are thought to be abusing our process?

Stated in this way, the question should be answered in the affirmative with the following advice. Absent a judicial finding that an individual is a vexatious litigant, and a corresponding order of a permanent judicial commission to require judicial review of filings from that individual before any other judicial process is commenced (as in *Hoover v. Presbytery of Charlotte*, Remedial Cases 206-9, 206-11, and Case 206-10), all members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) enjoy the same access to our judicial process as provided in the Rules of Discipline.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that renunciation of membership in a congregation or of church office is a serious action that carries significant implications. In the case of both officers and members, there are other, less disruptive ways by which a person may relinquish standing in the church. Elders or deacons may resign from office for good cause (G-6.0501) or may request release from the exercise of office (G-6.0600 a and b), both without implication of judgment or failure on the officer. Members may request transfer to another congregation (G-10.0302b1) or termination of membership (G-10.0302b3), again all without implication of judgment or failure. Renunciation of jurisdiction, on the other hand, carries with it a sense of fracture of relationship and injury to the body of Christ. In the case of an individual member, the decision to join another congregation without regular transfer and the decision to renounce jurisdiction are essentially equivalent in effect (G-10.0302b(4)). In the case of an officer, renunciation carries with it the requirement of the immediate termination of the exercise of office as well as removal from the membership roll (G-6.0701). In those cases where renunciation is presumed on the basis of the persistence of the officer in disapproved work, renunciation is related to disobedience and an unwillingness to be a friend among one's colleagues in ministry.

Regarding the questions presented in the request:

1a. A person who has renounced membership and/or church office in a PC(USA) congregation may, at some subsequent point, seek admission to membership in another PC(USA) congregation by reaffirmation of faith. Membership may not be denied “for any ... reason not related to profession of faith” (G-10.0102b). It is the session’s responsibility to receive such persons, and to determine if their reaffirmation of faith is consistent with the requirements for a profession of faith in W-4.2003a–c. In such determinations, sessions may wish to pay particular attention to whether the applicant declares “intent to participate actively and *responsibly* in the worship and mission of the church” (W-4.2003c, emphasis added), and whether the person will fulfill the obligations of church membership as defined in G-5.0102, especially G-5.0102f— “demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church”—and G-5.0102h— “living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life.” In

its examination, the session may also inquire about the faith journey of the person requesting membership, and the nature of relationships between that person and prior congregations from which he or she has renounced membership. The session may wish to emphasize that the act of professing faith is itself a form of renunciation: the person requesting membership “renounces evil” and affirms reliance on God’s grace.

**1b.** A person who has renounced jurisdiction and then subsequently been received into the membership of another PC(USA) congregation would, on the basis of the new membership, be able to initiate judicial process, provided that membership in the new church grants standing for the envisioned judicial process. Membership in a congregation gives the individual standing to file a remedial complaint only “against the session of that church” (D-6.0202b1) or a statement of disciplinary offence against another person “under the jurisdiction of a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (D-10.0102a). It should be noted that a written statement alleging a disciplinary offense does not itself initiate judicial process, although it does initiate procedure preliminary to a disciplinary case (D-10.0101). Judicial process in a disciplinary case is initiated by the filing of a charge by an investigating committee. (See D-10.0404.)

**1c.** A person who has previously renounced the jurisdiction of the PC(USA) and then been admitted to membership and elected an officer of another PC(USA) congregation is once again under the jurisdiction of a governing body of the church. However, it is not the election to office but the reaffirmation of faith and admission to membership that constitutes a reversal of renunciation. Once elected to office, an elder or deacon may then file remedial complaints against the session of the new congregation, and he or she may also file a statement of disciplinary offense against another person under PC(USA) governing body jurisdiction. In addition, if the elder is serving as a member of the session of the new congregation, he or she may file a statement of offense on the basis of information received from any source that a potential offense should be investigated for purposes of discipline (D-10.0102b).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the 217th General Assembly (2006) rejected an overture to amend the text of D-10.0102 to restrict access to disciplinary process. In so doing, it asked the Office of the General Assembly to “undertake a study of the inappropriate use of judicial process and report findings and recommendation to the 218th General Assembly (2008)” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 38). The report of the OGA concludes concerning the use of judicial process that

... the Rules of Discipline cannot be used to mediate intrinsic differences of theology, polity, power, or trust. These broader issues of conflict should be addressed by individuals within the church and by administrative processes within the church such as mediation, administrative review committees, or administrative commissions. Judicial process is to be used when an individual church member after trying to bring about an adjustment or settlement of the quarrel, complaint, delinquency, or irregularity asserted has determined after prayerful deliberation that the due process provided by the Rules of Discipline is necessary to preserve the purity and purposes of the church, either to limit the behavior of individuals within the church or to correct the unconstitutional use of power by governing bodies. (Referral 05-20 from the Office of the General Assembly, 218th General Assembly (2008))

**2.a and b.** The hypothetical situation proposed in this section presumes that the renunciation takes place as disciplinary charges are either active or pending against the renouncing member/officer. It further presumes that the renouncing member/officer is then admitted to the membership of another PC(USA) congregation, although it does not specify the time frame within which these two events occur.

Section D-3.0106 is clear that “jurisdiction in judicial process ends when a church officer or a member renounces jurisdiction of the church.” There is no provision in either the Form of Government or the Rules of Discipline that would prevent a member from initiating judicial process simply because the member was once the subject of charges. In addition, neither makes provision for the resumption of proceedings against a member or officer who renounces jurisdiction to avoid prosecution and then is admitted to membership in another PC(USA) congregation. However, a person who is accused of sexual abuse as defined in D-10.0401c and who renounces jurisdiction to avoid prosecution on those charges, becomes liable to those charges again when he or she comes under the jurisdiction of another governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (D-10.0102a) by being received into congregational membership. To the extent that it is aware of prior renunciations of jurisdiction, a governing body has both the right and the obligation to inquire into the circumstances of any such renunciation in its examination of an officer.

As the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos notes, the core issue here is whether an individual member or officer may renounce the jurisdiction of one session to avoid prosecution for a disciplinary offense, and then join another congregation and seek to use the same judicial process whose authority he or she has recently evaded. The current state of the constitution would appear to make this strategy possible. The filing of excessive remedial complaints or written statements of offenses, however, could subject the church officer to disciplinary allegations for violation of their ordination vows to “be a friend among your colleagues in ministry” (W-4.4003e), to “work for the reconciliation of the world” (W-4.4003f), and to “further the peace, unity, and purity of the church” (W-4.4003g). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the same 2006 referral to the Office of the General Assembly mentioned above concerning inappropriate use of the judicial system also urged

individuals and governing bodies to become familiar with D-10.0102 and, as appropriate, to exercise their right to submit an accusation alleging (1) that a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has violated the commandment against bearing false witness, and/or (2) the member, if an officer of the church, has broken his/her ordination vows (see G-14.0405b(4)–(9) and G-14.0207d–j) [now W-4.4002a-i] by filing accusations in bad faith. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 38)

**At the same time, caution must be exercised against the assumption that multiple use of the judicial process by the same person constitutes “filing accusations in bad faith.” It is the merit of the individual complaint or allegation, and not the history of the complainant, that must determine its legitimacy.**

### Questions Received

Item 04-21 from the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

May an individual who is a member/officer of a local congregation renounce jurisdiction to avoid prosecution, move to another congregation, and proceed to use the system of judicial process which they have renounced?

The question is posed in two scenarios as follows:

1. Regarding a member or church officer against whom no disciplinary charges are filed or pending, and who renounces the jurisdiction of the church and is removed from the membership rolls of the local congregation:

a. May they join another PC (U.S.A.) congregation? If the other congregation finds out the person has renounced jurisdiction, may they choose not to receive them as a member?

b. May the individual who renounced now initiate judicial process based on their standing as a member of the new church—even though they have renounced jurisdiction? (e.g. can you “unrenounce” renunciation?)

c. If the individual is elected an officer of the new church and takes the vows of office, would this “unrenounce” and once again bring them under the jurisdiction of the PC (U.S.A.)? Could they then initiate judicial process?

2. Regarding a member or church officer against whom charges have been filed or are pending, and who renounces the jurisdiction of the church and is removed from the membership rolls of the local congregation:

a. May they join another congregation, and having joined, proceed to initiate judicial process based on their standing as a member of a new church?

b. If charges are filed in the original congregation, can the original session proceed to trial against the member or officer, even though he/or she is no longer a member of the original congregation?

## \*Item 04-22

[The assembly approved Item 04-22. See pp. 48, 51.]

*Regarding Authoritative Interpretation or Amendment to D-10.0202h(3)—From the Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Cincinnati.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) to answer Item 04-22 with the following recommendation:**

The clear requirement of D-10.0202h(3) is that the decision of the session or permanent judicial commission (PJC) be transmitted to the session clerk or stated clerk, who is then to “record minutes of the proceedings, which shall include any actions or orders of the session or permanent judicial commission relating to the case with the vote thereon” (D-11.0601c). Since the proceedings of the session or permanent judicial commission must include “the name of the accused, the substance of the accusation or charge, and censure” (D-10.0202h3), it is therefore the case that the name of the accused and substance of the accusation must be spread across the records of the presbytery.

**In 2004, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the assembly in response to Item 04-06 that**

2. When an investigating committee begins alternative forms of resolution under D-10.0202g the investigating committee must file charges at least concurrently with an agreement being filed with the permanent judicial commission in order to seek the permanent judicial commission’s approval of the agreement. Absent such charges, the permanent judicial commission has no basis to evaluate the proposed agreement. Moreover, if the agreement is not approved, the investigation should be prepared to move forward to prosecute such charges.



3. An agreement approved by the permanent judicial commission under D-10.0202g(2) is a decision of the permanent judicial commission. (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 299)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the rationale for the approval of the current wording of D-10.0202h(3) included the following comment:

The intent of this amendment is to ensure that the church's commitment to truthfulness as expressed in the disclosure provisions of a disciplinary trial (D-11.0701) are also expressed in disciplinary proceedings that utilize alternative forms of resolution to reach settlement agreements (D-10.0202g). Since the introduction of the provisions for alternative forms of resolution into the *Book of Order*, there is an increasing utilization of nondisclosure clauses in settlement agreements. In some instances, such nondisclosure agreements have resulted in the sealing of records. This practice is contrary to the provisions of D-11.0000 that result in the disclosure of the results of disciplinary case proceedings (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 85, 314).

### Question Received

Item 04-22 from the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Cincinnati presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

Under the provisions of D-10.0202h(3), when agreement on an alternate form of resolution is reached between an investigating committee and an accused person, is the stated clerk required to enter into the records of the presbytery the name of the accused and substance of the accusation?

## \*Item 04-23

[The assembly approved Item 04-23. See pp. 48, 51.]

*Clarification Regarding Certification of Christian Educators—From the Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Santa Fe.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 04-23 with the following recommendations:

1. That the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-11.0407 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-11.0407 Rolls

“The stated clerk shall maintain four rolls, one listing the names of all of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are continuing members of the presbytery and who are active members, one listing the names of all of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are continuing members of the presbytery and who are members-at-large, one listing the names of all of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are continuing members of the presbytery and who are inactive members, one listing all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery who are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice at all presbytery meetings *during the term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery*, and a fifth roll listing those who have been deleted from the other rolls. [Paragraph continues unchanged.]”

[*The proposed Revised Form of Government provides each presbytery the flexibility to determine which rolls it will maintain.*]

2. That the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Amend G-14.0730 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-14.0730 Presbytery and Certified Christian Educators

“The presbytery shall

**“a. support the certification process by encouraging educators to seek certification, providing guidance through the Educator Certification Advisor, and encouraging sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification; and**

**“b. provide the following support to the certified Christian educators: service of recognition that shall include the constitutional questions at W-4.4003 (G-11.0103n); establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits (G-11.0103n); and access to the committee on ministry (G-11.0503); and.**

**“e. *The presbytery may grant the privilege of the floor to the certified Christian educator at all its meetings with voice only, and, in the case of certified Christian educators who are ordained elders, voice and vote under the provisions of G-11.0101b, during the term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery. (G-11.0407)*”**

*This language is consistent with that of the proposed Revised Form of Government.*

**3. That if the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes the questions point to serious deficiencies in the educator certification process, it should direct the Educator Certification Council to address these issues in its handbook and the model policies provided to the presbyteries.**

### ***Rationale***

The Form of Government provides for the certification of Christian educators. Section G-14.0720 mandates that the General Assembly provide a “handbook containing the training and continuing education process for Christian Educators...” It also calls for an Educator Certification Council (hereafter ECC) that administers the provisions of the handbook and grants certification for Christian educators. Subsequent Form of Government paragraphs describe the accrediting process (G-14.0721), the presbytery’s role and responsibilities with certified Christian educators (G-14.0730 and G-14.0731), and the certified Christian educators’ and certified associate Christian educators’ duty to report evidence of abuse or neglect of minors or adults who lack mental capacity in specified circumstances (G-14.0732).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the Educator Certification Council (ECC) handbook addresses some of the questions in Item 04-23. While this handbook guides or controls the work of the ECC and those seeking certification, it has no binding authority on presbyteries.

1. With respect to the first question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that certification is granted by the ECC on behalf of the General Assembly Council, as specified in G-14.0720.

2. With respect to the second question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that there is no mention in the Constitution of rescinding certification, nor is there any provision for revocation of certification for cause by the presbytery.

3. With respect to the third question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that “certification [is] granted by the Educator Certification Council on behalf of the General Assembly Council” (G-14.0720). But the presbytery is not required to recognize the applicant for a certified education position in a church until the presbytery “is satisfied with the qualifications of an applicant” (G-14.0731). When the presbytery is satisfied, it “provides for a Service of Recognition” (G-14.0731). It is not clear what happens if the presbytery is not satisfied. Nor is it clear what, if any, effect a presbytery’s decision not to provide for a Service of Recognition would have.

4. With respect to the fourth question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that there is no constitutional provision requiring consultation with the presbytery before the status of Certified Christian Educator is conferred. The handbook describes a process for the presbytery and the ECC to work together toward the certification of Christian educator applicants. However, the ECC and presbyteries may not have partnered in the certification process of particular educators in the ways described in the handbook. Presbyteries may be unaware of their roles in the process of certification. Or they may be unwilling or unable for a variety of reasons to provide the personnel to participate in the process. Presbyteries may feel that they do not need to abide by the provisions of a handbook they did not adopt.

The Form of Government (G-14.0730a–c) does require the presbytery to

a. support the certification process by encouraging educators to seek certification, providing guidance through the Educator Certification Advisor, and encouraging sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification;

b. provide the following support to the certified Christian educators: service of recognition that shall include the constitutional questions at W-4.4003 (G-11.0103n); establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits (G-11.0103n); and access to the committee on ministry (G-11.0503); and

c. grant the privilege of the floor to the certified Christian educator at all its meetings with voice only, and, in the case of certified Christian educators who are ordained elders, voice and vote under the provisions of G-11.0101b. (G-11.0407)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further finds that it is an aberration in our polity that a person is granted the privilege of the floor, or, in the case of elders, full membership privileges without the approval of the body in which those privileges will be exercised. In 2004, the ACC noted in its advice on Item 05-11:

For various reasons a presbytery may grant “membership” to an ordained elder “for a term.” However such a provision by rule and for a fixed term of service is different from what is proposed, namely a status of “member” based solely upon a certification process. The effect of this overture, if approved, would create a category of persons entitled to membership by virtue of a certification process outside the discretion of the presbytery. The historic principle of governance asserts that a presbytery has the right to determine its membership. (*Minutes*, 2004, Part 1, p. 400)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution also notes that certification itself is contingent upon having employment as a Christian educator in a Presbyterian church [PC(USA)]. However, once the certification is conferred, the presbytery is *required* to enroll the certified Christian educator with voice, or, if an elder, with voice and vote under the provisions of G-11.0101b, whether or not the educator remains employed. Once established, the relationship to the presbytery is not contingent upon service or employment in a Presbyterian church. Further, the certified Christian educator could move his or her church membership to a particular church in a different presbytery and that presbytery would be required to enroll the certified Christian educator regardless of employment status and without any right to determine suitability for membership in the presbytery. Conversely, the first presbytery has no authority or warrant for dismissing or removing a departed Christian educator from its roll of certified Christian educators, required by G-11.0407.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that constitutional amendment is warranted to establish the presbytery’s right to determine whom it will enroll.

5. With respect to the fifth question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that there is no constitutional provision for review or termination of Certified Christian Educator status.

6. With respect to the sixth question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that there is no constitutional provision for committees on ministry to exercise oversight or evaluation functions with respect to Certified Christian Educators.

7. With respect to the seventh question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the Rules of Discipline contain no special provisions for disciplinary cases when the accused is a certified Christian educator. As a member of a Presbyterian church, the session of that church would have original jurisdiction.

### *Questions Received*

Item 04-23 from the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Santa Fe presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

1. At what point does certification of Christian educators actually happen?
2. Is a presbytery’s dissatisfaction with the qualifications of the applicant enough for the ECC to rescind certification?
3. Who has the authority to certify a Christian educator?
4. Is there any input requested from presbytery such as a review, reference checking, and/or examination prior to certification?
5. Is certification, once conferred, permanent?
6. G-11.0501 (a) gives responsibility to COM to serve as “pastor and counselor” to Certified Christian Educators of the presbytery and to facilitate their relations with the congregation, ministers, and presbytery, yet COM is not given any power to examine, oversee, recommend, etc. Is this an oversight?
7. Who has jurisdiction over Christian educators in the event that allegations are filed?

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## **\*Item 04-24**

[The assembly approved Item 04-24. See pp. 48, 51.]

*Authoritative Interpretation Regarding Discretionary Powers of Presbytery in Relation to the Formula of Agreement and Orderly Exchange—From the Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 04-24 with the following response:**

1. With respect to the first question, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the “Formula of Agreement” was approved by the General Assembly, approved by the presbyteries, and is binding on the whole church. At the time the “Formula of Agreement” was approved, the presbyteries also amended G-11.0405 to enable implementation of “Formula of Agreement” provisions. Without those amendments, the provisions of “A Formula of Agreement” could not have been put into practice, as stipulated in G-15.0302c: “Ecumenical activity under the guidance of such received ecumenical statements may be conducted only under provisions of the Constitution thereof.”

“The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament” is a series of agreements that were mandated by “A Formula of Agreement.” The Preface of “A Formula of Agreement” specifies that the four denominations will, among other requirements, “recognize each others’ various ministries and make provision for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.” These agreements were written by persons representing the four denominations and were not approved by the General Assembly or the presbyteries, but they, too, are binding on the church, because of our agreements with the partner denominations.

2. With respect to the second question, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that there are no express provisions in our Constitution for amendment, interpretation, or clarification. However, in the Orderly Exchange document itself, is a section entitled “Background and Affirmations” where we find:

the four churches will need to continue conversations toward clarification of church policies in order to enhance the orderly exchange of ministers and to find ways to celebrate visibly our full communion relationship and the recognition of the ordained ministries of the four churches.

Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the way to amend the Orderly Exchange document is to ask the team, made up of representatives of the four participating denominations to amend or clarify the document.

3. With respect to the third question, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that “A Formula of Agreement,” was approved by the General Assembly and the presbyteries. It is a standard of the whole denomination. No presbytery may waive provisions approved by the whole. As a subsidiary document of “A Formula of Agreement,” “The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament” is, likewise, a standard of the whole church.

“A Formula of Agreement,” was agreed upon by the four partner churches and “The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament” was written by representatives of the four churches and expresses the ways we work together in support of our common mission. In the spirit of that partnership, it is important that we all adhere to the agreed principles or the process of exchange is no longer orderly. It is not possible for a single body to override or amend agreements of the partner churches.

4. With respect to the fourth question, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that it is the intent of Principle 2 to prohibit a candidate from accepting a first call in “a congregation of another church.” Principle 2 states:

It is important to the faithful and orderly exchange of ordained ministers among the four churches of *A Formula of Agreement* that one who would serve in a congregation of another church first be formed and educated for ministry in one’s own tradition, and have experience in serving in that church’s ordained ministry. Such experience and grounding in one’s own tradition are seen to be essential prior to serving in a setting of another tradition; therefore, such service is not intended for a first call.

This is confirmed in our own Constitution in G-11.0405b which states, “A minister of another denomination, with whom the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion (G-15.0201), may be called ... .” A minister is a person who is already ordained, working in Presbyterian ministry, and a member of a presbytery.

5. With respect to the fifth question, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that “not intended” closes the door to ordination to a first call in another denomination.

If the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the issues raised by questions in Item 04-24 warrant discussion by the representatives of the Formula of Agreement partner denominations, the General Assembly should direct the Stated Clerk to request conversations between the four partner churches for discussion of same.

#### Questions Received

1. What authority do the *Formula of Agreement* and *The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament* have in the PC(USA)?

2. May the *Agreement* and the *Orderly Exchange* be amended, interpreted, or clarified and by what process?
3. May a presbytery waive a provision of the *Agreement* or the *Orderly Exchange* and by what process?
4. Does principle number two [quoted above] from the *Orderly Exchange* prevent a presbytery from ordaining a candidate to ministry in a partner denomination? If not, are there any specific conditions that limit when a presbytery may ordain a candidate to ministry in a partner denomination?
5. In the phrase, “therefore, such service is not intended for a first call,” does the use of the word “intended” open or close the door to ordination to a first call in another denomination?

## **\*Item 04-25**

[The assembly approved Item 04-25. See pp. 48, 51.]

*On Transferring Shalom Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of Riverside—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.*

**The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to concur with the request that Shalom Presbyterian Church (pin number 11314) be transferred to Riverside Presbytery from Hanmi Presbytery for the purpose of merging with the First Presbyterian Church of Fontana (pin number 00719).**

### *Rationale*

The Shalom Presbyterian Church has previously been located in Los Alamitos, California, and has been meeting more recently in the First Presbyterian Church of Fontana, California, located at 9260 Mango Ave. in Fontana.

The congregations of both Shalom Presbyterian of Hanmi Presbytery and First Presbyterian Church of Fontana of Riverside Presbytery approved the Covenant of Intent to Merge on February 3, 2008.

The session of Shalom Presbyterian Church and the session of First Presbyterian Church formally approved the Covenant of Intent to Merge on February 3, 2008.

The Presbytery of Riverside voted on March 11, 2008, to receive Shalom Presbyterian Church upon transfer from Hanmi Presbytery so that the congregation could merge with First Presbyterian Church of Fontana. Hanmi Presbytery voted on Feb. 14, 2008, to dismiss Shalom Presbyterian Church to Riverside Presbytery so that it could merge with First Presbyterian Church of Fontana.

The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii voted in a special meeting on December 8, 2007, to approve the transfer and merger, and to overture the General Assembly to concur.

## **\*Item 04-26**

[The assembly approved Item 04-26 with comment. See pp. 48, 51.]

*On Transferring Faith Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of the Pacific—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.*

**The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to concur with the request that Faith Presbyterian Church (pin number 11900) be transferred from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of the Pacific.**

**Comment: It is understood the effective date is 1-1 2009.**

### *Rationale*

Faith Presbytery Church, 1880 Crenshaw Blvd. in Torrance, California, was initiated by Torrance First Presbyterian Church (TFPC), a church within the geographical bounds of the Presbytery of the Pacific, but a member of the non-

geographical Hanmi Presbytery, primarily an English-language congregation of TFPC. Faith Church is separately chartered and has been a member church of Hanmi Presbytery.

The session of Faith Presbytery Church voted on June 25, 2006, and the congregation voted on June 20, 2006, to request the transfer of the church to the Presbytery of the Pacific.

The Presbytery of the Pacific voted on September 11, 2007, to overture the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii to approve the transfer of Faith Presbyterian Church upon its dismissal from Hanmi Presbytery, and to receive Faith Presbyterian Church upon action of the synod and General Assembly.

Hanmi Presbytery voted on November 1, 2007, to dismiss Faith Church to the Presbytery of the Pacific.

The Synod of Southern California and California voted in a Special Meeting on December 8, 2007 to approve the transfer, and to overture the General Assembly to concur.

## \*Item 04-27

[The assembly approved Item 04-27. See pp. 48, 51.]

**The Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) remind individuals that the Rules of Discipline cannot be used to mediate intrinsic differences of theology, policy, polity, power, or trust. These broader issues of conflict should be addressed by individuals within the church and by administrative processes within the church such as mediation, administrative review committees, or administrative commissions. Judicial process is to be used when an individual church member, after trying to bring about an adjustment or settlement of the quarrel, complaint, delinquency, or irregularity asserted has determined after prayerful deliberation that the due process provided by the Rules of Discipline is necessary to preserve the purity and purposes of the church either to limit the behavior of individuals within the church or to correct the unconstitutional use of power by governing bodies.**

### *Rationale*

This recommendation is in response to the following referral: *2006 Referral: Item 05-20. On Amending D-10.0102, Accusation of Another—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 38, 40, 427–9).*

Item 05-20 was referred to the Office of the General Assembly with the following comment:

1. The 217th General Assembly (2006) requests that the Office of the General Assembly undertake a study of the inappropriate use of judicial process and report findings and recommendation to the 218th General Assembly (2008).
2. The General Assembly urges individuals and governing bodies to become familiar with D-10.0102 and, as appropriate, to exercise their right to submit an accusation alleging (1) that a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has violated the commandment against bearing false witness, and/or (2) the member, if an officer of the church, has broken his/her ordination vows (see G-14.0405b(4)–(9) and G-14.0207d–j) by filing accusations in bad faith. (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 427*)

### Introduction

The Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order* describe two very detailed judicial processes for the governing bodies to use in order to address two very specific types of conflict in the church, disciplinary and remedial. The disciplinary judicial process provides a “due process” in situations where individual members of the church are alleged to have behaved in ways contrary to Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution. The disciplinary judicial process allows the PC(USA) community to determine whether the individual engaged in the prohibited behavior and whether the PC(USA) should limit the individual participation within the church (either as a member or as an officer) until the individual has exhibited repentance and is able to be restored to the full rights and responsibilities of membership or office. The remedial judicial process provides a formal process by which a member of a governing body, a sister governing body, or an employee of a governing body may challenge a collective decision of the governing body if the governing body has taken an action it does not have the power under the PC(USA) Constitution to take or has failed to take an action the governing body has a duty to take under the PC(USA) Constitution. All other conflicts may be addressed by the governing bodies through administrative committees or commissions that may be given broader powers to resolve the particular conflicts under the Form of Government.

Occasionally individuals within the PC(USA) will attempt to use these judicial processes in inappropriate ways. On these occasions it can take quite a bit of human energy and money to eventually resolve the cases and many times resolve the is-

sues. Inappropriate uses of judicial process can include multiple filing of allegations of offenses against individual, which triggers the appointment of multiple committees to determine probable cause. When allegations of offenses are in writing from a member of the PC(USA), the governing body automatically appoints an investigating committee to determine probable cause. When allegations of offense are from a non-member of the Presbyterian church or not in writing, the governing body staff analyze whether they have received a notice of offense that will need a committee appointed to determine probable cause and reasonable proof. Other inappropriate uses of judicial process include the filing of multiple remedial cases against one governing body to interfere with the ongoing mission of the church.

#### Results of Study

The Office of the General Assembly sent a survey to the stated clerks of the presbyteries and synods to find if the stated clerks felt that there had been any inappropriate use of judicial process in their governing body. We received responses from fifty-six presbyteries out of one hundred seventy-four presbyteries or just under one third of the presbyteries and four synods or one fourth of the synods. Of those who responded, fifty-two stated clerks stated that their governing body had not experienced any inappropriate use of judicial process. Eight stated clerks did acknowledge the inappropriate use of judicial process, seven presbyteries and one synod.

Most of the inappropriate uses were spread out over two to four years and involved one person filing multiple disciplinary allegations as well as multiple remedial complaints. In several instances, the individual also filed civil cases. Most of these allegations and cases were attempts to challenge a particular set of facts and circumstances in a variety of ways. In some cases, the disciplinary allegations of offense were filed against individuals for decisions made within the context of a committee or commission of a presbytery and in two instances for participation in a judicial case either as witnesses or as members of a permanent judicial commission. In some situations, the disciplinary allegations did not rise to the level of an offense and the investigating committees did not begin an inquiry. In some situations, the allegations may have constituted an offense, but the investigating committees found no probable cause after an initial inquiry. Some of these governing bodies had to appoint five to six investigating committees (of three to five members each) simultaneously. Others have had to field five to six investigating committees over a period of years because the individual filing the allegations continued to file against people.

The most egregious use of judicial process occurred over a period of four years in which a church split spawned over one hundred disciplinary allegations and remedial complaints. The permanent judicial commission with jurisdiction spent several years consolidating the cases until a resolution satisfactory to all was obtained. Another church split spawned a dozen disciplinary allegations and remedial complaints. In those cases where multiple remedial complaints were filed, the permanent judicial commission with jurisdiction consolidated cases based upon similar facts and circumstances. In those disciplinary allegations based upon the same facts and circumstances, presbyteries have utilized one investigating committee (IC) to inquire into the facts and circumstances for allegations of offense against multiple people.

The financial costs to the governing bodies have ranged from \$2,000 to \$200,000 for the inappropriate use of judicial process within the context of the church, with most in the range of \$2,000 to \$5,000. When civil litigation is included, the financial costs increase. The costs to the governing bodies in time and energy included the use of as many as fifteen to thirty people as members of investigating committees, administrative commissions, permanent judicial commissions, and governing body staff. When these inappropriate uses occur, it can cripple the ongoing mission of the governing body since the time and energy of so many people are directed towards judicial process.

One stated clerk observed that the inappropriate use seemed to be in retaliation for a perceived wrong rather than an attempt to correct a perceived wrong.

In five instances, the governing bodies eventually either censured the individual responsible for the inappropriate use, limited which body has jurisdiction over the cases filed by the individual, presumed the individual to have renounced jurisdiction, or the individual renounced jurisdiction. In three instances, there has been no censure of the individual who used the judicial process inappropriately.

#### Is There A Solution?

The current Rules of Discipline allow the permanent judicial commission (PJC) of jurisdiction to dismiss a remedial complaint that fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. Current authoritative interpretation of the Rules of Discipline also allows a permanent judicial commission to consolidate multiple remedial complaints filed based upon the same facts and circumstances.

When allegations of offense against members of the PC(USA) are received by a governing body, the current Rules of Discipline state that, depending upon the form of the allegation, either a committee is automatically formed to determine probable cause or the governing body staff that receives the allegation determines whether or not to form a committee. Gen-

erally the PC(USA) has preferred that decisions made by governing bodies be made in the context of groups of people, not by individuals. Any further limit on the form of allegation that automatically triggers the formation of a committee shifts the power into the hands of the governing body staff to determine whether or not a committee should be appointed to determine probable cause.

The PJC currently has the power, after due process, to limit any individual behavior that constitutes an offense, including using judicial process inappropriately.

The inappropriate use of judicial process can be quite destructive on the life and witness of the church through its governing bodies. When used appropriately, judicial process maintains the rights of individuals and governing bodies to have a fair hearing when alleged to have behaved beyond the boundaries set by the church and Scripture. The current processes can be used to limit, consolidate, dismiss, or censure individual and governing body behavior including inappropriate use of judicial process.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-27

*Advice on Item 04-27—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution*

Item 04-27 is in response to the following referral: *2006 Referral: Item 05-20. On Amending 10.0102 Regarding Accusation of Another—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 427).*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve the recommendation of the Office of the General Assembly, which is in response to the referral, and to thank the Office of the General Assembly for its work.

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## Item 04-28

[The assembly approved Item 04-23 with amendment. See pp. 49, 51.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Urging a Gracious, Pastoral Response to Churches Requesting Dismissal from the PC(USA).*

### The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1. Directs the Stated Clerk to send this resolution to the presbyteries, synods, and sessions, indicating the will of the assembly that presbyteries and synods develop and make available to lower governing bodies and local congregations a process that exercises the responsibility and power “to divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members” (*Book of Order*, G-11.0103i) with consistency, pastoral responsibility, accountability, gracious witness, openness, and transparency.

2. Believing that trying to exercise this responsibility and power through litigation is deadly to the cause of Christ, impacting the local church, other parts of the Body of Christ and ecumenical relationships, and our witness to Christ in the world around us, [the General Assembly] urges [congregations considering leaving the denomination,] presbyteries[,] and synods to implement a process using the following principles:

- **Consistency:** The local authority delegated to presbyteries is guided and shaped by our shared faith, service, and witness to Jesus Christ.
- **Pastoral Responsibility:** The requirement in G-11.0103i to consult with the members of a church seeking dismissal highlights the presbytery’s pastoral responsibility, which must not be submerged beneath other responsibilities.
- **Accountability:** For a governing body, accountability rightly dictates fiduciary and connectional concerns, raising general issues of property (G-8.0000) and specific issues of schism within a congregation (G-8.0600). But, full accountability also requires preeminent concern with “caring for the flock.”
- **Gracious Witness:** It is our belief that Scripture and the Holy Spirit require a gracious witness from us rather than a harsh legalism.



- ***Openness and Transparency: Early, open communication and transparency about principles and process of dismissal necessarily serve truth, order, and goodness, and work against seeking civil litigation as a solution.***

### ***Rationale***

There are many scenarios and reasons for dismissal of churches. Furthermore, presbyteries have constitutional discretion in how to respond to such requests. Nonetheless, it is not sufficient to follow the letter of church law and miss or transgress the Spirit of Christ in that law. This resolution is deeply needed for two reasons.

First, it is easy for us to emphasize the property trust responsibilities of presbytery/synod oversight to the exclusion of the pastoral responsibility of caring for the congregations (members staying and leaving) and the responsibility of public witness to Christ with the larger body of Christ and the community and world.

Second, across the church our presbyteries are inconsistent in communicating how they will respond to churches seeking dismissal. There are several helpful and gracious processes available on the middle governing body Website (and by the example of some presbyteries), but many presbyteries and councils are guarded about the local application of G-11.0103i. This fosters a preemptive all-or-nothing posture from a church seeking dismissal. Our desire is to urge each other into a more grace-filled exchange.

Our concern is practical and is rooted in the commission to care for Christ's sheep. To be direct, if a church goes through the trauma of an internal split, wouldn't we rather the members go to church anywhere than end up disillusioned and quitting on a local church and presbytery that have been to court in a protracted legal battle? Wouldn't we rather lose some dirt or brick or even lose face than poison the well of witness in our community? As the resolution states, we believe litigation by Christians against Christians is deadly to the cause of Christ.

What do we envision? We call on local church leadership and presbytery leadership to care pastorally for majority and minority groups in a church seeking dismissal. This could result in a final picture, not of two embittered enemies in court, but in mutual blessing and partnership in the midst of the sadness of parting. We envision presbytery leadership and local church leadership working together to bless and make way for a majority group and to take great care to relocate and shepherd a minority group. This could be the last great joint mission effort of two parts of Christ's body who are focusing on different mission fields.

Brothers and sisters, we can do better than we are doing! But it will take a reprioritizing of how we exercise responsibility and power and a commitment to act. Failure to act will perpetuate communication and practice that we believe is not only harmful to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) but to our witness to Jesus Christ in the world. Choose to act by endorsing this resolution for the cause of Christ in the world.

The Reverend Robert Austell, Presbytery of Charlotte  
Elder Archie Smith, Presbytery of San Joaquin

## **Item 04-Info**

### ***A. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Agency Summary***

#### *1. Assigned Responsibilities*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) is composed of nine voting members as established by the *Book of Order*, G-13.0112 and G-18.0301. The nine voting members must be former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, stated clerks or former stated clerks of synods or presbyteries, or other qualified persons with knowledge of and experience with the Constitution and polity of the church (G-13.0112a). The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is a member ex officio without vote.

With regard to questions requiring an interpretation of the *Book of Order*, the advisory committee's responsibilities are set out in G-13.0112c and d as follows:

c. All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* arising from governing bodies of the church or from individuals shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.

d. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such questions of interpretation to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, except those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission. The Advisory Committee shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations. Such recommendations may include proposals for constitutional change. The General Assembly shall vote on the recommendations, and may amend or decline to approve them.

With regard to proposed amendments to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the advisory committee's mandated responsibilities are set out in G-18.0301b, as follows:

b. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such proposed amendments to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (G-13.0112), which shall examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The advisory committee shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the committee. The General Assembly shall not consider any amendment until it has considered the report and any recommendation from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

## 2. *Process and Procedures, Responsibilities and Relationships*

The advisory committee does not interpret the Constitution. The role of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, as its title suggests and as its constitutional mandate clearly establishes, is to advise the General Assembly. The committee's advice has no authority until and unless it is approved by the General Assembly. With respect to proposed amendments to the Constitution, the advisory committee focuses on clarity of proposed language, and consistency of the proposed amendment with the remainder of the Constitution. The advisory committee occasionally finds that the intent of the proposal is already inherent in other provisions of the Constitution or that it could be achieved by slight changes in language, by placing the amendment in a different section, or by different language entirely. The advisory committee sometimes has recommended such changes in order to avoid inconsistencies within the *Book of Order*, and also to make as few changes as possible in existing paragraphs and in section numbering.

With respect to requests for interpretation, as well as comments on overtures, the advisory committee seeks to provide advice that is based on constitutional issues, not on the substance of the issues at hand. In many circumstances, the question has been answered by earlier interpretations and does not require action by the General Assembly. In these cases, the inquirer is notified of the standing interpretation. In order to make clear the questions raised, the advisory committee has modified its past practice of reprinting the entire request received (which in some instances contained material not germane to the question itself), and has focused the presentation of the request on the question presented, together with the advisory committee's findings and recommendations. If the question was not clear from the request received, the advisory committee has sought clarification from the individual transmitting the request.

All overtures and reports containing proposed amendments and all requests for interpretation of the *Book of Order* by the General Assembly must be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly (G-13.0112c). This 120-day time period allows the advisory committee the time to consider and research carefully each proposed amendment and request. Those requests that the advisory committee brings to the General Assembly are those that it believes meet this constitutional criterion.

The advisory committee completed its preparatory work for the General Assembly in three meetings. In June 2007, the advisory committee met for two days to review and comment upon a draft proposed revision to the Form of Government prepared by the Form of Government Task Force. At a two-day fall meeting, held in conjunction with the OGA Fall Polity Conference, we were able to begin work on our task of preparing for the 218th General Assembly (2008). At its spring five-day meeting, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution concluded its work of preparing responses to constitutional issues to be considered by the 218th General Assembly (2008).

After it has received and considered the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, the General Assembly is free to take whatever action it deems wise on proposed amendments, requests for interpretations, and referrals.

The primary focus for the advisory committee is to fulfill its constitutional function to provide advice to the General Assembly concerning overtures that seek to amend the Constitution, and concerning requests for interpretation of the Constitution.

## 3. *Observations Regarding the Business Coming Before the Assembly*

The advisory committee, because of its role in reviewing all requests for constitutional change or interpretation, has the opportunity to observe some of the trends and changes in the type of business coming to the assembly. In reviewing the business coming to the 218th General Assembly (2008), the advisory committee notes that a number of overtures in effect seek to bring motions to postpone or motions to refer particular business before the assembly. The advisory committee reminds the church that these procedural motions could be brought by any commissioner. While such overtures are perfectly permissible, they suggest a lack of trust that the Holy Spirit will work by and through the commissioners to the assembly. The advisory committee reminds the church that such trust in the workings of the Holy Spirit is central to the functioning of our polity.

## 4. *Editorial Corrections*

The *Organization for Mission* provides, at IV.B.2.c., that the Stated Clerk shall prepare editorial changes in the *Book of Order*, which should be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, provided the changes do not alter the sub-

stance of the text approved by the presbyteries. The following changes have been made by the Stated Clerk and approved by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution:

*Editorial Change 08-01* from Neal E. Lloyd who asked whether there should be an editorial correction in the last phrase of the second sentence of G-11.0401a where he suggested that the word “formerly” should be replaced with “currently.”

With respect to the question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question points to a deficiency in the current language of the *Book of Order* that can be addressed through the process of editorial correction. Lloyd is correct in stating that “membership always resides somewhere” and that this phrase does not really refer to any previous presbytery of membership, but the place of current membership. Correction of this language makes the sentence clearer.

Therefore, in response to Editorial Change 08-01, regarding the second sentence of G-11.0401a, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution approves the correction made by the Stated Clerk so the sentence now reads: “A minister called to work not under the jurisdiction of a presbytery may apply for reception to the presbytery in which he or she will be resident, or to another presbytery, or retain membership in the presbytery where he or she ~~was formerly~~ *is currently* a member.”

*Editorial Change 08-02* from the Presbytery of Philadelphia noted that in D-12.0103 the permanent judicial commission was the body that imposed censure. There is no rational distinction among the four levels of censure that would call for the permanent judicial commission to pronounce the censure under D-12.0103 rather than the presbytery, which does it in the other three levels of censure. The other changes are made to bring the language in D-12.0103 into conformity with the language of the other sections dealing with censure.

The Presbytery of Philadelphia has correctly asserted that in all other forms of censure, the pronouncement of the censure states that it is the presbytery (or session) named as the party executing the censure. The current language implies that in the case of rebuke with supervised rehabilitation, the permanent judicial commission acts on its own behalf, when instead it acts with the authority of and on behalf of the presbytery in these proceedings. There is no reason for the language to be different in this one instance.

#### 5. *Special Thanks*

On behalf of the 218th General Assembly (2008), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution expresses its thanks and appreciation to the Reverend William Chapman and Elders John Matta and Frances Pitts for their dedicated service to the church through membership on the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. Each of them has brought profound gifts, and deep dedication, to the work of the committee.

The advisory committee is grateful for the staff assistance of the Reverend Mark Tammen, Associate Stated Clerk and director for the Department of Constitutional Services, Joanne Green and Diane Minter, administrative assistants for the Department of Constitutional Services. We are also grateful for the years of dedicated service given by Elder Mary Ruth Phares, who provided immeasurable support as an administrative assistant for the Department of Constitutional Services.

The advisory committee also notes that George Adams, a good and faithful servant of the denomination both in his work for the advisory committee and in the many other works he did for the church died shortly after resigning from the committee in the fall of 2007. We continue to miss both his insights and his irrepressible personality.

Finally, the advisory committee is deeply grateful for the profound and insightful leadership Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick. As an ex officio member of the advisory committee, Dr. Kirkpatrick has been a calm and consistent voice for the peace, unity, and purity of the church, and a passionate advocate for the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We are grateful for the opportunity to have served with him.

## **B. *General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission***

### 1. *Roster of Former Members (D-5.0206b)*

#### a. *Class of 2006*

Jesse Butler, 8316 N. Flora Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64118; Gwen Cook, 1104 Oak Drive, Durango, CO 81301; Jane Fahey, 2930 Habersham Way, Atlanta, GA 30305; David Snellgrove, P.O. Box 616, Batesville, MS 38606; Christopher Yim, 20701 Frederick Road, Germantown, MD 20876.

b. *Class of 2003*

Mary Lou Koenig, 114 Downing Road, DeWitt, NY 13214; James McClure, 440 South Gulfview Blvd, #1204N, Clearwater, FL, 33767; Patricia K. Norris, 40 North Central, Phoenix, AZ 85004; Daniel M. Saperstein, 1630 NE Stadium Way, Pullman, WA 99163.

c. *Class of 2001*

The Reverend David Bridgman, 1958 North Webb Road, Wichita, KS 67206; the Reverend Charles A. Hammond, 2200 Locust St., Philadelphia, PA 19103-5596; The Reverend Laura S. Mendenhall, PO Box 5488, Austin, TX 78763; the Reverend James H. Quillin, 3253 Waynoka Circle South, Memphis, TN 38111; Stephen L. Taber, Esq., 1915 Oak Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.

NOTE: The 2004 General Assembly approved class reassignments; therefore, the GAPJC did not have any outgoing members in 2005.

2. *Final Decisions of the Permanent Judicial Commission*

The Permanent Judicial Commission met in Louisville, Kentucky, on July 27–31, 2006, and October 12–16, 2006; in Kansas City, Missouri, on May 3–7, 2007; in Louisville, Kentucky, on July 26–30, 2007; in Snowbird, Utah, for training on November 8–12, 2007; in Louisville, Kentucky, on February 7–11, 2008, and April 24–28, 2008. Having received the final decisions from the commission from its clerk, Ernest E. Cutting, the Stated Clerk now reports to the 218th General Assembly (2008) the final decisions received in the following cases and advises the General Assembly that they will be included in the *Minutes*:

a. *Remedial Case 217-12*

-----	)	
Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church,	)	
Complainant/Appellant,	)	
	)	<u>DECISION AND ORDER</u>
v.	)	
	)	Remedial Case 217-12
National Capital Presbytery,	)	
Respondent/Appellee.	)	
-----	)	

Headnotes

(1) Property of a dissolving congregation: A dissolving congregation has the right to dispose of church property only as the presbytery directs. G-8.0401 grants the presbytery exclusive rights and responsibilities for dealing with the property of a dissolved church.

(2) Effective date of dissolution: The act of dissolution of a church is complete at the effective date stated in a presbytery resolution.

(3) Property held in trust: The principle that all property held by or for a particular church is held in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) applies to congregations and presbyteries, no matter which entity holds title to church property. (G-8.0201)

(4) Congregational meetings on property matters: Congregational meetings on property matters are not required for every matter having to do with property issues, but are limited to those matters enumerated in Chapters VII and VIII. (G-7.0304, G-8.0500)

(5) Lack of authority of a dissent or minority report: In a judicial decision, neither a dissent nor a minority report has binding authority.

(6) Presbytery business with non-members: Presbyteries and congregations are free to transact business with non-members and may take actions and pass resolutions that address their dealings with non-members. (G-15.0105)

(7) Standard of review: Factual determinations made by a trier of fact have a presumption of correctness and are not to be disturbed on appeal unless they are plainly wrong, without supporting evidence or manifestly unjust (*Hardwick v. Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of North Carolina, Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 45).

## Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) on appeal by the Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church (CTPC) from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic (SPJC) dated April 19, 2005. This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that the Appellant has standing to appeal, that the appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

## Appearances

The following persons appeared on behalf of Appellant, Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church: Max Ko, Ying H. Shih, and Y.T. Hung. The Reverend David Shih, Moderator, and Chung Yao Kuo, Clerk of Session, of Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church were also present. Appellee, Presbytery of National Capital Presbytery, was represented by the following persons: Lynn Stanton-Hoyle, Gerald Hopkins, and James G.E. Williams. Richard McFail, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, was also present.

## History

Chesterbrook Presbyterian Church (CPC) was a congregation of National Capital Presbytery (Presbytery), located in Falls Church, Fairfax County, Virginia on about 9 acres. The site is divided into three parcels: Parcel A of 3.4 acres, which contained the church building with parking and access to the street; Parcel B of .6 acres, which was a narrow strip of land on the northern boundary of the property, designed to provide access to the land at the rear; and Parcel C of 5 acres, a land-locked area at the rear of Parcel A. As early as 1974, Fairfax County records showed Parcel B as providing potential access to Parcel C.

As a diminishing and aging congregation, CPC began moving toward dissolution as a congregation. An "Exploratory Task Force" met on March 13, 2000, with the pastor and two elders of the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church of Northern Virginia (TPCNVA) to discuss the possibility of the latter using the building and land of the former, as TPCNVA had been meeting in a school building and had no facility of its own.

By September, 2000, Presbytery, through its Church Development Committee, began to discuss closure with CPC, and on September 17, the congregation of CPC voted to close with a tentative date of January 31, 2001. Throughout the remainder of 2000, committees of Presbytery worked with CPC, focusing on pastoral care and transition issues which would follow dissolution.

On October 8, 2000, TPCNVA's Session met. In a letter dated October 9, 2000, from Elder Y. T. Hung, Clerk of Session of TPCNVA, to William Carter, the representative of CPC, Mr. Hung stated, "The Congregation and the Session express their deepest appreciation for the love and generosity of the Chesterbrook Presbyterian Church...[A]s a gift receiver, we think any additional request would be beyond the God's grace to TPC. Therefore, TPC will go along with whatever the decision made by the CPC and with whatever CPC sees feasible." Mr. Hung also suggested the need for language and exhibits to be precise concerning potential building of an assisted living facility on Parcel C and the impact of this proposed building on future plans for church expansion.

A congregational meeting of CPC was held on November 12, 2000 to approve the dissolution of the church, effective January 31, 2001, with the following resolution:

We accept the Session's plan to deed the real property to National Capital Presbytery, Incorporated, with the provision that the building and grounds be given, at no cost, to the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church of Northern Virginia Congregation and to give Lewinsville Presbyterian Church the opportunity to determine whether or not an assisted living facility for low and moderate income persons can be constructed on the back portion of the Church property and to also explore the possibility of developing a home for the Family Respite Center.

On November 26, 2000, at a congregational meeting, TPCNVA voted to accept CPC's plan, and to change the church name to "Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church."

At the stated meeting of Presbytery on January 23, 2001, the Presbytery approved the dissolution resolution for CPC (effective January 31, 2001) and the name change for TPCNVA. The January 23, 2001 resolution included the following:

8. On February 1, 2001, the CTPC is authorized to use "Parcel A" and "Parcel B" property as their new church home with all responsibilities thereof. The Taiwanese Church, chartered in 1992 and a rapidly growing congregation, will move from its current worship site at Oakton Elementary School to "Parcel A." This move will allow them to continue to grow their ministry by now having their own church building. The Taiwanese Church shall maintain and make improvements to the property as necessary. Also, the Taiwanese Church shall be National Capital Presbytery, Inc.'s local representative for oversight of "Parcel C," with such representation to end upon any development of Parcel "C" anticipated in paragraph 12.

\* \* \*

12. The Session of Lewinsville Presbyterian Church is requested to form a task force for exploring the use of undeveloped "Parcel C" as an Affordable Assisted Living Facility or a similar facility. Every effort shall be made to incorporate the Family Respite Center (currently located on "Parcel A") into the Affordable Assisted Living Facility. It is recognized that access to "Parcel C" will be by way of "Parcel B" or other access over a portion of "Parcel A." This task force shall report its build/no build decision to Presbytery's Business Advisory Committee no later than July 31, 2002, which is 18 months from dissolution of Chesterbrook Presbyterian Church. By mutual agreement, this time may be extended if needed.

The January 23, 2001 resolution also provided that the Presbytery address contractual issues with two not-for-profit tenant organizations using church facilities, and proceed with all legal arrangements for dealing with Parcel C, including a long-term lease of the property and access rights. CTPC moved to the property on February 1, 2001. Later in 2001, CPC transferred the title to all the church property (Parcels A, B, and C) to Presbytery.

The feasibility study for the assisted living facility on Parcel C began, and the deadline for completing the study was extended to March 1, 2004. During the period 2001-2004, many activities related to planning, zoning, and other government approvals for the assisted living facility were in progress. CTPC became concerned that the use of Parcel C and the location of the access road would impair its capacity to expand the building as the congregation grew. On February 17, 2004, Presbytery leadership sent a letter to all those of interest, acknowledging CTPC's concerns and stating a willingness to work together to solve the issues. Several discussions and communications to that end ensued.

On March 9, 2004, Presbytery Council met, considered motions concerning the disposition of the issues, but postponed action until a later date. Later that month, Presbytery voted to accept the project proposal for the assisted living facility, now named Chesterbrook Residences, Inc. (CRI). On April 20, 2004, a meeting was held with representatives of CTPC, Presbytery, CRI, and Lewinsville Church, which resulted in a first draft of a proposed resolution to address these concerns. This resolution was to be presented at Presbytery's stated meeting in May, 2004. At some point, CTPC ceased to participate in the discussions.

On May 10, 2004, a revised "Working Draft" of the resolution was sent by e-mail to CTPC representatives and the others participating in the drafting. The following day, Presbytery Council met to consider the draft. Though invited, representatives of CTPC did not attend.

Presbytery held its stated meeting on May 25, 2004 and the Council's recommended resolution was presented. Following a failed motion to postpone, Presbytery passed the resolution after considerable discussion. The May 25, 2004 resolution began as follows:

National Capital Presbytery recognizes that language in the Chesterbrook Presbyterian Church Dissolution Resolution which it approved on January 23, 2001, has led to confusion, distress and conflict. The presbytery, therefore, apologizes to its members and particularly to the members and leadership of CTPC, Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, Immanuel Presbyterian Church and Chesterbrook Residences, Inc (CRI). The Presbytery seeks grace and forgiveness as it moves forward.

In order to resolve differences which have arisen, underscore its commitment to the vitality and success of Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church and the proposed Chesterbrook Affordable Assisted Living Facility, and more clearly define its intentions, National Capital Presbytery hereby resolves, agrees, and acknowledges that:

1. The Presbytery retains title to Parcels A, B, and C . . . and all the rights and responsibilities of a presbytery under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA);
2. With regard to Parcels A and B, National Capital Presbytery grants to Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church all of the rights and responsibilities of a particular church under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) [ex. G-8.0201, ff: G-10.0102, ff)
  - a. with the understanding that an access road on Parcel B to Parcel C will occupy a portion of Parcel A in perpetuity and subject to an easement granted across Parcel A;
  - b. with the understanding that CTPC cedes its interest in Parcel B and agrees that the Presbytery shall retain all rights and responsibilities to Parcel B...

On July 6, 2004, CTPC filed a complaint with the SPJC concerning the actions of Presbytery on May 25, 2004. A stay of enforcement was requested by CTPC, but was not granted. Following a trial, SPJC issued a decision on April 29, 2005, which upheld the May 25, 2004 resolution, and ordered that congregational meetings should be held "in all future matters of this sort having to do with property issues . . ." An appeal was filed by CTPC with the GAPJC on June 2, 2005. A hearing on appeal was held February 10, 2006 by the GAPJC.

#### Specifications of Error

CTPC's specifications of error have been reworded or combined for purposes of clarity.

#### Part I Property of Dissolving Congregation

One specification of error suggests the question: "May a dissolving congregation direct disposition of church property?"

*Specification of Error Number 3: SPJC erred in denying a particular church's right of the disposition of its own property before it was formally dissolved by the Presbytery.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

Specification of error number 3 refers to the "right" of a church to dispose of church property before being dissolved by Presbytery. CTPC contends that, because of the wishes expressed by CPC prior to its dissolution, CTPC had a greater interest in the church property from February 1, 2001 forward than Presbytery was willing to acknowledge.

The *Book of Order* is clear that a dissolving church, such as CPC, has the right to dispose of church property only as the presbytery directs. G-8.0401 grants Presbytery exclusive rights and responsibilities for dealing with the property of a dissolved church. SPJC correctly held that a dissolving congregation cannot dispose of church property by gift, contract or other means. Thus, CTPC could not acquire from CPC that which CPC had no right to transfer.

CTPC argued that the dissolution of CPC was not complete until the January 23, 2001 resolution was passed by Presbytery and a formal celebration occurred. However, G-8.0401 does not apply only after "formal dissolution" as CTPC defines it, *i.e.*, after a final worship service. The process leading to the dissolution of a congregation, even in cases where the congregation seeks to be dissolved, takes substantial time, particularly when dealing with real property. The act of dissolution is complete at the effective date stated in a presbytery resolution, which in this case was January 31, 2001.

Moreover, even if CPC had not been formally dissolved before January 23, 2001, it could not have sold, leased, or otherwise encumbered church property without the written approval of Presbytery (G-8.0501). A presbytery has exclusive power to determine the use and disposition of church property in a case where the property ceases to be used for a particular church, as was the case with CPC (G-8.0301).

These three provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-8.0301, G-8.0401, G-8.0501) are consistent with the premise in G-8.0201 that "[a]ll property held by or for a particular church, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ... is held in trust ... for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)." This principle applies to congregations and presbyteries, no matter which entity holds title to church property, and applies whether the property is being used for a particular church program, for investment or otherwise.

## Part II

### Effect of CPC Resolution and January 23, 2001 Presbytery Resolution

Two specifications of error suggest the question: "What 'rights' did CTPC receive under the November 12, 2000 CPC resolution or the January 23, 2001 presbytery resolution?"

*Specification of Error Number 4: SPJC erred in disregarding CTPC's contractual right and the promise of Presbytery.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*Specification of Error Number 5: SPJC erred in neglecting the common understanding of the Chesterbrook Dissolution Resolution of January 23, 2001, which resulted in denying CTPC's right to the property.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

The January 23, 2001 resolution granted "authorized use" to CTPC and required it to assume "all the responsibilities thereof." This authorized use was limited by the "development of 'Parcel C' anticipated in paragraph 12." That paragraph expressly "recognized that access to 'Parcel C' will be by way of 'Parcel B' or other access over a portion of 'Parcel A'." The difference in understanding between CTPC and Presbytery about the extent of CTPC's rights in Parcels A and B under this language (including its right to object to the location of an easement) did not emerge until 2004 when Fairfax County officials determined that access to the assisted living facility would cross both Parcels A and B. In light of the language of paragraph 12 of the 2001 resolution, the SPJC correctly held that CTPC's right to use Parcels A and B was subject to the placement of an easement over either Parcel A or B for purposes of access to Parcel C.

## Part III

### Effect of 2004 Presbytery Resolution

Specification of error number 2 suggests the question: "Was the CTPC divested or deprived of property rights by the May 25, 2004 resolution of Presbytery?"

*Specification of Error Number 2: SPJC erred in allowing a presbytery to use a resolution to dispose of a particular church's property right that has been well settled without consent of the particular church.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

After February 1, 2001, CTPC was authorized to use the church property. No right previously given to CTPC was taken away from it by the May 25, 2004 resolution. Rather, the May 25, 2004 resolution gave CTPC full rights and responsibilities for the church property under Chapter VIII of the *Book of Order*.

Part IV  
Necessity for Congregational Meeting

Specifications of error numbers 1, 7, and 8 suggest the question: "Was a meeting of the CTPC congregation required to give consent to the placing of easements in May 2004?"

*Specification of Error Number 1: SPJC erred in making a decision which contradicted its own finding.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*Specification of Error Number 7: SPJC agreed with CTPC's position that the May 25, 2004 resolution required approval of the CTPC congregation. As Presbytery filed no appeal, the SPJC's finding is final and CTPC's plea should be granted.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*Specification of Error Number 8: SPJC erred in failing to correct and prevent the irregularities and delinquencies of Presbytery, as required by D-2.0101.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

In specification of error number 1, CTPC contends that SPJC correctly recognized that there should have been a meeting of CTPC congregation "to approve and accept" the May 25, 2004 resolution. CTPC further argues that SPJC then erred when it did not grant relief to it based on the fact that no such meeting occurred, even while suggesting that such meetings "should" occur "in all future matters of this sort having to do with property issues and congregations."

Before May 25, 2004, CTPC had only been "authorized to use" Parcels A and B, modified by the possible future easements provided for in paragraph 12 of the resolution of January 23, 2001. That authority was not diminished by the relocation of the proposed access road easement at the direction of the Fairfax County officials. Yet SPJC's recognition of the wisdom of holding a congregational meeting to discuss the effect of the new easement was reasonable in light of the pattern of miscommunication and misunderstanding shown in this case.

However, a requirement for such a meeting in "all future matters of this sort having to do with property issues and congregations of the Presbytery" goes too far. Congregational meetings are not required for every matter having to do with property issues. The *Book of Order* requires congregational meetings in the limited situations enumerated in Chapters VII and VIII. G-7.0304 states, "Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall include . . . [m]atters related to buying, mortgaging, or selling real property (G-8.0500) . . ."

No business other than those items listed in G-7.0304a may be transacted at a congregational meeting. (G-7.0304b.) G-8.0501 notes that many property related transactions also require the written permission of presbytery:

A particular church shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any of its real property and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the particular church.<sup>1</sup>

SPJC's more expansive recommendation for congregational meetings is one that congregations and presbyteries may follow, but are not required to follow. Increasing the opportunities for communication and consensus, whether by congregational meetings, informational meetings, or correspondence, is desirable, even if not constitutionally mandated.

Part V  
Procedural Errors

Specifications of error numbers 6, 9 and 10 allege procedural errors by the SPJC.



*Specification of Error Number 6: SPJC erred in using materials that were part of the process of reconciliation against the party who participated in the process.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

This specification of error largely relies on a “Minority Report” in the SPJC decision, which concluded that the content of the May 25, 2004 resolution was “implicitly accepted by CTPC’s participation and approval in drafts of the resolution as early as April 2004.” CTPC, using a civil court standard, argues that SPJC made improper use of “materials” that were part of an offer of compromise. This civil court standard is not applicable in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s judicial process.

It should be noted that the designation “Minority Report” in the SPJC decision is not in common use in the ecclesiastical process of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and should normally have been written as a dissent. Neither a dissent nor a minority report has binding authority.

Moreover, in answer to this specification, the record in this case does not demonstrate that CTPC approved or accepted the resolution before it was presented to Presbytery for debate and vote on May 25, 2004.

*Specification of Error Number 9: SPJC erred in ruling that Presbytery’s violation of its own Manual “does not rise to the level of constitutional error.”*

This specification of error is not sustained.

SPJC correctly determined that Presbytery’s failure to include a copy of the May 25, 2004 resolution in the mailing that preceded the stated May 2004 Presbytery meeting did not rise to the level of constitutional error. (*Hope, et al, v. Presbytery of San Francisco, Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 455*)

Moreover, Presbytery’s manual states: “Docket and Packet: The packet containing materials to be voted on will be mailed prior to each regular meeting.” The manual does not state that *all* materials to be voted on will be mailed in advance.

*Specification of Error Number 10: SPJC erred in allowing a non-member of Presbytery who is not subject to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be a party to the Presbytery Resolution.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

Presbyteries and congregations are free to transact business with non-members and may take actions and pass resolutions that address their dealings with non-members. G-15.0105 states:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will initiate and respond to approaches for conversation and common action with movements, organizations, and agencies of the business, educational, cultural, and civic communities that give promise of assistance toward accomplishing the mission of the Church in the world.

#### Part VI Factual Errors

*Specification of Error Number 11: SPJC erred in disregarding the evidence admitted, and the undisputed facts and circumstances, which resulted in a denial of justice.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

CTPC alleges that certain evidence was disregarded by SPJC, resulting in a denial of justice. That certain facts were not mentioned in SPJC’s decision does not mean they were not considered by SPJC. Moreover, factual determinations made by SPJC, as a trier of fact, have a presumption of correctness and are not to be disturbed on appeal unless they are plainly wrong, without supporting evidence or manifestly unjust (*Hardwick v. Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of North Carolina, Minutes, 1983, Part I, p. 45*). CTPC has not met the burden articulated in *Hardwick*.

According to CTPC, the evidence shows that Presbytery acted contrary to the expressed intent of the parties with respect to the January 23, 2001 resolution and that Presbytery representatives were less than forthcoming with CTPC. The SPJC, as the trier of fact, did not find improper motives or dishonesty, but a profound breakdown in communication between CTPC and the Presbytery. CTPC’s quest for accountability and integrity reflects its commitment to our polity and deep respect for Presbytery. In seeking forgiveness, reconciliation and closure, Presbytery demonstrated its sensitivity to the means and manner by which it exercised its authority and power.

Church discipline is a power to be used for “building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, not for punishing. It should be exercised as a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath so that the great ends of the Church may be achieved, that all children of God may be presented faultless in the day of Christ.” (D-1.0102) Although the ruling of SPJC is now affirmed, it is this Commission’s hope that this process has helped remove discord and division between CTPC and Presbytery.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic be affirmed, with the clarification that the Constitution requires a congregational meeting on property matters only as specified in G-7.0304, G-8.0501, and G-8.0502.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the National Capital Presbytery report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church report this Decision and Order to the Session at its next meeting, that the Session enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-participants

William Carlough, P. David Snellgrove, and Judy Woods were not present and took no part in this case. Christopher Yim was recused from participation in this case.

Dated this 12th day of February, 2006.

b. Remedial Case 217-13

----- John R. Frye, Complainant/Appellee,	)	
	)	
	)	DECISION AND ORDER
v.	)	
	)	Remedial Case 217-13
Session of First Presbyterian Church, Tecumseh, Michigan,	)	
Respondent/Appellant. -----	)	

Headnotes

- (1) Inactive member’s request for restoration to the active roll: At a minimum, a session must convene to consider an inactive member’s request for restoration to the active roll.
- (2) Timeliness of filing a remedial complaint: A complaint filed within ninety days of the Session’s response to an inactive member’s request for restoration to the active roll is timely filed within the provisions of D-6.0202a.
- (3) Session’s discretion in determining active members: In determining active membership, a session has broad discretion, but its exercise of that discretion is limited by G-5.0202, G-10.0102b and s, and G-10.0302a(2)(a).
- (4) Standard of review: A permanent judicial commission shall not substitute its judgment for that of a session absent a showing that the session did not act “reasonably, responsibly, and deliberately within the Constitution of the church.” (*Simmons v. Presbytery of Suwannee, Minutes*, 1985, Part I, p.114.)

Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) on appeal filed by Respondent/Appellant Session of First Presbyterian Church of Tecumseh, Michigan, (Session) from a decision by the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant (SPJC) dated July 14, 2005. This Commission finds that it has juris-

diction, that Session has standing to appeal, that the appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

#### Appearances

John R. Frye, Complainant/Appellee (Frye), was represented by Edward H. Koster; Session was represented by Gregory Grover and William Wise.

#### History

On March 28, 2002, Session took action to place John and Marcia Frye on the roll of inactive church members. The Fries were notified of this decision by letter from Session on April 17, 2002.

On March 31, 2004, Frye requested by letter to Session that it reverse the allegedly improper action taken in April, 2002, and restore the Fries to active membership.

Frye received an unsigned letter dated April 13, 2004, purportedly from Session, stating that his request fell under the provisions of D-2.0202, and therefore it was not timely.

At its meeting on April 22, 2004, Session removed the Fries from the membership roll.

On June 22, 2004, Frye filed a remedial complaint with the Presbytery of Maumee Valley, complaining that in its letter of April 13, 2004, the Session failed to reinstate Frye to the active roll.

On September 4, 2004, four members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Maumee Valley (PPJC) ruled that Frye had no standing to file the complaint because he was no longer a member of the church against which the complaint was directed. No other findings were made. On October 21, 2004, counsel for Frye requested a full PPJC hearing. Following a hearing on March 15, 2005, the PPJC ruled that it had jurisdiction; that Frye did have standing; that the complaint stated a claim on which relief could be granted; but that the complaint was not timely filed, because all aspects of the complaint related only to the Session action of March 28, 2002.

On April 6, 2005, Frye appealed the PPJC decision to the SPJC. Following a hearing on July 14, 2005, SPJC sustained in part the PPJC decision, concluding that the complaint was timely filed only with regard to Session's April 13, 2004 response or failure to respond to Frye's request to be restored to the active roll.

Session filed the present appeal and a request for stay of enforcement on August 26, 2005. The request for stay was granted. The GAPJC heard the appeal on February 10, 2005.

#### Specification of Error

Specification of Error: The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant erred in finding that the complaint was timely filed.

#### The specification of error is not sustained.

The complaint was timely filed with respect to the Session's response or failure to respond to Frye's letter of March 31, 2004. According to the present record, Session failed to meet to consider Frye's request to be restored to active membership. Instead, in an unsigned letter purportedly from Session dated April 13, 2004, Frye's request was summarily rejected as untimely. On June 22, 2004, Frye filed a complaint with the PPJC alleging a delinquency in the issuance of the April 13, 2004, letter. This complaint was initiated within ninety days of Frye's receipt of the unsigned letter, and therefore within the ninety-day time limit prescribed in D-6.0202a. On remand, the PPJC should address whether Session's process for considering Frye's request to be restored to the active roll was appropriate.

On remand it will also be the PPJC's task to determine what, if any, relief is appropriate. The *Book of Order* grants a session "the responsibility and power to receive members" (G-10.0102b), to keep rolls (G-10.0102s), and to determine whether a person is "active in the church's work and worship" (G-10.0302a(2)(a)). A session's exercise of its discretion in matters concerning membership is broad, and a permanent judicial commission shall not substitute its judgment for that of a session absent a showing that the session did not act "reasonably, responsibly, and deliberately within the Constitution of the church." (*Simmons v. Presbytery of Suwannee, Minutes* 1985, Part I, p.114). Constitutional bounds include the limitations that the "conditions of active membership are to be "consistent with the order and confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" (G-5.0202) and that "membership shall not be denied to any person because of race, economic or social circumstances, or any other reason not related to profession of faith" (G-10.0102b).

Decision and Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Maumee Valley convene and conduct a trial limited to an examination of the Session’s process in responding or failing to respond to Frye’s request of March 31, 2004, to be restored to the active roll of the First Presbyterian Church of Tecumseh, Michigan.

The Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission shall convene the trial within ninety days of this decision.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Maumee Valley report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of First Presbyterian Church, Tecumseh, Michigan report this Decision and Order to the Session at its first meeting after receipt, that the Session enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing the entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-participants

William Carlough, P. David Snellgrove, and Judy Woods were not present and took no part in this case.

Dated this 12th day of February, 2006.

c. Remedial Case 217-14

-----	)	
The Session of the Concord Liberty Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	
	)	ORDER FOR DISMISSAL
The Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church	)	
(U.S.A.); The Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity and Purity of	)	Remedial Case 217-14
the Church to the 217th General Assembly (2006), a Committee of the	)	
General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and Clifton	)	
Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian	)	
Church (U.S.A.),	)	
Respondents.	)	
	)	
-----	)	

This remedial case came before this Commission on a Complaint of original jurisdiction filed by the Complainant, The Session of the Concord Liberty Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), against The Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); The Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church to the 217th General Assembly (2006), a Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), dated November 18, 2005, and filed with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on November 21, 2005. Respondents filed an Answer to the Complaint and a Motion to Dismiss the Statement of Complaint on December 16, 2005.

The Executive Committee of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly issued a Preliminary Order and Order for Dismissal on December 19, 2005. There has been no request by the Complainant to petition the full Permanent Judicial Commission for a hearing on the Order for Dismissal on jurisdictional grounds.

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission finds that the Commission has jurisdiction, that the Complainant has standing to file the Complaint, and that the Complaint was properly and timely filed. The Commission finds, however, that the Complaint fails to states a claim upon which relief can be granted. The report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church is only a recommendation to the 217th General Assembly (2006), and has no force or effect without further consideration and action by the General Assembly. Therefore, the recommendations proposed in that

report, which the Complaint challenges as “irregularities,” do not constitute “actions” that are subject to remedial attack at this time. See D-2.0202a.

The Permanent Judicial Commission dismisses the Complaint in the above-captioned matter on the grounds that the Complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

Dated the 12th day of February, 2006.

d. Remedial Case 218-01 (Formerly 217-15)

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 Session of Colonial Presbyterian Church, Kansas )  
 City, Missouri, )  
 Complainant/Appellant, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 Session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, )  
 Overland Park, Kansas, )  
 Respondent/Appellee. ----- )

DECISION AND ORDER

Remedial Case 218-01  
 (formerly 217-15)

Headnotes

(1) Sufficiency of Session Examination of Elders-elect: Session examination must meet the *Wier* standard “if the governing body has reasonable cause for inquiry *based on its knowledge of the life and character of a candidate*, it has a positive obligation to make due inquiry and uphold all of the standards of ordination and installation” [emphasis added]. However, the governing body must have “direct and specific knowledge that such a person is in violation of the ordination and installation standards of the *Constitution*” (*Wier v. Session, Second Presbyterian Church of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 339*).

(2) Pleading Standards for Failure to State a Claim: “A permanent judicial commission must assume the truth of the facts alleged in the complaint and then determine whether those assumed facts warrant any relief” (*McKittrick v. Session, West End Presbyterian Church of Albany, New York, Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 272-274*).

(3) Alternative Resolution: Attention of all ... is directed to the Biblical obligation to resolve disputes without strife and to avoid judicial process when possible (D-1.0103P). The Presbytery and parties are urged and encouraged to explore alternative dispute resolution as provided by G-9.0106 and particularly the possibility of special administrative review as provided by G-9.0409a.

Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) on appeal by the Session of Colonial Presbyterian Church (Colonial) from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Mid-America (SPJC) to dismiss a Remedial Complaint against the Session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church (GCPC) for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, the Appellant has standing to appeal, the appeal was properly and timely filed, and the appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

Appearances

The Session of Colonial Presbyterian Church, Complainant/Appellant, was represented by Ryan G. Terril. The Session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Respondent/Appellee, was represented by Michael D. Hockley and Ky A. Weekley.

History

In April, 2004, the Session of GCPC initiated a series of congregational discussions and circulated mailings to prepare the congregation for the election of officers in May. These included a session letter to the congregation, a summary chart of *Book of Order* provisions, a series of questions and answers, an election “roadmap,” and a voting process chart, among others. These discussions and mailings centered on the constitutional, biblical, and confessional issues of ordination standards,

specifically the standard laid out in G-6.0106b, requiring “fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.” The pastor preached at least two sermons on the topic, one on the day of the election. On May 16, 2004, the congregation elected the slate of officers.

At the June, 2004, meeting of Presbytery of Heartland Committee on Ministry (COM), members expressed concern about the election of a woman “thought to be a lesbian” to the session of GCPC. An appointed task force of COM met with representatives of GCPC on June 24, 2004. The GCPC group consisted of its three pastors, eight elders, and the four elders-elect. A discussion of constitutional issues ensued. The COM report concluded that “the congregation was very well prepared for this particular election of officers.” The record of this case does not show that the COM took further action.

Subsequently, the four elders-elect were ordained and/or installed on July 18, 2004.

On September 13, 2004, the session of Colonial made a written request to the session of GCPC to cure an alleged delinquency in the ordination and installation of one or more elders. The session of GCPC did not act to correct the alleged delinquency at its next stated meeting on September 20, 2004. Colonial asked the GCPC session for the questions used to examine elders-elect. In a subsequent (undated) written communication, an elder from GCPC described their examination process as follows:

- a. The discussion by them of their personal faith journey. Two questions were then asked of all elder designates:
  - i. How do you understand your role as an elder, if ordained; and
  - ii. Having completed your training (in the doctrine, government and discipline of the church and in the duties of Elder), what concerns do you have about fulfilling your role as an Elder?
- b. The Elder candidates are then asked the constitutional questions in G-14.0207.

On October 13, 2004, Colonial filed a complaint with Presbytery of Heartland Permanent Judicial Commission (PPJC) against the GCPC session claiming an irregularity and a delinquency in the examination, ordination, and installation of its elders-elect.

In December, 2004, the PPJC moderator and clerk examined the papers and found that the Complaint did not state a claim upon which relief can be granted (D-6.0305d). On January 31, 2005, Colonial challenged the findings of the moderator and clerk. The PPJC on March 10, 2005, upheld the findings of the moderator and clerk and dismissed the Complaint for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

On April 20, 2005, Colonial appealed the decision of the PPJC to the SPJC. The SPJC held a hearing on October 28, 2005, and issued a decision upholding the decision of the PPJC, thus dismissing the case for failure to state a claim under D-6.0305d.

Colonial filed the Notice of Appeal to this Commission on December 15, 2005. This Commission accepted the appeal and heard the arguments of the parties on July 28, 2006.

#### Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1: The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Mid-America committed an injustice in the process when it ruled that Appellant’s Complaint failed to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.*

This specification of error is sustained.

The Complaint alleges that the session failed to conduct sufficient inquiry consistent with the standard set forth in *Wier v. Session, Second Presbyterian Church of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 339* and specifically failed to inquire of each of the elders-elect as to whether he or she was living in compliance with G-6.0106b. Colonial’s allegations are based on materials distributed to the congregation during a period of education and discernment leading up to the congregation’s election of four persons to serve as elders as well as a report from the COM. The materials cited in the Complaint include a letter from the session to the congregation dated March 30, 2004.<sup>2</sup>

The *Wier* case states that “if the governing body has reasonable cause for inquiry based on its knowledge of the life and character of a candidate, it has a positive obligation to make due inquiry and uphold all of the standards of ordination and installation.” The *Wier* case further states, however, that the governing body must have “direct and specific knowledge that

such a person is in violation of the ordination and installation standards of the Constitution. A hunch, gossip or stereotype is not a sufficient ground to compel a governing body to make *further* inquiry” [emphases added].

The crux of the Complaint is whether GCPC session had reasonable cause for further inquiry of the elders-elect as to their willingness to uphold all the standards for ordination and installation.

Since this appeal is limited to the preliminary jurisdictional question of whether or not the Complaint states a claim upon which relief can be granted (D-8.0301), the decision must address only that narrow issue. The pleading standard for failure to state a claim is clearly articulated in *McKittrick v. Session, West End Presbyterian Church of Albany, New York, Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 272–274*:

In ruling on a motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim, a permanent judicial commission must assume the truth of the facts alleged in the complaint and then determine whether those assumed facts warrant any relief.

At this stage of the proceeding, this Commission is compelled to accept as true the allegation in the Complaint that the GCPC session may have had cause for further inquiry based on its professed knowledge of the life and character of the elders-elect.

It therefore cannot be said with certainty that this Complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. If the facts alleged in this Complaint are assumed true *only* for the purposes of deciding the preliminary jurisdictional questions, the case must be accepted for trial by the PPJC. With the presentation of evidence and witnesses, the PPJC will have the opportunity to deliver a decision on the Complaint in full.

Accordingly, the decision of the SPJC is reversed on the narrow question of whether the GCPC session conducted a sufficient examination of one or more elders-elect prior to ordination and installation.

*Specification of Error No. 2: The SPJC erred in not applying proper standards to its review of the evidence and authorities in reaching its decision.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

Because this Commission is deciding preliminary jurisdictional questions, and not reviewing evidence presented at a trial, this specification of error is not sustained.

#### Decision

There are sufficient allegations presented in this Complaint, that, if assumed true, would state a claim upon which relief could be granted. The assumption of truth of alleged facts is only for the purpose of determining this preliminary jurisdictional question. The ultimate determination of whether or not those facts alleged are indeed true is properly left to the trier of fact. If it is determined that the session’s examination of elders-elect was not sufficient, then the presbytery has the authority to require that future examinations be conducted in compliance with the Constitution.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Mid-America be reversed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Heartland be reversed, that all the preliminary jurisdictional questions be answered in the affirmative, and that this Complaint proceed to trial on the facts unless an alternative resolution is achieved.

The attention of all parties is directed to D-1.0103. In the spirit of this provision, this Commission strongly urges and encourages the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission to explore alternatives to resolve this case between the parties, including allowing time for the Presbytery to consider using a special administrative review of the elder-elect examination process of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church.

If a special administrative review is conducted by the Presbytery, it will determine, in accordance with G-9.0409a, whether the examination:

- (1) was regular and in accordance with the *Constitution*;
- (2) was prudent and equitable; and

(3) was faithful to the mission of the whole church.

If the dispute between the parties is not resolved by means of a special administrative review or other alternative dispute resolution processes in accordance with G-9.0601, the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission shall proceed with the trial on the merits of the case. Whether the case goes to trial or an alternative method of resolution is used, the parties are enjoined to be mindful of the standards set in the *Wier* case.

The trial, should it be necessary, shall commence by June 1, 2007.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Colonial Presbyterian Church, Kansas City, Missouri, report this decision to the Session at its first meeting after receipt, that the Session enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Overland Park, Kansas, report this decision to the Session at its first meeting after receipt, that the Session enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Heartland report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Mid-America report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-participants

Mildred Morales was not present and took no part in this case. Judy Woods took no part in the decision in this case.

Dated this 16th day of October, 2006.

e. Remedial Case 218-02 (Formerly 217-16)

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 Patricia Fair-Booth, )  
 Complainant/Appellant, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 National Capital Presbytery, )  
 Respondent/Appellee. )  
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DECISION AND ORDER  
 Remedial Case 218-02  
 (formerly 217-16)

Headnotes

(1) Standing. An elder-commissioner enrolled at a particular presbytery meeting has standing to file a complaint against that presbytery concerning an irregularity or delinquency which occurred during that period of enrollment (D-6.0202a(1)).

(2) Presbytery Membership. A presbytery is a corporate expression of the church consisting of all the churches and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within a certain district. When a presbytery meets, each church shall be represented by an elder or elders commissioned by the session (G-11.0101). Duly elected elder-commissioners become temporary members of presbytery for a particular meeting only when they present themselves at the meeting and are enrolled by the presbytery for that meeting. Their membership terminates upon adjournment of that meeting. Specific exceptions to this are noted in G-9.0203b and G-11.0101c.

(3) Enrollment of Elder-Commissioners at Presbytery Meetings. An elder-commissioner to presbytery is enrolled at a presbytery meeting only if he or she is present at the meeting and fulfills the presbytery's enrollment procedure. Such an elder is enrolled only for that meeting, and the elder's enrollment terminates when the meeting is adjourned.

(4) Parity between Elder-Commissioners and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. The *Book of Order* requires parity between ministers of Word and Sacrament and elder-commissioners in terms of voice and vote at meetings (G-



6.0302). This requirement for parity at meetings does not mean that there is parity in how ministers and elders can become members of a presbytery or in their privileges or authority outside of presbytery meetings.

#### Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) on appeal by Patricia Fair-Booth from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic (SPJC) to dismiss a Remedial Complaint against the National Capital Presbytery on the grounds that Fair-Booth lacked standing to bring her Complaint.

#### Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, the Appellant has standing to appeal, the appeal was properly and timely filed, and the appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under *Book of Order* D-8.0105.

#### Appearances

Patricia Fair-Booth, Complainant/Appellant, was present and represented by Mary Thomas. National Capital Presbytery, Respondent/Appellee, was represented by Stephen Morse.

#### History and Procedural Background

Patricia Fair-Booth (Fair-Booth) is a member of the session of the Church of the Redeemer (Church), a congregation in the National Capital Presbytery (Presbytery). In February 2005 the Church session elected Fair-Booth to a one-year term as one of its two commissioners to the Presbytery. Fair-Booth was unable to attend the Presbytery's stated meeting on September 27, 2005 due to health reasons. The Church's other commissioner was present at the meeting.

At the meeting the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry distributed and presented a recommendation to appoint an administrative commission for the Church. The recommendation was amended from the floor. The Presbytery approved the following amended motion:

The Committee on Ministry recommends that the presbytery appoint an Administrative Commission which will assess the situation and be empowered to act to dissolve the pastoral relationship and/or empowered to dissolve the session if it sees fit in accordance with the *Book of Order* (G-9.0505). Furthermore it recommends that the presbytery empower the Committee on Ministry Coordinating Team to appoint this Administrative Commission on its behalf.

On November 1, 2005 Fair-Booth filed a Remedial Complaint with the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic against the Presbytery. The Complaint, among other things, alleged that at its September 27, 2005, meeting, the Presbytery erred by appointing an administrative commission for the Church and by intervening in the affairs of the Church without the session's knowledge, request or approval. The Presbytery did not file an Answer to the Complaint as required by D-6.0303. Notwithstanding the absence of an Answer, the Moderator and Clerk of the SPJC proceeded with a preliminary examination of the Complaint and found that the SPJC had jurisdiction, Fair-Booth had standing to file the case, the Complaint was timely filed, and the Complaint stated a claim upon which relief could be granted. These findings were communicated to the parties by memorandum dated February 8, 2006.

The Presbytery did file an Answer on February 23, 2006 and made a timely challenge to the preliminary finding by the SPJC Moderator and Clerk that Fair-Booth had standing to file the Complaint. The Presbytery requested the opportunity to present evidence and argument, as provided for in D-6.0306a, in order to show that Fair-Booth did not have standing because there was no record that she had attended the September 27, 2005 Presbytery meeting or had been elected as a Presbytery commissioner by her session. Based on these allegations, the Presbytery moved to dismiss the case pursuant to D-6.0306c. Fair-Booth responded that she did have standing because she had been elected by her session as a commissioner to the Presbytery, that the Complaint was based on a series of erroneous actions taken by the Presbytery, and was not based solely on the Presbytery's actions at the September 27, 2005 meeting.

Both parties submitted briefs to the SPJC. In its brief, the Presbytery acknowledged that Fair-Booth was a duly-elected commissioner to the Presbytery but maintained that she was not present at the September 27, 2005 Presbytery meeting, and therefore did not have standing to bring the Complaint. The Presbytery contended that standing to complain about an action by the Presbytery was limited to "a minister or elder enrolled as a member of presbytery concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that period of enrollment..." (D-6.0202a(1)).

Fair-Booth acknowledged that she did not attend the September 27, 2005 meeting, but claimed that she had standing to complain because she was an "enrolled" member of the Presbytery, having been elected to serve as a commissioner to the Presbytery by the Church's session for a term that included the September 27, 2005 Presbytery meeting.

The SPJC conducted a hearing on March 27, 2006 on the issue of Fair-Booth's standing to bring this Complaint. Thereafter, the SPJC voted not to sustain the ruling by the SPJC Moderator and Clerk that Fair-Booth had standing as required by D-6.0305b because Fair-Booth "was not present at the meeting in which the irregularity allegedly occurred." As a result of this decision the Complaint was dismissed pursuant to D-6.0306c.

Fair-Booth appealed the SPJC decision to dismiss her Complaint to the GAPJC. The GAPJC heard the arguments of the parties on July 28, 2006.

#### Specification of Error

"The Synod of the Mid-Atlantic erred in its constitutional interpretation of the term 'enrolled' as it relates to the standing of elder-commissioners to file a complaint in a remedial case."

This specification of error is not sustained.

#### Decision

The sole issue in this case is whether a duly-elected elder-commissioner to a presbytery who did not attend a presbytery meeting has standing to file a remedial complaint against the presbytery for alleged irregularities that occurred during and prior to that meeting. The dispute concerns the difference between "membership" and "enrollment" in a governing body, in this case, a presbytery. The case illustrates the difference between ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are members of presbyteries with continuing membership status and responsibilities (G-6.0201), and elder-commissioners who are elected by sessions from a particular church but who are members of a presbytery only when enrolled at a presbytery meeting.<sup>3</sup> "Presbytery is a corporate expression of the church consisting of all the churches and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within a certain district. When a presbytery meets, each church shall be represented by an elder [or elders] commissioned by the session" (G-11.0101). Under G-10.0102p, the session elects commissioners to presbytery and is encouraged to elect commissioners for specified terms. Elders elected as commissioners become enrolled members of presbytery only when they present themselves at a particular meeting of the presbytery occurring during the term for which the session elected them, and comply with the steps for enrollment (*e.g.*, signing an enrollment sheet, completing an attendance form, checking in with the stated clerk or the clerk's designee, etc.).

Commissioning is not the same as enrollment. Whether elected for a single meeting or a longer term, an elected elder is "enrolled" only if he or she is present at a meeting and fulfills the presbytery's enrollment procedure. Such an elder is "enrolled" only for that meeting, and the elder's enrollment terminates when the meeting is adjourned. In this case Fair-Booth would have been an enrolled member of Presbytery had she attended the September 27, 2005 meeting and registered with the attendance sheet used by the Presbytery. Fair-Booth was not enrolled at that meeting and thus did not have standing to bring her Complaint. The Church's other commissioner was enrolled at the September 27, 2005 Presbytery meeting, and would have had standing to complain about actions taken at that meeting, but did not bring or join this case.

The requirement for enrollment, as separate from election for presbytery commissioners is consistent with the principle that lower governing bodies do not determine the membership of higher governing bodies. Rather, lower governing bodies elect commissioners to higher governing bodies.

The importance of attendance and enrollment at a presbytery meeting, as a prerequisite to the elder-commissioner's standing to complain about an action taken at the meeting, is not a mere technicality. The decisions of church governing bodies "should be founded on the revealed will of God" (G-1.0307). "Presbyters are ... to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ" (G-4.0301d). Presbyterians come together in governing bodies to deliberate and decide matters as a community of faith, open to the work of the Spirit among them. Voting by proxy is not allowed except in a corporate matter where civil law specifically requires that voting by proxy be permitted as to that particular matter (G-7.0404).

Fair-Booth argued that requiring elder-commissioners to enroll before being deemed a member of presbytery results in disparate treatment of elder-commissioners and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. However, the *Book of Order* states that ministers of the Word and Sacrament are members of a presbytery, not members of a particular church (G-6.0201). The *Book of Order* requires parity between minister and elder commissioners in terms of voice and vote at meetings (G-6.0302). This requirement for parity at meetings does not mean that there is parity in how ministers and elders can become members of a presbytery, or in their privileges or authority outside of presbytery meetings. A minister's continuing membership in a presbytery parallels an elder's continuing membership in a church, rather than an elder-commissioner's transitory status at a presbytery meeting.

Fair-Booth's contention that she is complaining about matters outside of the September 27, 2005 meeting does not change the analysis or outcome in this case. An individual who has been elected by a session to be that church's commissioner to presbytery meetings does not, by that act of election, have standing to complain about actions of the presbytery,

whether such actions occur in a meeting or outside a meeting of presbytery. Enrolled elder-commissioner members of presbytery have standing to complain only about things that happen at a meeting at which they were enrolled. A particular church and its session interact with the presbytery in many ways, while an elder-commissioner acts on behalf of a church only at presbytery meetings.

Fair-Booth lacks standing to bring her Complaint because she was not enrolled at the September 27, 2005 meeting. This does not mean that there are no checks on the presbytery's actions. Sessions can bring remedial cases against presbyteries (D-6.0202a(3)); ministers of the Word and Sacrament can bring remedial cases against presbyteries (D-6.0202a(1)); and individuals can bring disciplinary cases against other individuals within a presbytery (D-10.0102a). In this case, Fair-Booth acknowledged that other actions have been taken by her and others to challenge actions by the Presbytery concerning the Church.

Presbyteries should be attentive to the importance of rolls and enrollment records. Fair-Booth correctly noted that there are many reasons why it is important to keep complete and accurate records, including, for example, tracking of information about membership in specific categories (G-9.0105b). For purposes of enrollment, this Presbytery uses an attendance form that is to be completed by elder-commissioners and ministers and dropped into a box in order to record attendance at a meeting. While this method may be sufficient for preparing an attendance record to be included in the minutes of the meeting, it may be less than optimal for tracking "enrollment" or membership for other purposes. As this case illustrates, presbyteries should be deliberate and careful to record the attendance of those present at presbytery meetings and should maintain an accessible record of those elder-commissioners who are enrolled at each meeting. Such records may be needed, for example, for voting by ballot during a meeting.

This Commission acknowledges that situations that come about as a result of long-term, chronic or systemic conflict, such as this Complaint, are difficult to address in a remedial case. In such situations, churches and presbyteries are urged to be pastoral and prayerful in their response to one another and to consider other means of resolving conflicts as an alternative, or preliminary step, to judicial process.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic be affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the National Capital Presbytery report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absence

Mildred Morales was not present and took no part in this case.

Dated this 31st day of July, 2006.

f. Remedial Case 218-03

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The Session of the Palos Park Presbyterian Community )  
Church, )  
Complainant, )  
)  
v. )  
)  
The Advisory Committee on the Constitution of the )  
General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church )  
(U.S.A.), )  
Respondent. )  
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CONSENT ORDER  
Remedial Case 218-03

## Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) as a matter of original jurisdiction to adjudicate a Complaint filed with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on July 7, 2006.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission is the appropriate body before which a complaint against an entity of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is heard. The Complainant is a session of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and has standing to file the Complaint. The Respondent, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC), appeared by an Answer and a Motion to Dismiss dated July 28, 2006.

## Appearances

Gordon Fish, Amy McCracken, and James R. Tony, minister, (Tony) were Committee of Counsel for the Complainant. Stephen S. Grace and Justin M. Johnson were Committee of Counsel for the Respondent.

## Background

This case involves the responsibilities of the ACC when questions of constitutional interpretation arising from governing bodies or individuals are delivered to the ACC by the Stated Clerk pursuant to G-13.0112. On February 14, 2006, Winfield R. Jones, minister (Jones) and M. Douglas Harper, Jr., minister (Harper), submitted certain questions (Jones/Harper Questions) to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly (Stated Clerk). On February 14, 2006, Tony also submitted certain questions (Tony Questions) to the Stated Clerk. The Jones/Harper Questions and the Tony Questions posed issues of constitutional interpretation for the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2006). The Jones/Harper Questions and the Tony Questions were timely filed with the Stated Clerk, and they were referred to the ACC, pursuant to G-13.0112d.

On or about March 13, 2006, the ACC formulated its advice concerning the Tony Questions. On March 29, 2006, Mark Tammen, the Associate Stated Clerk assigned to staff the ACC, advised Tony, and possibly Jones and/or Harper, of the ACC action. It is not clear from the record what advice was formulated by the ACC with respect to the Jones/Harper Questions. On April 3, 2006, Jones and Tony requested the ACC to reconsider its advice (Jones/Tony Letter). On April 5, 2006, Harper wrote the ACC (Harper Letter), noting that the ACC had not given advice on the Jones/Harper Questions and urged that the ACC was required to do so.

On April 10, 2006, the ACC went into executive session during a conference call meeting and had before it the Jones/Tony Letter and the Harper Letter.<sup>4</sup> On April 11, 2006, the Office of the Stated Clerk advised Tony, and perhaps Jones and Harper, that in the executive session portion of the April 10, 2006, meeting, the ACC had reviewed its original advice, as requested by the Jones/Tony Letter and the Harper Letter, and had declined to change or reconsider its original actions. The ACC subsequently reported to the General Assembly, but the date(s) of such report(s) is/are unclear from the record.

On July 7, 2006, the Session of Palos Park Presbyterian Community Church (Session) filed a remedial complaint with this Commission against the ACC. On July 28, 2006, the ACC filed its Answer and a Motion to Dismiss the Complaint. A hearing on the Motion to Dismiss was held on October 13, 2006, after which the GAPJC entered a Decision denying the Motion to Dismiss and setting the case for trial.

During the pre-trial conference, the case was submitted to mediation by consent of the parties. The matter was subsequently settled as a result of the mediation. The settlement agreement included a provision that the agreement be entered as “a final decision and order in this matter.” In accordance with this provision, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission has adopted the order set forth below. The Commission thanks the mediator, Jane Fahey, minister, former moderator of the GAPJC, and the parties, for their diligent and tireless work in the mediation.

## Consent Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the following agreement of the parties is made the Consent Order of the GAPJC concerning the parties’ dispute:

The parties have agreed to conclude this case by agreement on the following issues and to the entry of their agreement as a final decision and order in this matter.

The Role of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution in Advising the General Assembly

With respect to all questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the Book of Order that have been referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) by the Stated Clerk (G-13.0112c), the parties agree that the ACC may include in its advice (*i.e.*, findings and recommendations under G-13.0112d) to the General Assembly, given no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly (G-13.0112b), a single response that collectively addresses plural questions, along with other responses directed to individual questions. The parties further agree that where the ACC chooses to issue a collective response, such a collective response must provide a reasonable person with sufficient basis to understand how the findings and recommendations in its collective response address every question posed. The ACC acknowledges that the Constitution obligates it to provide advice to the General Assembly that a reasonable person would recognize is responsive to every question requiring a constitutional interpretation (G-13.0112d), and the ACC will comply with this responsibility. See *Manual of the General Assembly Standing Rule A.5.a.*

The General Assembly’s Open Meeting Policy

The ACC acknowledges that it is an entity subject to the provisions of the General Assembly Open Meeting Policy. The ACC agrees that it will secure advice from the Office of the Stated Clerk about whether the Open Meeting Policy permits it to close its meeting to discuss a particular subject and, that prior to closing its meeting to discuss that subject, it will announce the advice it has received and record in its official record the advice it received and the reason it is going into executive session. Whenever the ACC considers or acts upon subjects not enumerated in section 3(a) of the Open Meeting Policy, such as a request for reconsideration of prior advice, the Policy obliges the consideration or action to be done in open session.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly report this Consent Order to the General Assembly at its first meeting after receipt, that the General Assembly enter the full Consent Order upon its minutes.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Palos Park Community Presbyterian Church report this Consent Order to the Session at its next meeting, that the Session enter the full Consent Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Consent Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Dated the 7th day of May 2007.

g. *Remedial Case 218-04*

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George R. Stewart,	)	
Complainant/Appellant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	DECISION AND ORDER
	)	FOR DISMISSAL
	)	
Mission Presbytery,	)	Remedial Case 218-04
Respondent/Appellee.	)	
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Headnotes

- (1) Mootness. When the relief requested has been achieved, the case is moot. There is no point in proceeding in a case in which the findings and conclusions cannot affect the final outcome.
- (2) Role of Permanent Judicial Commission. This Commission is not an advisory body for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), regarding matters relating to the Constitution, but is charged with deciding cases or controversies.
- (3) Annotations. In addition to the Constitution, the law includes authoritative interpretations of the General Assembly and decisions of the GAPJC. Annotations found in the *Book of Order: Annotated Edition* are not authoritative. The annotation for *Sheldon, et al. v. Presbytery of West Jersey* contained in the *Book of Order: Annotated Edition, 2006–2007*, is a misstatement of the cited case.

Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) on appeal by George R. Stewart (Stewart), minister, from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Sun (SPJC) to dismiss a remedial complaint against Mission Presbytery, which enrolled a candidate for minister of Word and Sacrament who was a self-acknowledged practicing lesbian woman living in a committed homosexual relationship with another woman.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, Stewart has standing to appeal, the appeal was properly and timely filed, and the appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

## Appearances

Stewart was present and was represented by Marvin D. Snodgrass. Mission Presbytery, Respondent/Appellee (Presbytery), was represented by Thomas A. Forbes. Linda Tyler, member of the committee of counsel for Presbytery, was also present.

## History

Presbytery held a stated meeting on October 10–12, 2005. In the call to that meeting, the Moderator stated:

An inquirer who is ready to be accepted as a candidate for ministry wishes to inform you that she is a lesbian and lives in a committed relationship. Although our *Book of Order* (G-14.0305a-i) requires those coming to be ordained to observe fidelity in marriage and chasteness in singleness, the *Book of Order* does not place this standard on those in the candidacy process.

At the stated meeting, Presbytery voted by a ballot vote to move the person from inquirer to candidacy on a vote of 169 in favor, 114 opposed, and none abstaining. Stewart, an honorably retired minister member, was present at the stated meeting of Presbytery on October 10–12, 2005. He initiated a remedial complaint against Presbytery dated January 9, 2006, in which the relief sought was “that the Synod of the Sun order Presbytery to remove [the candidate] from the roll of candidates for minister of the Word and Sacrament.”

The trial in the remedial case against Presbytery was heard by the SPJC on September 8, 2006. The SPJC, on a tie vote, failed to sustain the Complaint. This decision was appealed to the GAPJC by Notice of Appeal dated October 11, 2006.

GAPJC issued a Preliminary Order on October 20, 2006, accepting the case for hearing.

In the interim, the candidate by a letter dated November 17, 2006, to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry requested that her name be withdrawn from the roll of candidates. On March 3, 2007, Presbytery voted to remove her from the roll of candidates for minister of the Word and Sacrament. Following this action, Presbytery moved to dismiss the case on the grounds of mootness on March 6, 2007.

The Executive Committee of this Commission issued an Order for Dismissal dated March 23, 2007, on the grounds that the relief requested in Stewart’s Complaint dated January 9, 2006, has been granted and that there is no longer a case upon which relief can be granted as required by D-6.0301(3)e.

Stewart requested a hearing before the full Commission on March 28, 2007, on the Order for Dismissal. The Executive Committee of the GAPJC issued an Order for Hearing on April 4, 2007, limited to the issue of mootness. The hearing on the issue of mootness was heard by this Commission on May 4, 2007.

## Decision

The issue before this Commission is whether Presbytery’s removal of the candidate’s name from the roll of candidates for minister of the Word and Sacrament rendered this matter moot. In other words, should this action continue even though the relief requested by Stewart has been achieved?

Stewart, in his complaint and during the trial, made numerous challenges to the action of Presbytery at its stated meeting on September 8, 2006. However, Stewart consistently maintained that, as relief, the candidate should be removed from the roll of candidates for minister of Word and Sacrament. This was achieved at the March 3, 2007, presbytery meeting. Upon a review of the record in this case, this Commission finds that no further relief can be granted. When the relief requested has been achieved, the case is moot.

In response to the Order for Dismissal, Stewart argues that the case was directed to the Presbytery, not to the person who was advanced to candidate status. The complaint was not made against the Presbytery in the abstract, but in the context of the Presbytery’s specific action to enroll a candidate. Because the enrollment has been withdrawn by the Presbytery, the subject of the action no longer exists. There is no point in proceeding in a case in which the findings and conclusions cannot affect the final outcome.

Stewart also argues that Presbytery committed a variety of errors in the timing, location, and conduct of its October, 2005, meeting. Again, these allegations are only relevant in the context of the specific action challenged.

Stewart further argues that there is a “need for guidance” because the statements to the Presbytery and the SPJC cast doubt on the *Book of Order* requirements for candidates. This Commission is not an advisory body for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding matters relating to the Constitution, but is charged with deciding cases or controversies. However, this Commission notes with concern that the record shows that both the Presbytery and the SPJC appear to have relied on the *Book of Order: Annotated Edition* entry for the *Sheldon, et al. v. Presbytery of West Jersey, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 589*, case, rather than the language of the case itself. Such reliance was misplaced. The erroneous explanation given under G-14.0305d of the *Book of Order: Annotated Edition* to the *Sheldon* case provides “An inquirer may be received as a candidate even if not currently eligible for ordination because of G-6.0106b, but could not be ordained if found at the time for certification of readiness for ordination not to be in compliance.”

The annotation is a misstatement of the cited case. *Sheldon* concerned an inquirer being considered for candidacy who was a celibate gay man, and therefore eligible to become a candidate. Furthermore, the GAPJC specifically found in *Sheldon* that “... the evidence supports a determination that the candidate has not violated the standard of G-6.0106b.” *Sheldon* concludes by stating, “However, if the [Presbytery] should determine the Candidate to be ineligible for candidacy at some point in the future, the [Presbytery] should remove the Candidate’s name from the roll of candidates, as provided by G-14.0312.”

The correspondence in the record from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly also cites *Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Minutes, Part I, 2002, p. 339*, which is more relevant to this case: “If the governing body has reasonable cause for inquiry based on its knowledge of the life and character of the candidate, it has the positive obligation ... to uphold all the standards for ordination and installation.”

The task of this Commission is to consider and decide individual cases which come before it on the basis of the Constitution and the law of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In addition to the Constitution, the law includes authoritative interpretations of the General Assembly and decisions of the GAPJC. Annotations found in the *Book of Order: Annotated Edition* can be helpful to the Church as it seeks to be faithful in its life and service; however, they are not authoritative. The assistance that annotations offer to the church is as a guide to the deliverances of the bodies that have been accorded authority in our Constitution. To the extent that the misstatement in the *Book of Order: Annotated Edition* was relied upon by the Committee on Preparation of Ministry, the Presbytery, and the SPJC, it misled each body.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Order of Dismissal dated March 23, 2007, of the Executive Committee of this Commission is affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of Mission Presbytery report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Sun report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-participants

Mildred Morales was not present and took no part in this case.

Dated this 7th day of May, 2007.

h. Remedial Case 218-05

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 Douglas J Essinger-Hileman and )  
 Sandra D. Essinger-Hileman )  
 Complainants/Appellants, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 The Presbytery of Miami, )  
 Respondent/Appellee. )  
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DECISION AND ORDER

Remedial Case 218-05

## Headnotes

(1) Fundamental Fairness. Principles of fundamental fairness include reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard.

(2) Dissolution of a Pastoral Relationship by a Presbytery

(a) The *Book of Order* does not set forth a specific procedure to be followed when neither the congregation nor the pastor has requested dissolution, and no administrative commission has recommended or is empowered to act to dissolve the relationship.

(b) The matter of the dissolution of a pastoral relationship is so serious that ordinarily the pastor and the congregation should be given notice and an opportunity to be heard before a final vote to dissolve (G-11.01030).

## Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) on appeal filed by the Complainants/Appellants, Douglas J. Essinger-Hileman and Sandra D. Essinger-Hileman (Pastors) from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant (SPJC) dated September 7, 2006.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, the Pastors have standing to appeal, the appeal was properly and timely filed, and the appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

## Appearances

The Pastors appeared in person and without counsel. The Presbytery of Miami (Presbytery) was represented by W. McGregor Dixon.

## History

The Pastors first met with the Committee on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of Miami in September, 2004. Although questions were raised about their call, the COM approved their service as co-pastors of the United Presbyterian Church of Belle Center (Church), and the congregation subsequently voted to extend the call on October 10, 2004. At its meeting on November 9, 2004, the Presbytery received the Pastors as members and approved their installation as co-pastors of the Church.

Having received new information regarding the background and previous service of the Pastors, the COM held a special meeting on November 13, 2004, at which it rescinded its approval of the call and established a task group to meet with the parties, also making arrangements for financial compensation to the Pastors in the event their starting date at the Church was delayed. The scheduled start date of the Pastors was delayed by one day while the task group accomplished its work. The Pastors began work at the Church on November 16, 2004, upon e-mail approval by the COM.

At its November 30, 2004, meeting, the COM received the report of its task group, “rescinded its rescission,” and approved several recommendations intended to facilitate healthy pastoral relationships, including: the creation of a “companion group” to begin meeting with the Pastors as they began their ministry at the Church, a testing and counseling process for the Pastors at the Presbytery’s expense, and the completion of a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education by one of the Pastors, also at the Presbytery’s expense.

The Pastors were officially installed on January 8, 2005. The “companion group” met with them on a number of occasions over the next several months, reporting regularly to the COM. The initial reports were positive, but at its meeting on May 31, 2005, the COM approved an expenditure for the Pastors’ participation in the crisis process at the Midwest Career Development Center. At its July 26, 2005, meeting, the COM adopted a recommendation to invite the Session of United Presbyterian Church of Belle Center (Session) to request the formation of an Administrative Commission (AC) to the Church.

At a special meeting of the Presbytery on August 23, 2005, an AC was appointed by the Presbytery. The COM, the Pastors and the Session concurred in the appointment of the AC. The AC was granted the authority to assume original jurisdiction of the Church, if necessary, but was not granted authority to dissolve the pastoral relationships of the Pastors.



The AC conducted a congregation-wide listening process, and met on several occasions in the fall of 2005, including a lengthy meeting with the Pastors on November 13, 2005. The Pastors were placed on administrative leave at their own request from November 29, 2005, through January 21, 2006, during which time the Pastors agreed “to refrain from all pastoral responsibilities including preaching, pastoral calls, and pastoral contact with the parishioners, attending all church meetings, services, and congregational functions,” according to the minutes of the AC. On December 22, 2005, the AC met with the Pastors, at which time the possibility of the dissolution of their pastoral relationships was discussed openly.

On January 5, 2006, the AC held a joint meeting with the Session to which the Pastors were specifically invited and at which the Pastors were present. The Pastors were informed of the Session’s intent to pursue the dissolution of their pastoral relationships at the annual meeting of the congregation. The AC/Session meeting continued with open discussion of two severance package options which had been presented to the Pastors prior to the meeting. The Pastors were afforded the opportunity to state their views regarding the Session’s intentions and to openly question members of the Session.

At the conclusion of the AC/Session meeting on January 5, 2006, the Session adopted a motion to recommend that the pastoral relationships be dissolved as part of the congregation’s annual meeting scheduled for January 15, 2006. On January 12, 2006, the Pastors filed a complaint with the SPJC alleging irregularities in the action of the Session regarding this recommendation. On January 13, 2006, a stay of enforcement was issued resulting in the cancellation of the January 15, 2006, annual meeting.

On January 15, 2006, the AC “met informally” with the congregation to “provide the congregation with pastoral care” and to “allow them [to] ask questions or relay feelings over the Stay of Enforcement,” according to the minutes of the AC.

At a special meeting on January 17, 2006, the COM approved a recommendation to the Presbytery that it call a meeting of the congregation for January 29, 2006, for the sole purpose of considering a request for dissolution of the pastoral relationships. The Pastors were notified that this motion would be presented to the Presbytery at its meeting on January 21, 2006.

On January 19, 2006, the Pastors filed two additional complaints with the SPJC against the Presbytery claiming that the AC violated terms of the Stay of Enforcement by meeting with Church members on January 15, 2006, and requesting that the COM be prevented from bringing any action to call a congregational meeting to dissolve the pastoral relationships between the Pastors and the Church.

The Pastors were not present at the January 21, 2006, meeting of the Presbytery, at which the COM presented its recommendation that the Presbytery call a congregational meeting at the Church for January 29, 2006, for the sole purpose of considering a request for dissolution of the pastoral relationships. A substitute motion from the floor to dissolve the pastoral relationships in accordance with G-11.0103o “effective at the close of this presbytery meeting,” was adopted in place of the COM recommendation.

On April 20, 2006, the Pastors filed a Complaint with the SPJC regarding the Presbytery’s action to dissolve the relationships. The SPJC heard the case and issued its decision on September 7, 2006, which was to dismiss the Complaint.

The Pastors filed an appeal to the GAPJC on October 24, 2006. Oral arguments were heard on May 4, 2007.

#### Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1: The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant erred in that it manifested prejudice in the conduct of the case by limiting the Pastors’ closing argument but not limiting the Presbytery’s closing argument, by not answering all of the specifications of error raised by the Pastors, and by denying the Pastors’ lines of questioning in oral argument.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

This Commission finds that the SPJC properly and adequately addressed the Pastors’ complaint.

*Specification of Error No. 2: The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant erred by incorrectly interpreting the Constitution in its assertions that “the Book of Order fails to provide clear guidance with regard to a situation such as occurred in this case, where a motion to dissolve the pastoral relationships was made on the floor of the Presbytery, in the absence of the pastors,” and that the Book of Order’s requirements for due process are not applicable in this instance.*

This specification of error is sustained in part and not sustained in part.

This commission concurs with the result reached by the SPJC, but not with its rationale. The SPJC was correct in affirming the action of the Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationships between the Pastors and the Church. The SPJC was

unanimous in finding that the pastoral relationships in this instance were irretrievably broken and that the church's mission under the Word imperatively demanded dissolution in accordance with G-11.0103o. No remedial action or relief by any judicatory body will restore those relationships, and, therefore, the decision to dissolve the pastoral relationships should not be reversed. In this instance, there is a long history of efforts to address the difficulties in these pastoral relationships, and responsibility for these difficulties is shared by all parties. The Pastors admittedly knew that a process for dissolving the pastoral relationships had begun and matters concerning this process would be addressed at the January 21, 2006, Presbytery meeting. The Pastors made a decision not to attend the Presbytery meeting.

The docket for the Presbytery meeting included the COM's recommendation that a congregational meeting be called for the sole purpose of taking action on the Session's recommendation to dissolve the pastoral relationships, but did not state that the Presbytery would take action to dissolve the pastoral relationships at the Presbytery meeting. The Church's elder commissioner offered a substitute motion to dissolve the pastoral relationships in place of the motion to call a congregational meeting for the same purpose.

The *Book of Order*, G-14.0602 and G-14.0603, addresses procedures for the dissolution of a pastoral relationship when requested by the pastor and/or the congregation. Similarly, G-9.0505b(1) and (2) address dissolutions through an administrative commission. In this case, none of these procedures applied. The *Book of Order* does not set forth a specific procedure to be followed when neither the congregation nor the pastor has requested dissolution, and no administrative commission has recommended or is empowered to act to dissolve the relationship.

Under G-11.0103o, a presbytery has authority to dissolve a pastoral relationship "when it finds that the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it." The Presbytery's authority to act on this basis is not at issue here.

Principles of fundamental fairness include reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard (see *Lewis v. Presbytery of New York City, Minutes*, 1995, Part I, p. 133. Here, the Pastors had notice of the Presbytery meeting and could have spoken to the substitute motion if they had elected to attend the Presbytery meeting.

Under the unique circumstances of this case, it cannot be said that it was fundamentally unfair for the Presbytery to proceed with the substitute motion. It would have been a better practice, however, to provide for a fuller hearing of the issues before voting on the substitute motion, particularly when the motion at hand involved so serious a matter as the dissolution of pastoral relationships. Some means should have been devised by which the Pastors and the congregation were given notice and an opportunity to be heard before the final vote to dissolve was taken.

*Specification of Error No. 3: The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant erred by incorrectly interpreting the Constitution in not answering the Pastors' assertion that the Administrative Commission did not follow the provisions of G-9.0505 of the Book of Order and therefore determining that these provisions are applicable at the discretion of the presbytery.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

The provisions of G-9.0505 relate specifically to the decisions of administrative commissions. In the instant case, the AC had neither been granted the authority to dissolve the pastoral relationships nor had it decided to recommend to the Presbytery that the pastoral relationships be dissolved.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant is affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of Miami Presbytery report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### Absences and Non-participants

Mildred Morales was not present and took no part in this case.

Dated this 7th day of May, 2007.

i. *Disciplinary Case 218-06*

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Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Pres-	)	
bytery of Wyoming,	)	
Complainant/Appellant,	)	DECISION AND ORDER
	)	
v.	)	
	)	Disciplinary Case 218-06
Gordon R.J. King,	)	
Respondent/Appellee.	)	
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Headnotes

(1) Appeals in disciplinary cases: Appeals in disciplinary cases exist to review proceedings of lower governing bodies (D-13.0100) and not to retry issues of fact. The determinations of facts are made by the trier of fact, not the appellate body.

(2) Standard of review: Factual determinations made by a trier of fact have a presumption of correctness and are not to be disturbed on appeal unless they are “plainly wrong, without supporting evidence or manifestly unjust” (*Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church v. National Capital Presbytery, Minutes, 2006, p.493, and Hardwick v. Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of North Carolina, Minutes, 1983, Part I, p. 45*).

(3) Record of proceedings: While D-11.0601 does require an accurate verbatim recording of all testimony and oral proceedings at trial, it does not require such recording to be available during commission deliberations.

Arrival Statement

This disciplinary case came before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on an appeal filed by the Complainant/Appellant, Presbytery of Wyoming (Presbytery), from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains (SPJC) dated November 17, 2006.

Jurisdictional Statement

On December 4, 2006, the Executive Committee of the GAPJC found that this Commission has jurisdiction; that the Presbytery has standing to file the appeal; that the appeal was properly and timely filed; and that the appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal under D-13.0106b.

Appearances

The Presbytery was represented by Lynne Reade. Gordon R.J. King, minister, was represented by Elizabeth T. Dunning.

History

This disciplinary case began on May 31, 2003, with the filing of four charges by an Investigating Committee of the Presbytery against Mr. King. One of those charges became the subject matter of the instant case. On July 20, 2003, the SPJC accepted jurisdiction of the case on reference from the Presbytery (D-4.0100).

Previously, on July 16, 2002, Mr. King had been convicted in a Utah state criminal court for sexual abuse of a child and was incarcerated. This conviction comprised the substance of the original charge in this matter. Mr. King was unable to appear in person at an ecclesiastical trial because of his incarceration. Mr. King’s conviction was reversed and remanded in 2004 and Mr. King was released from prison. The release of Mr. King was communicated to the Investigating Committee in 2005. On April 21, 2006, the Presbytery Prosecuting Committee (Prosecuting Committee) filed a “Request for Action by the Synod PJC.”

On August 8, 2006, the Prosecuting Committee amended the original charge against Mr. King by replacing the charge based on his conviction with charges based on the specific alleged acts of sexual abuse of a minor child. The trial was held by the SPJC on October 16 and 17, 2006. The Prosecuting Committee presented no live witness testimony in support of its direct case at trial. In lieu of live testimony, the Prosecuting Committee attempted to enter the transcript of the Utah criminal prosecution into evidence. While the written transcript was not admitted into evidence, portions of that trial transcript were read

into the record, including testimony of the alleged victim and other witnesses. The ruling of the SPJC Moderator, affirmed by the SPJC, was “to proceed to hear the testimony on the transcript” without admitting the full transcript as an exhibit into evidence. Additional responsive and rebuttal witnesses were present and testified on behalf of both parties including Mr. King and another person who was present when the alleged incident occurred.

This is an appeal filed by the Presbytery on November 27, 2006, from the SPJC Decision finding that Mr. King was not guilty. This Commission heard the arguments of the parties on July 27, 2007.

#### Specifications of Error

Appeals in disciplinary cases exist to review proceedings of lower governing bodies (D-13.0100) and not to retry issues of fact. The determinations of facts have already been made by the SPJC, the trier of fact in this case.

Factual determinations made by a trier of fact are accorded a presumption of correctness. These determinations are not to be disturbed on appeal unless they are “plainly wrong, without supporting evidence or manifestly unjust” (*Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church v. National Capital Presbytery, Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 493, and Hardwick v. Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of North Carolina, Minutes, 1983, Part I, p. 45*). Those Specifications of Error addressing factual findings have been considered in light of this principle.

#### *Specification of Error No. 1. The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation*

(1) *by conducting the trial under outdated rules; and,*

(2) *by the Moderator stating on the record that the accused has “a right to be confronted by a witness.”*

#### This specification of error is not sustained.

(1) An outdated Preamble to the Rules of Discipline (D-1.0101) was read at the beginning of the trial. The current Preamble was read later during the trial. It was acknowledged by both parties at oral argument that this did not affect the conduct or outcome of the case.

(2) The Moderator did state during the trial that the accused has “a right to be confronted by a witness.” Nevertheless, the Moderator’s statement did not preclude the Prosecuting Committee from using transcript testimony at the trial. (See discussion in Specification of Error No. 2.)

*Specification of Error No. 2. The SPJC erred in refusing the Prosecuting Committee reasonable opportunity to present evidence, particularly by not receiving into evidence the entire criminal court transcript.*

#### This specification of error is not sustained.

The entire transcript from Mr. King’s state criminal trial was not admitted into evidence in written or testimonial form; however, all the testimonial portions of the trial transcript requested by the Prosecuting Committee were read into the record in question and answer form. Therefore, the SPJC’s refusal to admit the written transcript into evidence did not prejudice the Prosecuting Committee’s case.

#### *Specification of Error No. 3. The SPJC erred in receiving improper or declining to receive proper evidence or testimony.*

(1) *The Moderator and Clerk made reference to information received only by them and not shared with the rest of the SPJC.*

(2) *The criminal case was referred to as a “nullity” by the Moderator, other commissioners, and counsel for Mr. King.*

#### This specification of error is not sustained.

(1) The record shows that the SPJC was made aware of all pertinent information at the time of the trial, including the existence of briefs regarding transcript evidence.

(2) The SPJC understood that, although Mr. King’s conviction had at the time been reversed, the trial testimony that was read into the record was not a “nullity.”

#### *Specification of Error No. 4. The SPJC erred in that irregularities occurred in the proceedings, including*

- (1) *accepting a Reference from the Presbytery improperly;*
- (2) *not making evidence read into the record available to the SPJC during its deliberations; and,*
- (3) *allowing “wide-ranging” discussions during the trial.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

(1) Reference of a case from a lower to a higher governing body is both possible and proper in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as delineated in D-4.0000. The Presbytery itself requested Reference to the SPJC. While this step should have been documented, the Record does not show that the Reference was accepted irregularly (D-4.0201). The Prosecuting Committee asked the SPJC to proceed to trial and understood that the SPJC had accepted the Reference, as shown by the Prosecuting Committee’s “Request for Action by Synod PJC” dated April 21, 2006. The full SPJC and the parties proceeded to trial without objection, and thus must be presumed to have acquiesced in the acceptance of the Reference. Moreover, the Synod Decision states that the SPJC accepted jurisdiction on the PPJC’s request for Reference.

(2) While D-11.0601 does require an accurate verbatim recording of all testimony and oral proceedings at trial, it does not require such recording to be available during commission deliberations.

- (3) Regarding the “wide-ranging” discussions, the Record does not sustain the allegation of error (D-11.0304).

#### Decision

None of the Specifications of Error are sustained; therefore, the Decision of the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission is affirmed.

In Mr. King’s brief to the GAPJC, he questioned, for the first time, the Presbytery’s standing to appeal. He argued against the retroactive application of D-13.0102 and D-11.0502. [D-11.0502, as printed in the 2005–2007 *Book of Order*, conflicts with D-13.0102. This editorial error was corrected to conform to D-13.0102 by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution as published in the 2006 revision of the 2005–2007 *Book of Order*, in accordance with the *Manual of the General Assembly, 2006, A.5.a* and as reported to the 217th General Assembly (2006).] Because the Decision of the SPJC is being sustained on independently sufficient grounds, no determination has been made on the jurisdictional question raised by Mr. King.

This Commission recognizes the gravity of the allegations in this matter and the concerns raised in this case for the alleged victim and the rights of the accused (D-1.0101). This case illustrates the need for careful adherence to procedural safeguards as set forth in the Rules of Discipline in order that the rights and interests of all concerned are given due accord.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains is hereby affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Wyoming report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### Absences and Non-Participants

All members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission were present for the hearing and consideration of this case.

Dated this 29th day of July, 2007.

j. *Disciplinary Case 218-07*

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 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the )  
 Through the Presbytery of the Redwoods, )  
 Prosecuting Committee, )  
 Complainant, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 Jane Adams Spahr, )  
 Accused. )  
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ORDER REFUSING REQUEST  
 FOR REFERENCE

Disciplinary Case 218-07

This Request for Reference dated December 22, 2006, was submitted to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) by the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific (SPJC), under D-4.0100.

Whether to accept a reference from a lower body’s judicial commission is a matter of discretion to be exercised by the permanent judicial commission of the higher body. GAPJC considered the Request and hereby refuses to accept reference of this case. Responding to the reasons suggested by SPJC for the reference, GAPJC, under D-4.0203, states the following reasons for the refusal:

(1) A Matter of First Impression. While this may be a case of first impression as to an appeal by a prosecuting committee, now permitted under D-13.0102, it is not a matter of first impression as to the substance of the complaint. See, for example, *Benton et al., v. Presbytery of Hudson River, Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 586. The complexity of the issues invites consideration through the full judicial structure of the PC(USA).

(2) An Appeal Inevitable. Despite an assertion by SPJC that an appeal is inevitable, it is not for GAPJC to speculate whether a non-prevailing party at the SPJC level will appeal a decision of SPJC. Further, the judicial framework established by the *Book of Order* provides an intermediate level of appellate review at the synod level. Acceptance of this reference would deny the parties one level of review.

(3) Undue Expense and Delay. The expense and delay, if any, that may result from this refusal of reference is not likely to be extraordinary, as SPJC claims.

THEREFORE, this case is returned to the SPJC for action in accordance with D-4.0203.

Absences and Non-participants

Mildred Morales was not present and took no part in this case. June Lorenzo was recused and took no part in this case.

Dated this 7th day of May, 2007.

k. *Remedial Case 218-08*

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 Hyung K. Yun, Yun Soo Kim, Young Yoon )  
 Kim, Kwan Young Lee, Seung G. Ahn, In Bae )  
 Chun, Richard Yun, and Kee Ho Lim, )  
 Complainants/Appellants, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 Session of Korean United Presbyterian Church of )  
 New Jersey, )  
 Respondent/Appellee. )  
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DECISION AND ORDER  
 Remedial Case 218-08

Headnotes

(1) Dismissal on Preliminary Questions: A permanent judicial commission must assume the truth of the facts alleged when considering the factual allegations in a statement of errors contained in a notice of appeal (D-8.0202e). A per-

manent judicial commission may not dismiss an appeal on jurisdictional grounds under D-8.0301 and D-8.0302 on the basis that the appellant has not “proven” the alleged errors.

(2) Hearing Required: A decision to sustain or deny alleged errors is only appropriate after a hearing under D-8.0400 on the merits of the errors alleged.

#### Arrival Statement

This remedial case came before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on an appeal filed by the Complainants/Appellants, Hyung K. Yun, Yun Soo Kim, Young Yoon Kim, Kwan Young Lee, Seung G. Ahn, In Bae Chun, Richard Yun, and Kee Ho Lim, (Yun *et al.*) from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast (SPJC) dated December 7, 2006.

#### Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction to hear this appeal. Yun *et al.* have standing to appeal; the appeal was properly and timely filed<sup>5</sup>; and the appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

#### Appearances

Dr. Hyung K. Yun and Mr. Seung G. Ahn, Committee of Counsel, and Elder John Lee appeared on behalf of Yun, *et al.* Mr. H.K. Dong represented the Session of Korean United Presbyterian Church of New Jersey (Session).

#### History

This case arose from a remedial complaint filed by several members of the Korean United Presbyterian Church of New Jersey with the Presbytery of Newark concerning matters leading up to and at a congregational meeting for the election of elders and deacons on October 2, 2005. The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Newark (PPJC) tried the case on April 4, 2006.

The PPJC entered a Decision containing the parties’ acknowledgment that certain irregularities identified in the Complaint had occurred and their agreement to six specific remedies recommended by the PPJC. Those persons elected at the congregational meeting were later ordained and installed and are presently serving their terms of office.

Yun *et al.* appealed the PPJC Decision to the SPJC. The Notice of Appeal stated, as grounds for the appeal, items enumerated in D-8.0105, specifically that: the PPJC erred in constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g), there was injustice in the Decision (D-8.0105f), the Complainants were refused a reasonable opportunity to present evidence (D-8.0105b), there was manifestation of prejudice in the conduct of the case (D-8.0105e), and the PPJC hastened to a decision before the evidence or testimony was fully received (D-8.0105d). The Notice also included argument on the merits of each of those alleged errors.

The SPJC dismissed the appeal under D-8.0302c, holding that the Notice of Appeal did not state one or more of the grounds for appeal as set forth in D-8.0105. The SPJC Order of Dismissal also addressed the merits of the arguments of Yun *et al.* as set forth in their Notice of Appeal.

Yun *et al.* appealed the Order of Dismissal by the SPJC to this Commission, asserting that the SPJC had improperly dismissed the appeal. On July 27, 2007, the GAPJC heard oral argument on the issue of whether the SPJC appeal was properly dismissed based on a defective Notice of Appeal.

#### Specification of Error

*Specification of Error: The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast erred in dismissing the case when it ruled that the Notice of Appeal did not state one or more of the grounds for appeal set forth in D-8.0105.*

#### This specification of error is sustained.

The Notice of Appeal met all requirements of D-8.0202, including the requirement to state the errors of the PPJC that were the grounds for appeal to the SPJC. In its consideration of the preliminary questions, the SPJC was limited by D-8.0301 and D-8.0302 to a consideration of whether the Notice of Appeal met the requirements of D-8.0202e and D-8.0105. The SPJC erred because it considered the merits of the appeal prematurely and did not limit its decision at this preliminary stage to whether the Notice of Appeal was sufficient.

This Commission held in *Daniel J. McKittrick v. The Session of West End Presbyterian Church of Albany, New York, Minutes, 2003, Part I, p. 273*, that when a permanent judicial commission is considering a motion to dismiss a case for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, it must assume the truth of the facts alleged. The same standard must be applied when considering on a preliminary basis the factual allegations in a statement of errors contained in a notice of appeal

(D-8.0202e). A permanent judicial commission may not dismiss an appeal on jurisdictional grounds under D-8.0301 and D-8.0302 on the basis that the appellant has not “proven” the alleged errors. Rather, a decision to sustain or deny alleged errors is only appropriate after a hearing under D-8.0400 on the merits of the errors alleged.

Decision

This case is remanded to the SPJC for proceedings in accordance with D-8.0303 - .0307 and D-8.0400. In remanding this case to the SPJC, the parties and the SPJC are cautioned that the scope of the appeal is established by the Notice of Appeal of Yun *et al.* Therefore, the SPJC will need to consider whether the PPJC had jurisdiction to address errors alleged to have occurred before and at the congregational meeting, and whether the remedies requested in the appeal can be granted (*see* D-2.0202 and D-6.0200).

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that this case is remanded for further proceedings before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast as provided above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of the Korean United Presbyterian Church of New Jersey report this Decision and Order to the Session at its next meeting, that the Session enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly (D-8.0404f).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Newark report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Concurring Opinion

I concur in all respects with the majority decision in this case. However, it bears noting that the record in this case, as well as the exchange during the GAPJC hearing, reveal the lack of a common understanding among the parties of the appropriate issues to address at various stages of the appeal. Unfortunately, the SPJC’s dismissal deepened this misunderstanding. Rather than confining itself to the question of whether the Notice of Appeal stated one or more grounds for appeal as set forth in D-8.0105, the SPJC entertained issues that would have been addressed in a hearing on the merits. This decision, which was likely drafted with helpful intentions, only served to create further confusion.

In a denomination where we value our diversity, we must undertake the challenges presented when we have different cultures and different languages into which Presbyterian “culture” and polity are being translated. I therefore urge governing bodies to appreciate their critical role as “translator” of the *Book of Order* and its implementation at any given stage in cases such as these.

June L. Lorenzo

Dated this 29th day of July, 2007

I. Remedial Case 218-09

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Barlow J. Buescher, Dave R. Brown, Mary D. McGonigal, )  
 Jeanne Howell, Serena Sullivan, Eileen Dunn, Wayne H. Keller, )  
 Don E. Keller, Dwight W. Whipple, David R. Kegley, F. Mark )  
 Dowdy, Brian Heath, R. Sidney Cloud, Isaac H. Jung, Irene Van )  
 Arnam, Michael Baugh, Chuck Jenson, Donna Lee, and the )  
 Session of Lakewood Presbyterian Church, )  
 Complainants-Appellants, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 Presbytery of Olympia, )  
 Respondent-Appellee. )  
 )

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DECISION AND ORDER  
 Remedial Case 218-09



## Headnotes

(1) Authoritative Interpretation Did Not Change any Ordination Standard: While the General Assembly and the GAPJC may *interpret* ordination standards set forth in the *Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government, the Authoritative Interpretation of the Theological Task on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church adopted by the 217th General Assembly did not (and constitutionally could not) change any ordination standard, including the requirements set forth in G-6.0106b.

(2) Statements of “Essentials of Reformed Faith and Polity”: Attempts by governing bodies that ordain and install officers to adopt resolutions, statements or policies that paraphrase or restate provisions of the *Book of Order* and/or declare them as “essentials of Reformed faith and polity” are confusing and unnecessary, and are themselves an obstruction to constitutional governance in violation of G-6.0108a.

(3) Rationale for Decisions not Required but Recommended: While the Constitution does not require that a permanent judicial commission provide a rationale for every irregularity or delinquency assigned in the complaint when rendering a decision (D-7.0402), this Commission recommends that permanent judicial commissions provide enough explanation for the church to understand the reasons for decisions and be guided accordingly.

## Arrival Statement

This remedial case came before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on an appeal filed by the Complainants-Appellants, Barlow J. Buescher, Dave R. Brown, Mary D. McGonigal, Jeanne Howell, Serena Sullivan, Eileen Dunn, Wayne H. Keller, Don E. Keller, Dwight W. Whipple, David R. Kegley, F. Mark Dowdy, Brian Heath, R. Sidney Cloud, Isaac H. Jung, Irene Van Arnam, Michael Baugh, Chuck Jenson, Donna Lee, and the Session of Lakewood Presbyterian Church, (Buescher, *et al.*) from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Alaska-Northwest (SPJC) dated March 30, 2007.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Buescher, *et al.*, have standing to file the appeal, that the appeal was properly and timely filed and that the appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal required under D-8.0105.

## Appearances

Buescher, *et al.*, Complainants-Appellants were represented by Doug Nave and Dwight Whipple. The Presbytery of Olympia (Presbytery), Respondent-Appellee, was represented by William Holt and Pamela Anderson.

## History

At a meeting of the Presbytery held on September 21, 2006, at Church of the Indian Fellowship in Tacoma, Washington, the Presbytery adopted the following Resolution:

We hereby declare that in our discernment of the movement of the Holy Spirit, every mandate of the Book of Order (2005-2007) is an essential of reformed polity. Therefore, any violation of a mandate of the Book of Order (2005-2007) constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of reformed polity and thus presents a bar to ordination and installation.

Following this action, Buescher, *et al.*, filed a Complaint with the SPJC seeking remedial relief.

After a hearing held on March 20, 2007, in Seattle, Washington, in which both parties were represented by counsel, the SPJC entered its Decision affirming the action of the Presbytery.

Buescher, *et al.*, timely filed a Notice of Appeal dated March 20, 2007, with this Commission. On May 25, 2007, this Commission entered its Preliminary Order and Order for Hearing and on August 6, 2007, entered its Amended Order for Hearing setting a hearing on this matter at this Commission’s February, 2008, meeting. The appeal was heard by the GAPJC on February 8, 2008.

## Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1. The SPJC erred in allowing the Resolution to stand because it voids the presbytery’s responsibility to conduct meaningful examinations.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 2. The SPJC erred in allowing the Resolution to stand because it violates individuals' freedom of conscience and presbytery's duty to show mutual forbearance in non-essentials.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 3. The SPJC erred in allowing the Resolution to stand because it violates Olympia Presbytery's connectional responsibilities as part of the larger church.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 4. The SPJC erred in applying an improper standard of review.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 5. The SPJC erred by committing other procedural irregularities and injustice by failure to engage in transparent and reasoned decision making and by disregarding the immediate and harmful effects of the Resolution.*

This specification of error is sustained.

### Decision

The record on appeal and statements of counsel at oral argument suggest that the Presbytery adopted the Resolution in response to concerns among the churches and members of the Presbytery about the implementation of the Authoritative Interpretation of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church (Authoritative Interpretation) adopted by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 514–515). The Presbytery submitted that it desired to provide advice to potential candidates for the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament as to what the Presbytery would consider to be “essential” in the event the process set forth in the Authoritative Interpretation resulted in “scruples” by such candidates, as contemplated by the Authoritative Interpretation.

The Authoritative Interpretation provides that “*The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government of the *Book of Order* set forth the scriptural and constitutional standards for ordination and installation.” The Authoritative Interpretation clarifies procedures for applying those standards. G-6.0108b provides that the “decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the governing body in which he or she serves.”

The question herein is whether the Resolution is constitutional. This Commission reiterates the rationale contained in a case decided contemporaneously herewith, *Bush, et al., v. the Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (218-10, February 11, 2008):

The Authoritative Interpretation correctly states that the standards for ordination of officers in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are set forth in the *Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government. Section “b” of the Authoritative Interpretation states that “these standards are determined by the whole church, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries” (emphasis added). The constitutional process for amending ordination standards (or any other provision of the Constitution) is defined in Chapter 18 of the Form of Government. While the General Assembly and the GAPJC may interpret these standards, the Authoritative Interpretation did not (and constitutionally could not) change any ordination standard, including the requirements set forth in G-6.0106b. Similarly, no lower governing body can constitutionally define, diminish, augment or modify standards for ordination and installation of church officers (footnote omitted).

\* \* \*

[A]ttempts by governing bodies that ordain and install officers to adopt resolutions, statements or policies that paraphrase or restate provisions of the *Book of Order* and/or declare them as “essentials of Reformed faith and polity” are confusing and unnecessary. G-6.0108a sets forth standards that apply to the whole church. These standards are binding on and must be followed by all governing bodies, church officers and candidates for church office. Adopting statements about mandatory provisions of the *Book of Order* for ordination and installation of officers falsely implies that other governing bodies might not be similarly bound; that is, that they might choose to restate or interpret the provisions differently, fail to adopt such statements, or possess some flexibility with respect to such provisions. Restatements of the *Book of Order*, in whatever form they are adopted, are themselves an obstruction to the same standard of constitutional governance no less than attempts to depart from mandatory provisions.

In allowing the Resolution to stand, the SPJC disregarded such immediate and harmful effects as those described above.

Therefore, this Commission finds the Resolution to be unconstitutional.

If there were concerns in the Presbytery about the Authoritative Interpretation and its impact on freedom of conscience, *Bush* clarifies the issue:

While G-1.0301 permits broad freedom of conscience for members of the church, “in becoming a candidate or officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds” (G-6.0108b). G-6.0108a defines the limits of this freedom of conscience for ordained church officers. It first states the requirement that all church officers adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity as expressed in the *Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government (footnote omitted). It next assures freedom of conscience, but *only* with respect to the interpretation of Scripture. Even then, freedom of conscience is permitted only to the extent that it (a) is not a serious departure from the essential standards of Reformed faith and polity, (b) does not infringe on the rights and views of others, and (c) does not obstruct the constitutional governance of the church.

By declaring in advance the mandates to be “essentials,” and by establishing in advance the mandates to be an absolute bar to ordination and installation, the Presbytery violated G-6.0108 and the Authoritative Interpretation.<sup>6</sup> As was stated in the 1927 Report of the Special Commission of 1925 (the “Swearingen Commission Report”) Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1927, Part I, pp. 78–79):

One fact often overlooked is that by the Act of 1729, the decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be in specific cases. It was no general authority that might be stated in exact language and applied rigidly to every case without distinction. It was an authority somewhat undefined, to be invoked in each particular instance. . . . It was clearly the intention that this decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be made after the candidate had been presented and had declared his [or her] beliefs and stated his [or her] motives personally, and after the examining body. . . . had full opportunity to judge the man himself [or woman, herself] as well as abstract questions of doctrine.

The SPJC’s decision did not make clear what standard of review it used to determine the constitutionality of the Resolution, but simply stated that the Resolution “does not preclude Olympia Presbytery from conducting a meaningful examination to assess the fitness of individual candidates on a case-by-case basis. . . .” Without a clear articulation by the SPJC of its rationale, this Commission is unable to determine the SPJC’s standard of review. Given the foregoing rationale as to the other specifications of error, this Commission concludes that the SPJC’s review was constitutionally flawed.

Finally, while the Constitution does not require that a permanent judicial commission provide a rationale for every irregularity or delinquency assigned in the complaint when rendering a decision (D-7.0402), this Commission recommends that permanent judicial commissions provide enough explanation for the church to understand the reasons for decisions and be guided accordingly.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Alaska-Northwest be reversed and that the Resolution of the Presbytery of Olympia is void and of no further force or effect.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Olympia report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Alaska-Northwest report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-participants

Tony Cook was recused from participation in this case.

Dated this 11th day of February, 2008.

m. Remedial Case 218-10

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 Randall Bush, Wayne Peck, and the Session of East Liberty)  
 Presbyterian Church, )  
 Complainants-Appellants, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 Presbytery of Pittsburgh, )  
 Respondent-Appellee. )  
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DECISION AND ORDER

Remedial Case 218-10

## Headnotes

(1) No Departures from “Fidelity and Chastity” Requirement: Candidates and examining bodies must follow G-6.0108 in reaching determinations as to whether the candidates for ordination and/or installation have departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity. Such determinations do not rest on distinguishing “belief” and “behavior,” and do not permit departure from the “fidelity and chastity” requirement found in G-6.0106b.

(2) Examinations of Candidates: Ordaining and installing bodies must examine candidates for ordination and/or installation individually. The examining body is best suited to make decisions about the candidate’s fitness for office, and factual determinations by examining bodies are entitled to deference by higher governing bodies in any review process.

(3) Statements of “Essentials of Reformed Faith and Polity”: Attempts by governing bodies that ordain and install officers to adopt resolutions, statements or policies that paraphrase or restate provisions of the *Book of Order* and/or declare them as “essentials of Reformed faith and polity” are confusing and unnecessary; and are themselves an obstruction to constitutional governance in violation of G-6.0108a.

## Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) on appeal filed by the Complainants/Appellants, Randall Bush, Wayne Peck, and the Session of East Liberty Presbyterian Church, from a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Trinity (SPJC) dated May 16, 2007.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Complainants/Appellants have standing to appeal, the appeal was properly and timely filed, and the appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

## Appearances

Randall Bush, Wayne Peck, and the Session of East Liberty Presbyterian Church (Bush, *et al.*) were represented by Stephen Paschall and Randall Bush. The Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Presbytery) was represented by Susan Dobbins.

## History

The 217th General Assembly adopted, with amendment, the recommendations of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church (PUP Task Force). The fifth and final of those recommendations sets forth an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 (Authoritative Interpretation) which is thereby binding on the church. The Authoritative Interpretation (which is recommendation 5 of the PUP Report) states:<sup>7</sup>

a. *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government of the *Book of Order* set forth the scriptural and constitutional standards for ordination and installation.

b. These standards are determined by the whole church, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries. These standards may be interpreted by the General Assembly and its Permanent Judicial Commission.

c. Ordaining and installing bodies, acting as corporate expressions of the church, have the responsibility to determine their membership by applying these standards to those elected to office. These determinations include:

(1) Whether a candidate being examined for ordination and/or installation as elder, deacon, or minister of Word and Sacrament has departed from scriptural and constitutional standards for fitness for office,

(2) Whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation.

d. Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.

e. All parties should endeavor to outdo one another in honoring one another’s decisions, according the presumption of wisdom to ordaining/installing bodies in examining candidates and to the General Assembly, with presbyteries’ approval, in setting standards. (217th General Assembly (2006); *Minutes*, Part I, pp. 514–515).

Following this action by the General Assembly, several sessions in the Presbytery proposed a resolution (Resolution) to the Presbytery seeking to “clarify” the Authoritative Interpretation. The Resolution states:

## 04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

In its discernment of the essentials of Reformed polity and for the sake of the peace, unity, and purity of the church, Pittsburgh Presbytery [Resolution, part 1]:

Adopts the principle that compliance with the standards for ordination approved by the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the *Book of Order* is an essential of Reformed polity. Therefore, any departure from the standards of ordination expressed in the *Book of Order* will bar a candidate from ordination and/or installation by this governing body. Provisions of the *Book of Order* are signified as being standards by use of the term “shall,” “is/are to be,” “requirement” or equivalent expression [Resolution, part 2]; and

Resolves that no exceptions to the requirement that all Ministers of Word and Sacrament must “live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or in chastity in singleness” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0106b) will be allowed within the jurisdiction of this Presbytery [Resolution, part 3]; and

Resolves that Ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be prohibited from conducting same-sex marriages within the jurisdiction of this Presbytery [Resolution, part 4].

The Resolution was first reviewed by the Presbytery Council at a meeting on August 22, 2006. A motion was made to refer the Resolution to the Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry. The motion failed, and the decision was made to present the Resolution to the full Presbytery at the September meeting, with a final vote scheduled for the October Presbytery meeting. The Resolution was read and debated at the September 7, 2006 Presbytery meeting. Again a motion to refer to the Committees on Ministry and Preparation for Ministry failed, and further action was deferred to the October meeting. The Resolution was again considered at the Presbytery meeting of October 12, 2006. At the conclusion of debate, following prayer, the Resolution was adopted on a paper ballot vote of 148 to 105.

On November 22, 2006, Bush, *et al.*, filed a “Complaint of an Irregularity and a Request for Stay of Enforcement” with the Synod of the Trinity. SPJC issued a Stay of Enforcement on November 26, 2006. Trial before the SPJC was held on May 14 and 15, 2007, and the SPJC Decision and Order was issued on May 16, 2007. The SPJC sustained the first three irregularities alleged in the Complaint, but struck only part 2 of the Resolution.

By notice dated June 29, 2007, received July 5, 2007, Bush, *et al.*, appealed to this Commission. Bush, *et al.*, did not appeal from the final Order of the SPJC, but alleged irregularities in the SPJC Decision, contending that the SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation.

GAPJC issued a Preliminary Order on July 30, 2007, and the matter was set for a hearing on February 8, 2008. On October 12, 2007, counsel for the Presbytery filed a “Motion for Dismissal, or in the Alternative, Substitution of Real Party in Interest” (Motion). The Motion alleged that the Appellants had prevailed before the SPJC and therefore the Presbytery had no further interest or obligation in the matter. On October 22, 2007, the GAPJC Executive Committee amended its Order for Hearing, stating that the Motion would be heard at the February session of the GAPJC. On November 11, 2007, the full GAPJC reconsidered the Order for Hearing, denied the Motion, and revised the briefing schedule on the main matter. The appeal was heard by the GAPJC on February 8, 2008.

### Specifications of Error and Decision

*Specification of Error No. 1. The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by failing to place faith and practice (belief and behavior) on an “equal footing.”*

This specification of error is not sustained.

The Authoritative Interpretation includes a rationale section which was not adopted by the General Assembly. The rationale describes G-6.0106b as a “manner of life standard” and states that the Authoritative Interpretation “requires ordaining and installing bodies to examine carefully both the doctrinal views and the manner of life of those elected to office.” It is up to the examining body to determine whether a candidate’s actions and beliefs, including with respect to G-6.0106b, are a serious departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity, or are such that they infringe on the rights and views of others, or would obstruct the constitutional governance of the church (G-6.0108a). The PUP Task Force Report in its rationale for the Authoritative Interpretation stated: “Section G-6.0108 puts ‘faith and polity’—belief and behavior—on an equal footing, as they were in 1729, when scruples were permitted in matters of ‘doctrine, discipline and government.’” (*Minutes of the 217th General Assembly (2006), Part I, p. 516*) The rationale for the Authoritative Interpretation recognizes that faith encompasses behavior in that faith is demonstrated by action.

As finally adopted by the General Assembly, the Authoritative Interpretation does not equate “polity” with “behavior.” Nevertheless, the church has required those who aspire to ordained office to conform their actions, though not necessarily their beliefs or opinions, to certain standards, in those contexts in which the church has deemed conformity to be necessary or essential. Section G-6.0106b contains a provision where conformity is required by church officers “to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or in chastity in singleness.” The church has decided to single out this particular manner of life standard and require churchwide conformity to it for all ordained church officers. Therefore, the specific “fidelity and chastity” standard in G-6.0106b stands in contrast to the provisions of G-6.0106a,

including those concerning faith, discipleship, belief and manner of life in the church and the world, and also the remainder of G-6.0106b. The candidate and examining body must follow G-6.0108 in reaching a determination as to whether the candidate for office has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity, but that determination does not rest on distinguishing “belief” and “behavior,” and does not permit departure from the “fidelity and chastity” requirement found in G-6.0106b. Accordingly that portion of SPJC decision that stated: “no presbytery may grant an exception to any mandatory church wide behavioral ordination standard,” was correct. We agree with the SPJC that, “Under our polity, violations of behavioral standards are to be addressed through repentance and reconciliation, not by exception or exemption. The freedom of conscience granted in G-6.0108 allows candidates to express disagreement with the wording or meaning of provisions of the constitution, but does not permit disobedience to those behavioral standards.” The fidelity and chastity provision may only be changed by a constitutional amendment. Until that occurs, individual candidates, officers, examining and governing bodies must adhere to it.

*Specification of Error No. 2. The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by establishing mandates of the Book of Order as “Essentials” of Reformed polity.*

This specification of error is sustained in part and not sustained in part.

The Authoritative Interpretation correctly states that the standards for ordination of officers in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are set forth in the *Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government. Section “b” of the Authoritative Interpretation states that “these standards are determined *by the whole church*, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, *solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries*” (emphasis added). The constitutional process for amending ordination standards (or any other provision of the Constitution) is defined in Chapter 18 of the Form of Government. While the General Assembly and the GAPJC may *interpret* these standards, the Authoritative Interpretation did not (and constitutionally could not) change any ordination standard, including the requirements set forth in G-6.0106b. Similarly, no lower governing body can constitutionally define, diminish, augment or modify standards for ordination and installation of church officers.<sup>8</sup>

Although G-1.0301 permits broad freedom of conscience for members of the church, “in becoming a candidate or officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds” (G-6.0108b). G-6.0108a defines the limits of this freedom of conscience for ordained church officers. It first states the requirement that all church officers adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government.<sup>9</sup> It next assures freedom of conscience, but *only* with respect to the interpretation of Scripture. Even then, freedom of conscience is permitted only to the extent that it (a) is not a serious departure from the essential standards of Reformed faith and polity, (b) does not infringe on the rights and views of others, and (c) does not obstruct the constitutional governance of the church.

Ordaining bodies have the right and responsibility to determine whether or not any “scruples” declared by candidates for ordination and/or installation constitute serious departures from our system of doctrine, government, or discipline; to what extent the rights and views of others might be infringed upon by those departures; and whether those departures obstruct the constitutional governance of the church. At the same time, attempts by governing bodies that ordain and install officers to adopt resolutions, statements or policies that paraphrase or restate provisions of the *Book of Order* and/or declare them as “essentials of Reformed faith and polity” are confusing and unnecessary. G-6.0108a sets forth standards that apply to the whole church. These standards are binding on and must be followed by all governing bodies, church officers and candidates for church office. Adopting statements about mandatory provisions of the *Book of Order* for ordination and installation of officers falsely implies that other governing bodies might not be similarly bound; that is, that they might choose to restate or interpret the provisions differently, fail to adopt such statements, or possess some flexibility with respect to such provisions. Restatements of the *Book of Order*, in whatever form they are adopted, are themselves an obstruction to the same standard of constitutional governance no less than attempts to depart from mandatory provisions.

The Presbytery’s resolution would define the “essentials” of Reformed faith and polity by restating the Presbytery’s intention to enforce mandatory provisions of the *Book of Order*, when it has no authority to do otherwise. At the same time, declaring “essentials” outside of the context of the examination of a candidate for ordained office is inappropriate. As was stated in the 1927 Report of the Special Commission of 1925 (Swearingen Commission Report; Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, *Minutes*, PCUSA, 1927, Part I, pp. 78–79):

One fact often overlooked is that by the act of 1729, the decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be in specific cases. It was no general authority that might be stated in exact language and applied rigidly to every case without distinction. It was an authority somewhat undefined, to be invoked in each particular instance. . . . It was clearly the intention that this decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be made after the candidate had been presented and had declared his [or her] beliefs and stated his [or her] motives personally, and after the examining body...had full opportunity to judge the man himself [or woman herself] as well as abstract questions of doctrine.

For these reasons, the Resolution is unconstitutional and in error. It is not permissible for a presbytery or a session to define “essentials of Reformed faith and polity” outside of the examination of any candidate for office. Such a determination must be made only in the context of a specific examination of an individual candidate.

It would be an obstruction of constitutional governance to permit examining bodies to ignore or waive a specific standard that has been adopted by the whole church, such as the “fidelity and chastity” portion of G-6.0106b, or any other similarly specific provision. On the other hand, the broad reference in G-6.0106b to “any practice which the confessions call sin” puts the responsibility first on the candidate and then on the examining body to determine whether a departure is a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity and the remainder of G-6.0108(a) with respect to freedom of conscience. The ordaining body must examine the candidate individually. The examining body is best suited to make decisions about the candidate’s fitness for office, and factual determinations by examining bodies are entitled to deference by higher governing bodies in any review process.

The SPJC’s treatment of part 3 of the Presbytery’s Resolution is unclear. This Commission concludes that since SPJC did not explicitly “void” part 3 of the Resolution (as it did part 2 of the Resolution), part 3 of the Resolution was not invalidated by SPJC’s Decision.

The SPJC correctly stated that the fidelity and chastity provision of G-6.0106b is a mandatory standard that cannot be waived. To the extent that the SPJC Decision appears to leave in force part 3 of the Resolution, Specification of Error 2 is sustained. Presbyteries do not have the authority to restate or define such standards.

Similarly, we note that part 4 of the Resolution appears to suffer from the same infirmity as part 3 of the Resolution; however, that issue was not briefed or argued to this Commission. Thus, the GAPJC makes no decision as to part 4 of the Resolution. We note, additionally, that if the Presbytery’s intent was to provide a “summary of civil law intended to advise new clergy about the legal context of their ministry,” as suggested in the SPJC Decision, it was an improper attempt by an ecclesiastical body to give civil legal advice.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that all portions of the resolution adopted by the Presbytery of Pittsburgh on October 12, 2006, which were before this Commission are void.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh report this Decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Trinity report this Decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Dated this 11th day of February, 2008.

n. *Remedial Case 218-13*

Presbytery of South Louisiana,	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	ORDER DISMISSING COMPLAINT
	)	
Synod of the Sun,	)	Remedial Case 218-13
Respondent.	)	

This remedial case came before this Commission on a Complaint dated June 5, 2007, served on Respondent on June 12,2007, and filed with the General Assembly on June 18,2007.

The Executive Committee of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly finds that this Commission has jurisdiction, that Complainant has standing to file the Complaint, and that the Complaint was properly and timely filed.

The Executive Committee of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly further finds that the Complaint fails to state one or more claims upon which relief can be granted.

This remedial case is dismissed.

Dated the 30th day of July, 2007.

o. Remedial Case 218-15

Session of First Presbyterian Church of Washington, 1793, Session )	
of First Presbyterian Church of Charleroi, Jeffrey A. Kisner, Fran- )	
ces Lane-Lawrence, D. Jay Losher, Robert Miller, Kenneth E. No- )	
lin, Charles Puff, John Rankin, Susan Vande Kappelle, Robert )	
Vande Kappelle, Betty Voigt, Robert Randolph, and Linda Mankey, )	
Complainant-Appellee, )	DECISION AND ORDER
)	
v. )	Remedial Case 218-15
)	
Presbytery of Washington, )	
Respondent-Appellant. )	
)	

Headnotes

(1) Obligation of Permanent Judicial Commissions: Permanent judicial commissions are not required by the *Book of Order* to instruct parties to engage in non-judicial dispute resolution.

(2) The Adopting Act of 1729: This act provides significant guidance for the application and interpretation of G-6.0108a & b as to essentials.

Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on appeal filed by the Respondent-Appellant, Presbytery of Washington (Presbytery), from a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Trinity (SPJC) dated August 14, 2007.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that the Presbytery has standing to file the appeal, that the appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

Appearances

The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Washington, 1793, *et al.* (Washington, *et al.*), Complainant-Appellee, was represented by Thomas O. Vreeland and David A. Leslie. The Presbytery, Respondent-Appellant, was represented by Rebecca A. Bowman, Craig Kephart, and Barry Sweet.

History

This case arises from actions taken by the Presbytery at its stated meeting of March 13, 2007, in adopting two documents. The first one, Biblical Standards for Christian Leaders in Washington Presbytery (BSCL), deals with standards for personal conduct for church leaders and was derived from certain New Testament passages. The second document, Resolution A, deals with a declaration of “essentials of Reformed polity,” which the Presbytery intended as a guide to evaluate candidates for ordination and/or installation to any ordained office.

The following is the text of Resolution A as adopted by the Presbytery:

WHEREAS the 217th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) adopted an Authoritative Interpretation of section G-6.0108 of the Book of Order, declaring that ordaining and installing bodies of the Church have the responsibility to examine candidates for ordination as ministers, elders and deacons to determine:

*“Whether a candidate being examined for ordination and/or installation as elder deacon, or Minister of Word and Sacrament has departed from scriptural and constitutional standards for fitness for office”;* and,

*“Whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 of the Book of Order, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation”;* and,

WHEREAS the Presbytery of Washington is such an ordaining and installing body; and,



WHEREAS the aforementioned Authoritative Interpretation has caused considerable confusion within and without the church regarding what, precisely, constitutes the “essentials of Reformed faith and polity”;

THEREFORE, for the sake of the peace, unity, and purity of the church, the Presbytery of Washington adopts and shall function according to the following resolution: *It is an essential of Reformed polity that the Presbytery of Washington comply with and adhere to the standards for ordination adopted by the whole church and expressed in the Book of Order. Therefore, any departure from ordination standards mandated\* in the Book of Order, unless repented of, shall bar a candidate from ordination and/or installation by the Presbytery of Washington.* (Italics in original text)

[\*ordination standards mandated in the *Book of Order* include those instructions designated by the terms “shall,” “is/are to be,” “requirement” or “equivalent expression.”]

These two resolutions reflect “uneasiness” among some congregations and members of the Presbytery because of the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) (GA) in adopting the Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church.

The Committee on Ministry (COM) received the BSCL document at its meeting on November 29, 2006, and approved the presentation of BSCL to the Presbytery for a first reading at the January 20, 2007, Presbytery meeting. At that Presbytery meeting, COM presented BSCL for first reading, noting that it was “intended to clarify our expectations, as a presbytery, for those who lead among us,” and invited the Presbytery to discuss and vote on the document at its next meeting in March. At this same Presbytery meeting, Resolution A was received from Bentleyville Presbyterian Church and was referred by the Presbytery Moderator to the COM. The text of Resolution A was included in the minutes of the Presbytery meeting.

COM received and discussed Resolution A at its meeting on February 28, 2007. The motion to recommend its adoption to the Presbytery failed by a vote of four (4) in favor and seven (7) opposed.

The subsequent procedural history of Resolution A is somewhat murky. According to trial testimony, a summary of the March Presbytery meeting minutes was distributed with the docket for the May 2007 meeting; this summary did not refer to action on Resolution A.

A set of minutes of the March 13, 2007, meeting made available to participants at the pre-trial conference on July 6, 2007, did not refer to the passage of Resolution A. This set of minutes notes that Resolution A was read, but there is no record of discussion or action taken.

By July 9, 2007, a verified set of minutes of the March meeting was distributed. These minutes stated, “At the ruling of the Moderator, the Bentleyville Resolution A was brought back to the floor after no recommendation from the referral to COM. It was Moved, Seconded and Passed to approve the resolution” (emphasis in the original minutes). Witnesses noted that the resolution was adopted after vigorous debate; there is no record of yeas and nays.

The procedural confusion is compounded by the manner in which Resolution A got to the floor of the March Presbytery meeting. Resolution A was not on the meeting docket. The record is not clear as to whether it was presented to the Presbytery as part of the COM report or as New Business. There is conflicting testimony as to whether a request was made that Resolution A be presented as New Business or whether it would even be brought to the floor.

In either case, Resolution A was presented late in the meeting after a significant number of presbyters had left the meeting. As noted above, the Presbytery approved Resolution A after debate.

At that same Presbytery meeting, BSCL was passed on second reading by a standing vote of sixty-four (64) yea and twenty-five (25) nay. The BSCL document as adopted concluded in this way: “Washington Presbytery has established these standards, encouraging our Churches to [be] led by them as they call, commission, and train their own leadership.” At the end of the document is a sentence which reads, “I have read, understand, and subscribe to the ‘Biblical Standards for Christian Leaders’ as described above,” with lines for date and signature.

Further confusion exists as to the status of BSCL and Resolution A in the Presbytery. They were not designated as changes in policy or additions to the bylaws, nor did they follow the procedures normally taken for policy and bylaw changes. At the Synod trial the Stated Clerk testified that they are Standing Rules. The record is not clear as to how, when, and by whom these adopted items would have been applied.

Washington, *et al.*, filed a complaint and request for stay of enforcement of both Resolution A and BSCL on April 24, 2007. They claimed that Resolution A was unconstitutional under the *Book of Order* and the Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 adopted by the 217th GA and that BSCL was also unconstitutional by reintroducing subscriptionism to ordination and installation decisions. The stay was granted on April 30, 2007, without Presbytery objection. SPJC accepted the complaint and ordered a pre-trial conference for July 6, 2007. The trial was held on August 13–14, 2007.

The case record for the trial and subsequent oral arguments on appeal revealed a dispute between parties as to the extent of conciliation efforts. The record does not indicate what action if any was taken.

The SPJC's decision on August 14, 2007, set aside both Resolution A and BSCL as unconstitutional. In setting aside BSCL, the SPJC stated that presbyteries do not have the authority to set standards for elders and deacons.

The Presbytery filed a notice of appeal to this Commission on September 25, 2007. The Presbytery's appeal was limited to the procedural and ancillary matters surrounding the adoption of Resolution A and did not deal with BSCL. The hearing was held on February 8, 2007.

#### Specifications of Error<sup>10</sup>

*Specification of Error No. 1. The SPJC erred by "its failure to address Appellees' complete absence of Biblically-faithful actions to resolve issues before bringing them to the larger, higher jurisdictional body for resolution. Despite repeated written and oral requests throughout the course of the proceeding, the SPJC declined to require or even encourage the Appellees to participate in pre-filing and/or during-pendency intra-presbytery conversation, discussion or negotiation as instructed by Matthew 18:15-17."*

#### This specification of error is not sustained.

This Commission finds nothing in the record to sustain this specification of error; nor does it find any mandates in the *Book of Order* to support the claim that there is any requirement that a permanent judicial commission "require or even encourage [parties] to participate in pre-filing and/or during-pendency intra-presbytery conversation, discussion or negotiation as instructed by Matthew 18:15-17."

Matthew 18:15-17 applies in the situations where one party sins against another. While the text does suggest a process for conciliation between persons or parties, this Commission is reluctant to label the actions or failure to act by either party with respect to the settlement of their dispute as sin. An interpretation of this passage suggests that permanent judicial commissions embody the spirit of the "one or two others" that are taken along, "so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses." (Matthew 18:16, NRSV) The purpose of the "one or two others" is to "function as witnesses to the confrontation between the accuser and the accused ... [to] protect the accused if the accusation is too harsh or based on a misperception or inadequate information; [to] protect the accuser and observe how the accused responds to the charge."<sup>11</sup> It is exactly these functions that a permanent judicial commission accepts when it sits to hear and decide a dispute that is before it.

The *Book of Order* at D-1.0103 calls the Church to the Matthew 5:25 Biblical obligation to adjust differences without strife. However, this Commission recognizes the inadequacies in the *Book of Order* with respect to non-judicial dispute resolution processes. The GAPJC's Self Study Report as submitted to the 218th General Assembly (2008) states, "There is little guidance in Rules of Discipline about how the conciliation and mediation should take place... The experience of this Commission leads us to urge the General Assembly to consider adopting revisions to the Rules of Discipline that would promote alternative forms of dispute resolution and consensus building in lieu of adversarial judicial process. The Church should strive to resolve disputes in a manner that minimizes divisiveness and expense and promotes consensus, leaving this Commission to resolve disputes by judicial process as a last resort." (GAPJC Self Study Report, Chapter VI, Section 5, p. 25)

*Specification of Error No. 2. The SPJC erred by substituting its judgment for that of the Presbytery in the matter of the "discernment process." "Despite hearing extensive testimony regarding the process of discernment used by...Presbytery in responding to the PUP Report, SPJC [improperly] held that...Presbytery failed to comply with the invitation to 'explore the use of alternative forms of discernment.'"*

#### This specification of error is not sustained.

This Commission rejects the Appellant's claim that the SPJC substituted its judgment for that of the Presbytery. The SPJC's factual finding was, "that the Presbytery of Washington complied with this invitation only minimally, if at all." This finding of fact notes compliance, however minimal. This Commission accepts this factual finding based on *Hardwick v. PJC Synod of North Carolina*, "Judgments of a lower court on factual issues are favored with a presumption of correctness and are not to be disturbed unless plainly or palpably wrong, without supporting evidence, or manifestly unjust." (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1983, Part I, p.45)

The SPJC then went on to "recommend that the Presbytery provide appropriate opportunities for dialogue and discernment in the hope that additional litigation will not be necessary." This is SPJC's recommendation, not a factual finding which substitutes its judgment for that of the Presbytery.

*Specification of Error No. 3. The SPJC erred in its determinations regarding G-6.0106b, the Confessions and the Adopting Act of 1729 in the following manner:*

*(1) SPJC exceeded its authority when it “held that the requirement of G-6.0106b is ‘broad and ephemeral’” and that compliance with the requirement “was an unenforceable standard.”*

*(2) SPJC also exceeded its authority when it indicated that “it is impossible to read the Confessions without encountering allegations of sin for thoughts or actions which may no longer be considered sin.”*

*(3) SPJC incorrectly asserted “that the Adopting Act of 1729 established ‘essential’ as having a specific meaning”; the Act “does not... [mention] the word ‘essential’ or any variant of it.”*

This specification of error is not sustained in any part.

A. The Presbytery’s characterization of the SPJC decision regarding G-6.0106b and Resolution A is incorrect. The SPJC decision, in part, stated:

It is also noted that “any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin,” if unrepented, will preclude ordination and/or installation pursuant to *Book of Order* G-6.0106b. This broad and ephemeral requirement is stated in “mandatory” terms as defined in Resolution A. Accordingly, Resolution A would provide an unqualified bar to ordination or installation in Washington Presbytery of anyone who is unrepentant of any act or thought that the Confessions call sin.

The Presbytery interprets the statement as a holding by the SPJC that compliance with G-6.0106b is “an unenforceable standard.” Based on this interpretation, the Presbytery concludes that the SPJC has no authority to set aside or ameliorate a valid constitutional requirement.

When this passage is read within the context of the whole decision, it is clear that the SPJC’s holding applies to Resolution A rather than to G-6.0106b. This construction is supported by SPJC’s inclusion of “Resolution A” in the sentence that uses the “broad and ephemeral” statement as well as the inclusion of the term “Resolution A” in the very next sentence. This Commission, therefore, finds no error in the SPJC’s statement.

B. This Commission does not affirm the Presbytery’s characterization of the SPJC statement:

Since it is impossible to read the Confessions without encountering allegations of sin for thoughts or actions which may no longer be considered sin, or at least no longer be considered the “serious” departure referred to in the *Book of Order*, G-6.0108a (such as provisions pertaining to Sabbath observance and interest on loans), Resolution A is in conflict with G-6.0108a and the long-established policy that what is essential must be determined by case-by-case consideration rather than by blanket and unviable prohibitions.

The Presbytery characterizes this statement as a holding by the SPJC that the Confessions are no longer valid, that it does not have the authority to set aside or ameliorate an element of the Confessions, and that it exceeded its authority in doing so.

The SPJC’s determination clearly pertains to Resolution A. When the statement is read in context, there is nothing to suggest that it represents a holding that the Confessions are no longer valid. This Commission, therefore, finds no error in the SPJC’s statement.

C. Contrary to the Presbytery’s assertions, the Adopting Act of the nineteenth of September, 1729<sup>12</sup> (Adopting Act), incorporates the term “necessary and essential” four times. Moreover, it provides instructive historical guidance for the application and interpretation of G-6.0108a and b (as to essentials). This Commission does note that later re-affirmations of the Adopting Act do not include the term “necessary and essential.” The Church is therefore urged to use original sources of this and other historic church documents and not to rely upon re-statements or paraphrases.

#### Decision

It is for these reasons that none of the specifications of error are sustained.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Trinity is hereby affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Washington report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Trinity report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Concurring Opinion of Commissioners  
Catherine Glennan Borchert and Ernest Cutting

Essentials and Subscription

We concur with the decision of the majority in case 218-15 wholeheartedly. However, we think it would be helpful to the church to have clarity concerning concepts mentioned in the decision of the Synod of the Trinity.

The term, “essential,” did not begin with the Adopting Act of 1729, although it was used several times within that action, as recorded in the minutes of the Synod. For Presbyterians, the concept of essential and necessary with respect to doctrine can be found in John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapter I, Sections 9-16, (1559), in which Calvin discusses the marks of the Church and “the sin of schism.” Calvin identifies the marks of the church as:

“Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ’s institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists [cf. Eph. 2:20].” (Section 9)

Having defined the church, Calvin then says, “... it follows that separation from the church is the denial of God and Christ.” (Section 10)

If separation is the denial of God and Christ, how should the church and its members behave if there is some fault within the church or its members? Calvin’s words acknowledge that difficulty:

“What is more, some fault may creep into the administration of either doctrine or sacraments, but this ought not to estrange us from communion with the church. For not all the articles of true doctrine are of the same sort. Some are so necessary to know that they should be certain and unquestioned by all men as the proper principles of religion. Such are: God is one; Christ is God and the Son of God; our salvation rests in God’s mercy; and the like. Among the churches there are other articles of doctrine disputed which still do not break the unity of faith...Does this not sufficiently indicate that a difference of opinion over these nonessential matters should in no wise be the basis of schism among Christians?” (Section 12)

In the sections which follow, Calvin indicates that every church will include those who sin, and he speaks to those who wish to leave because of the sinfulness of others:

“Indeed, because they think no church exists where there are not perfect purity and integrity of life, they depart out of hatred of wickedness from the lawful church, while they fancy themselves turning aside from the faction of the wicked.” (Section 13)

Quite bluntly, Calvin states that, “... the church is at the same time mingled of good men and bad ...”, using Matthew 13:47–58 as Christ’s comparison of the many kinds fish caught in the net with the people to be found in the Body of Christ. Having said this, however, Calvin does not excuse any from recognizing the range of belief and behavior, or of even working to assist others in recognizing and repenting of “misdeeds.” Rather, he expects that remaining together for mutual support is important, so long as “public edification” is performed “decently and in order.” (Section 12) Calvin said that some things might be essential, but causing schism because of them was not desirable or necessary.

Concerning subscription, this practice has been handled differently in different times in the American Presbyterian Church. The earliest Presbyterian settlers on this continent brought with them disagreements from their time in Europe. Rigid subscriptionism had caused problems in England, Ireland, and Scotland, with some Presbyterians coming to the American shores to protect subscription to the Westminster Confession, and some to escape from this requirement. These struggles continued among the Presbyterians who formed the first presbyteries and the Synod, culminating in the Adopting Act of 1729. Presbyters were asked to declare their approbation of the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the act requiring each man to: “declare his Agreement in opinion with all the Essential and Necessary Articles of said Confession, either by subscribing the said Confession of Faith and Catechisms, or by a verbal Declaration of their assent thereto, as such Minister or Candidate shall think best.” By compromise, the subscription did not have to be in writing, but could be a spoken affirmation.

The record in case 218-15 reflects that subscription is now forbidden in the church. That is not entirely true. The outcome of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy, as embodied in the 1926 and 1927 reports from the Special Commission of 1925 (the “Swearingen Commission Report”), stated once again that the General Assembly did not have the power or authority to declare certain doctrines “essential.” The report noted that this action thus revised “our terms of subscription,” which had required subscription to five statements of doctrine that the General Assemblies in 1910, 1916, and 1923 had declared to be essential. (Minutes, 1926, p. 70) However, the adoption of these reports did not mean that subscription was removed from the church. Subscription continued in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, often taking the

form of the verbal assent affirming the vows taken at the time of ordination by elders, deacons and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, rather than written subscription.

Today, the “Form of Government” (2007/2009) retains the reference to subscription at the time of ordination or installation of a minister of the Word and Sacrament in saying in G-14.0485: “The presbytery shall record the ordination and installation as a part of its official records along with the acceptance and subscription of the new minister to the obligations undertaken in the ordination vows.”

Concurring Opinion by Commissioners  
Catherine Glennan Borchert, Ernest Cutting, and Wendy Warner  
Concerning the Handling of Presbytery Minutes

Case 218-15, involving the Presbytery of Washington, exposed a practice which is of concern. According to both the record and in oral argument, the custom in the Presbytery of Washington is to circulate to the presbytery a summary of the minutes of the previous presbytery meeting. The full minutes are given to “readers,” a minister and an elder, who review the minutes and suggest any modifications. The full minutes are then filed at the presbytery office at some future time.

In this case, the record showed that the full minutes of the meeting of March 13, 2007, reflecting the action on the Resolutions that were at issue in this case were not available even at the pre-trial conference held July 6, 2007. The minutes that were given to the parties that day did not reflect the action of the presbytery in passing Resolution A. It was a matter of verbal testimony at the original trial that the full and corrected minutes were not available until at least July 9, 2007, nearly four months after the meeting had occurred.

Two full meeting packets, with all materials to be circulated to presbytery commissioners and members in preparation for the meeting, were appended to the record, packets for the meetings of January 20, 2007 and March 13, 2007. In those packets, the Consent Items include the following:

1. That the minutes of the Stated Meeting of January 20, 2007 as read by Rev. Joe Rychcik and Elder Gretchen McBride (McMurray), and as summarized in this packet be approved; (March 13, 2007 packet)
2. That the minutes of the Stated Meeting of November 14, 2006 as read by Rev. Robert VandeKappelle [sic] and Elder Kevin Young (Laboratory), CLP and as summarized in this packet be approved; (January 20, 2007 packet).

The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the presbytery does not see nor approve the full minutes in any form. Because the handling of the minutes was not a part of the appeal, this Commission quite rightly has not considered this issue in its decision and order. The taking of minutes and dissemination of them to all members of the body is seen as a thankless task, often not valued by those asked to read them. Yet, as in this case, when minutes are not forthcoming and also not accurate, the actions of the presbytery may be questioned and the trust of presbyters can be seriously undermined.

At this point in time, *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, Section 48, page 456–57, permits the reading of minutes by a committee under certain specific circumstances. The ordinary procedure is stated as follows: “The minutes of the meeting are normally read and approved at the beginning of the next regular meeting... .” For those presbyteries that fall into the excepted categories, where the minutes are read by a committee, the full minutes should be available either in hard copy or electronically to the entire membership by the next meeting. Caution should be used in the handling of minutes in order to assure easy accessibility, which is vital to the health of the body.

It is the opinion of the undersigned members of this Commission, present and former stated clerks of presbyteries, that the Synod of the Trinity should be providing advice, counsel and oversight to the Presbytery of Washington concerning its handling of the minutes of presbytery meetings through its responsibility designated in G-12.0102n “to review the records of its presbyteries and to take care that they observe the Constitution of the church.” Providing full and accurate minutes is the responsibility of the stated clerk of the presbytery. Reviewing minutes for completeness and accuracy is the duty and privilege of every presbyter.

Dated this 11th day of February, 2008.

Endnotes

1. Written presbytery approval is also required if a congregation proposes to “lease its real property used for purposes of worship, or lease for more than five years any of its other real property ...” (G-8.0502).
2. This letter from the session of GCPC to the congregation states, in part, “we anticipate that some in the congregation may be particularly interested in discussing [ordination standards] since electing at least one of the nominees might be out of order according to one paragraph in the Constitution G-6.0106b.”

04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

3. Section G-11.0101c addresses the special status of elders who have been elected as moderator or other officers or chairs of committees or commissions of a presbytery. Under this provision, elders who hold the office of presbytery moderator have continuing membership in the presbytery during their term of office, others may be granted such status.
4. During oral argument, Complainant indicated that Jones and Tony attended the conference call meeting as observers until the ACC went into executive session.
5. See *Yun et al. v. Session of Korean United Presbyterian Church*, Decision on Challenge to Preliminary Questions of the GAPJC, dated May 7, 2007.
6. Both parties cited *Presbytery of West Jersey v. Synod of Northeast*, Minutes, 1993, Part I, p. 181, in support of their positions; however, *West Jersey* is not pertinent herein because it did not involve a declaration regarding “essentials.”
7. The remainder of the PUP report (including the rationale for recommendation 5) was received, but not adopted, by the General Assembly, and therefore has no binding effect on the church.
8. Governing bodies may impose other requirements on church officers, after ordination and installation, such as requirements to abide by ethics or sexual misconduct policies.
9. This section of the *Book of Order* refers only to the Form of Government, failing to recognize that standards for ordination of officers are now found in the Directory for Worship. This is an apparent oversight that should be addressed by the General Assembly.
10. The Presbytery’s specifications of error are limited to procedural and ancillary matters only. For a review of substantive considerations concerning the Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 issued by the 217th GA (in the report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church) see this Commission’s decisions in *Bush, et al., v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (218-10, February 11, 2008) and *Buescher, et al., v. Presbytery of Olympia* (218-09, February 11, 2008).
11. Douglas R. A. Hare, “Matthew” in *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993, p. 214.
12. The text of the act (The Adopting Act) which adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms states in its entirety:

Altho’ the Synod do not claim or pretend to any Authority of imposing our faith upon other men’s Consciences, but do profess our just Dissatisfaction with and Abhorrence of such Impositions, and do utterly disclaim all Legislative Power and Authority in the Church, being willing to receive one another, as Christ has received us to the Glory of God, and admit to fellowship in sacred ordinances all such as we have Grounds to believe Christ will at last admit to the Kingdom of Heaven; yet we are undoubtedly obliged to take Care that the faith once delivered to the Saints be kept pure and uncorrupt among Us, and so handed down to our Posterity. And do therefore agree, yt [that] all the Ministers of this Synod, or that shall hereafter be admitted into this Synod, shall declare their agreement in and approbation of the Confession of Faith with the larger and shorter Catechisms of the assembly of Divines at Westminster, as being in all the *essential and necessary* Articles, good Forms of sound words and systems of Christian Doctrine; and do also adopt the said Confession and Catechisms as the Confession of our Faith. And we do also agree, yt [that] all the Presbyteries within our Bounds shall always take Care not to admit any Candidate of the Ministry into the Exercise of the sacred Function, but what declares his Agreement in opinion with all the *Essential and Necessary* Articles of said Confession, either by subscribing the said Confession of Faith and Catechisms, or by a verbal Declaration of their assent thereto, as such Minister or Candidate shall think best. And in Case any Minister of this Synod or any Candidate for the Ministry shall have any Scruple with respect to any Article or Articles of sd.[said] Confession or Catechisms, he shall at the Time of his making sd.[said] Declaration declare his Sentiments to the Presbytery or Synod, who shall notwithstanding admit him to ye[the] Exercise of the Ministry within our Bounds and to Ministerial Communion if the Synod or Presbytery shall judge his scruple or mistake to be only about articles *not Essential and necessary* in Doctrine, Worship or Government. But if the Synod or Presbytery shall judge such Ministers or Candidates erroneous in *Essential and necessary* Articles of Faith, the Synod or Presbytery shall declare them incapable of Communion with them. And the Synod do solemnly agree, that none of us will traduce or use any opprobrious Terms of those yt [that] differ from us in these *extra-essential and not-necessary* points of Doctrine, but treat them with the same friendship, kindness and brotherly Love, as if they had not differed from us in such Sentiments.” (italics added) (*Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in America, 1706–1788*; Guy S. Klett, ed., Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1979, pp. 103–104)

p. *Disciplinary Case 218-12*

Jane Adams Spahr, Appellant, v. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Redwoods, Appellee.	) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) )	<b>DECISION AND ORDER</b>  Disciplinary Case 218-12
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Headnotes

1. Marriage is defined by the *Book of Order* W-4.9001. Section W-4.9001 provides four definitional statements of marriage. As a definition, W-4.9001 does not prohibit an officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who has been authorized to

perform marriages from performing a same-sex union. A same-sex ceremony is not and cannot be a marriage under W-4.9001.

2. Same-sex unions are not to be confused with marriages. There are differences between same-sex ceremonies and marriage ceremonies. The liturgy should be kept distinct for the two types of services. Officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who are authorized to perform marriages shall not state, imply, or represent that a same-sex ceremony is a marriage because under W-4.9001 a same-sex ceremony is not and cannot be a marriage.

3. Standard of review. Factual determinations made by a trier of fact are accorded a presumption of correctness. Questions of constitutional interpretation are not subject to the same deference.

#### Arrival Statement

This disciplinary case came before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on appeal filed by the Appellant, Jane Adams Spahr (Spahr), from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific (SPJC) dated August 18, 2007.

#### Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Spahr has standing to file the appeal, that the appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal required under D-13.0106.

#### Appearances

Spahr was present in person and was represented by Sara M. Taylor, Tim K. Cahn and Scott Clark. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)] through the Presbytery of Redwoods (Presbytery) was represented by the counsel for the prosecuting committee, Stephen L. Taber, Lyn Hamilton, and David Jordan-Erwin.

#### History

On February 28, 2004, Spahr, a minister of the Word and Sacrament, participated in a wedding ceremony for two men in Ontario, Canada. On October 24, 2004, the Presbytery filed a disciplinary case against Spahr based on this activity, charging her with violating W-4.9001 of the "Directory for Worship." Presbytery withdrew that charge in March, 2005, after determining that Spahr's level of participation in that particular ceremony was not in violation of W-4.9001 and as Authoritatively Interpreted by the 203<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly (*Minutes*, 1991, at 21.124-128) (1991 AI). Presbytery was granted permission to amend the charge to allege that:

Spahr conducted two same-gender marriages: the marriages of Connie Valois and Barbara Jean Douglass on August 21, 2004; and of Annie Senechal and Sherrill Figuera on May 27, 2005 in violation of W-4.9001. On August 21, 2004, you, Dr. Jane Adams Spahr, did perform a wedding service in the marriage of Connie Valois and Barbara Jean Douglass and on May 27, 2005 you did perform a wedding service in the marriage of Annie Senechal and Sherrill Figuera, and thereby you have acted contrary to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. These actions were in violation of W-4.9001 which states, in part, 'Christian marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship....'

By performing these wedding services, you violated Authoritative Interpretations of the General Assembly which declare that it would not be proper for a Minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.

Trial was held before the Presbytery's Permanent Judicial Commission (PPJC) on March 2-3, 2006. In her trial testimony, Spahr acknowledged that she had performed the ceremonies at issue and others preceding them. The record reflects that she also signed a "Certificate of Marriage" for each of the ceremonies which is the subject of this case. She testified that her ministry had been a "ministry of marriage equality." Spahr had officiated at ceremonies between same gender couples whether the couple described the ceremony as a "union," a "marriage" or in other terms. Spahr provided heterosexual and same-sex couples the same counseling and preparation work before performing any ceremony.

At the trial, a motion was made to disqualify a member of the PPJC based on the allegation that the member had a personal interest in the case because she took part with Spahr in a "ceremony of commitment" on August 5-6, 2004. The motion was denied.

By its order dated March 3, 2006, the PPJC found that Spahr had committed no chargeable offense, and thus she was effectively found to be "not guilty" as charged. Based on a 2005 amendment to D-13.0106b, which permits a prosecuting committee to appeal the decision in a disciplinary case, Presbytery filed this appeal on March 23, 2006. A request by the SPJC to refer the case to the GAPJC was denied on May 7, 2007, because (1) the complexity of the issues invited consideration by the full judicial structure of the PC(USA), (2) acceptance of reference to the GAPJC would deny the parties one level

of appellate review, and (3) there would be no extraordinary expense or delay if reference were not accepted. The SPJC subsequently held a hearing, and on August 18, 2007, issued its decision finding, Spahr guilty of violating W-4.9001 and the 1991 AI, and imposing on her the censure of rebuke.

#### Preliminary Statement

This is a disciplinary, not a remedial, case. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament can be charged with offenses for “any act or omission . . . that is contrary to the Scriptures or the Constitution.” (D-2.0203) Such charges must be clear and specific enough that the accused may know and understand the nature of the offenses charged and defend against the charges. In considering this case, this Commission had to determine whether the charges against Spahr were properly stated as offenses contrary to Scripture or the Constitution of the PC(USA). It is important that members and officers of the church know beforehand what conduct is prohibited as well as the basis for imposing censure. The Commission would note that while the Prosecuting Committee relied heavily on the decision in *Benton v. Presbytery of Hudson River Minutes*, 2000, Part I pp. 580-589, Remedial Case 212-11. *Benton* was a remedial case rather than a disciplinary case and involved the policies of a session. It is not applicable to this case.

#### Specifications of Error and Decision

*Specification of Error No. 1 (Appellant’s 5): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by concluding that, taken together, the 1991 AI, Benton and the provisions of W-4.9001 constitute a mandatory prohibition against a minister of the Word and Sacrament conducting same-sex marriages.*

This specification of error is sustained in part and not sustained in part for the reasons stated below following Specification of Error No. 2.

*Specification of Error No. 2 (Appellant’s 4 and 6): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by concluding that Spahr committed a disciplinary offense.*

This specification of error is sustained.

Spahr was charged with and found guilty of violating W-4.9001 and the 1991 AI by *performing* “wedding service[s] in the marriage of” two same-sex couples. The SPJC determined that Spahr was guilty based on her actions in *performing* “wedding” services for two same-sex couples. Even after amendment of the charges by the Presbytery, the offense charged was the act of *performing same-sex marriages*.

There is no prohibition in W-4.9001 against performing a same-sex ceremony. The 1991 AI acknowledged that there is no mention in the *Book of Order* of same-sex unions or ceremonies. The 1991 AI states that it is not “proper” for ministers to conduct ceremonies represented as marriages between persons of the same-sex.

W-4.9001 in the *Book of Order* defines marriage as follows:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

Section W-4.9001 provides four definitional statements of marriage. As a definition, W-4.9001 does not prohibit a minister from performing a same-sex union. Moreover, the 1991 AI did not prohibit ministers from performing ceremonies intended to bless or recognize the union between two men or two women.

The ceremonies that are the subject of this case were not marriages as the term is defined by W-4.9001. These were ceremonies between women, not between a man and a woman. Both parties acknowledged the ceremonies in question were not marriages as defined by the *Book of Order*. It is not improper for ministers of the Word and Sacrament to perform same-sex ceremonies. At least four times, the larger church has rejected overtures that would prohibit blessing the unions of same-sex couples.<sup>1</sup> By the definition in W-4.9001, a same-sex ceremony can never be a marriage. The SPJC found Spahr guilty of doing that which by definition cannot be done. One cannot characterize same-sex ceremonies as marriages for the purpose of disciplining a minister of the Word and Sacrament and at the same time declare that such ceremonies are not marriages for legal or ecclesiastical purposes.

The PPJC was correct in finding that by performing the two ceremonies at issue, Spahr did not commit an offense as charged. Therefore, the SPJC erred in determining that Spahr was guilty of violating W-4.9001 or the 1991 AI.

<sup>1</sup> Annotated *Book of Order* W-4.9001



In holding that Spahr was not guilty as charged, this Commission does not hold that there are no differences between same-sex ceremonies and marriage ceremonies. We do hold that the liturgy should be kept distinct for the two types of services. We further hold that officers of the PC(USA) authorized to perform marriages shall not state, imply, or represent that a same-sex ceremony is a marriage. Under W-4.9001, a same-sex ceremony is not and cannot be a marriage.

Spahr argued that her actions were justified based on her work in providing pastoral care to a marginalized and oppressed community. Spahr served in a validated ministry charged with caring for members of the gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender (GLBT) community and reported regularly to her presbytery about the same-sex unions and “weddings” she performed. These services were not described as marriages in her reports as found in the record of the case.

It is acknowledged by those who have heard this case at every level that Spahr has acted in light of her call and the church’s call to participate in a caring and compassionate ministry to persons who have been marginalized, who are faithful Christians, and who wish to be accepted in every way as full members of the body of Christ. In this, Spahr may consider herself to be acting in the role of a prophet to the church, while others would reject such a characterization. Prophecy contains risk and uncertainty both for those who would speak and for those who listen. The role of a prophet carries consequences. It is the burden of a church officer to accept the consequences of his or her actions that are the ecclesiastical equivalent of civil disobedience. Membership in the PC(USA) is open to all persons. (G-4.0400) The General Assembly has affirmed several times and in various ways its commitment to stand for the just and equal treatment of all persons regardless of sexual orientation. While drawing a distinction between sexual orientation and sexual practice, and maintaining behavioral standards for ordained office that further limit sexual practice, the church has attempted to minister to GLBT persons through the efforts of ministers like Spahr. The tension the church has created between sexual orientation and sexual practice has led to turmoil and dissension that will likely continue for some time. The difficulties faced by this Commission in deciding this case reflect that tension.

Christians are called to do justice. The language of W-7.3000 and W-7.4000 is replete with admonitions that are inconsistent with imposing censure on a minister of the Word and Sacrament for reaching out to a marginalized and oppressed segment of the body. Moreover, “the Christian community offers pastoral care to its members in their personal and communal life.” (W-6.3001) The church should provide ministries of pastoral care to people in recognizing and celebrating times of transition and commitment. (W-6.3010) “The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care as well as for the ministry of nurture in faith.” (W-6.4000)

In summary, Specification of Error No. 1 is not sustained because by definition, “marriage is . . . between a man and a woman.” (W-4.9001) Specification of Error No. 1 and Specification of Error No. 2 are sustained because W-4.9001 does not state a mandatory prohibition on performing a same-sex ceremony. The charge was for performing a marriage ceremony, which by definition cannot be performed.

*Specification of Error No. 3 (Appellant’s 1): The SPJC committed an irregularity in the proceedings by (a) substituting its judgment for that of the PPJC in the evaluation of Spahr’s conduct and (b) failing to apply the 2006 General Assembly’s Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 (2006 AI).*

This specification of error is sustained in part and not sustained in part.

(a) This case raises other procedural issues. This case is an appeal by a prosecuting committee as permitted by D-13.0102. Giving a prosecuting committee the right to appeal does not change the standard of review. Factual determinations made by a trier of fact are presumed to be correct. Questions of constitutional interpretation are not subject to the same deference, but are reviewed by an appellate body anew. (*Hardwick v. Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of North Carolina, Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 45) The SPJC determined that the PPJC erred in its constitutional interpretation.

In a case in which a prosecuting committee appeals a verdict of not guilty, the appellate body should not determine the appropriate censure in the first instance. Therefore, when the SPJC reversed the PPJC verdict, it should have remanded the case to the PPJC to impose a censure consistent with the SPJC’s decision. Attention is drawn to D-11.0403e, in which censures are imposed by the triers of fact who have heard “evidence as to the extent of the injury suffered, mitigation, rehabilitation, and redemption.”

(b) Spahr also contends that the SPJC failed to apply the 217th General Assembly’s Authoritative Interpretation, (2006 AI) and *Bush et al. v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh*, Remedial case 218-10, February 11, 2008. The 2006 AI and *Bush* do not apply because they deal with ordination standards that are not at issue in this case.

*Specification of Error No. 4 (Appellant’s 3): The SPJC committed injustice in the decision by concluding that the Constitution of the PC(USA) sanctions marriage only between a man and woman.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

As more fully discussed above in response to Specifications of Error Nos. 1 and 2, the SPJC was correct that W-4.9001 defines marriage as only between a man and woman, and that the Constitution does not address any other form of marriage. However, as discussed elsewhere in this decision, Spahr did not commit a sanctionable offense as charged.

*Specification of Error No. 5 (Appellant's 7): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by failing to apply the 2006 AI and historic constitutional principles of polity when it failed to determine whether Spahr's performance of same-sex marriages violated an essential tenet of Reformed faith or polity and, if so, whether the violation fell outside the bounds of G-6.0108.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

Because this Commission has found that Spahr did not commit a sanctionable offense as charged, this specification of error is not sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 6 (Appellant's 8): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by incorrectly applying G-6.0108, failing to apply subsections (c)-(e) of the 2006 AI, and by finding Spahr's actions contrary to the Constitution, and, therefore, censurable, even though she "acted with conscience and conviction" in performing her ministerial duty with respect to the marriages.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

Because this Commission has found that Spahr did not commit a sanctionable offense as charged, this specification of error is not sustained.

Spahr justifies her actions by claiming freedom of conscience as delineated in G-6.0108. Freedom of conscience is a foundational principle of the PC(USA). (G-1.0301) However, Spahr's repeated reliance on G-6.0108 as a standard of freedom to justify her actions ignores the thrust of this principle: freedom of conscience must be exercised within bounds. Rather than describing freedom of conscience in any absolute way, G-6.0108 declares the manner in which the conscience of an officer of the church is bound. The binding of the conscience of an officer of the church permits freedom of conscience with regard to the interpretation of Scripture only insofar as it "may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church." Further, G-6.0108 states that an officer's conscience is "captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek or hold office in that body." Submission to the current standards of the church may not always be comfortable, but it is not optional.

*Specification of Error No. 7 (Appellant's 2): The SPJC erred by concluding that a member of the PPJC should have been disqualified.*

This specification of error is sustained.

The SPJC determined that one member of the PPJC should have been disqualified from serving on the PPJC because there was at least an appearance of a conflict of interest. The PPJC member's participation was challenged because she "might conceivably have an interest in the case" based on evidence that she participated with Spahr in a "ceremony of commitment." At that ceremony of commitment, the PPJC member "led a blessing over the wine which was shared 'by the two to be wed,' she shared her story of her relationship with her best friend; she co-read in liturgy; she led a ceremony of lighting a 'unity candle,' which 'is an ancient Jewish custom called circling'; and she offered prayers and the benediction." These actions pertained to ceremonies not at issue in this case and thus did not rise to the level of an "interest in the case" requiring disqualification of the member under D-11.0402b(1).

In this case, the decision of the PPJC not to uphold the challenge to the member in question should not have been overturned. The member was not subject to the mandatory disqualification standards of D-5.0205, which applies to all types of cases. The member also did not fall into the disqualification standards of D-11.0402b(1), which pertain to disqualification in disciplinary cases. D-11.0402b(1) requires disqualification in a disciplinary case when the commissioner is "personally interested in the case" or has been "active for or against any party." The SPJC determination that the member should have been disqualified from serving was in error.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific is reversed and the censure is removed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Redwoods report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Concurring Opinion of Fred L. Denson, William E. Scheu,  
and Gregory A. Goodwiller for Specifications of Error 1 and 2

We join in the foregoing Decision and Order (Decision). We understand the Decision to be an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, to mean that officers of the PC(USA) who are authorized to perform marriages shall not hereafter perform a same-sex union ceremony in which or with respect to which such officer states, implies or represents to be a marriage or the equivalent thereof. While the Commission did not find Spahr guilty as charged herein, in part because her conduct occurred under prior authoritative interpretations, we understand that future noncompliance with the authoritative interpretation of the Decision will be considered to be a disciplinable offense.

Concurring Opinion of Catherine G. Borchert, Tony M. Cook,  
and William E. Scheu for Specification of Error No. 7

Specification of error #7 concerns the conclusion of the SPJC that one of the members of the PPJC should have been disqualified due to her participation in a same gender commitment service.

We agree with the conclusion in law of the majority. However, what is right in a narrow legal sense may not be best either for the parties or for the church. A member of a permanent judicial commission who is placed in a position of trust by his or her sisters and brothers in the church needs to do special work in discerning if their actions and connections with a party to a case places them in a situation in which a reasonable person would question their ability to maintain the objectivity necessary to undertake the task of judging and disciplining another.

In this case, the decision of the PPJC not to uphold the challenge to the member in question was undoubtedly legally correct, and so should not be overturned. The rationale presented by the Synod concerning the participation of the member is wise and should always be considered prayerfully by any commissioner who may have past associations of any kind with a party in a disciplinary case.

Concurring Opinion of Mary Eleanor Johns, Catherine G. Borchert,  
and Susan J. Cornman

Much of the argument in this case centered on the provision of pastoral care by Spahr as her call to ministry. In providing pastoral care, the minister must take into account not only the rules of the church, but the call to faithfulness as Presbyterians. Among other places in the Constitution, the living out of our faithfulness as Christians and as Presbyterians is called forth through the words which define compassion, justice, reconciliation and peace in the "Directory for Worship", W-7.3002–W-7.3004, sections which speak of compassion in settings of worship, show compassion as advocacy, and speak of faithful compassion. The ways in which compassion is seen to be faithful include the following from W-7.3003:

Such acts of compassion, done corporately and individually, are the work of the church as the body of Christ. The church is called to minister to the immediate needs and hurts of people. The church is also called to engage those structures and systems which create or foster brokenness and distortion. Christians respond to these calls through acts of advocacy and compassion, through service in common ministries of the church, and through cooperation with agencies and organizations committed to those ends. (G-3.0300)

The "Directory for Worship" continues, delineating ways in which we are called to serve.

Following the example of Jesus Christ, faithful disciples today express compassion

- a. with respect for the dignity of those in need, ...
- c. with willingness to risk their own comfort and safety.

Acts of compassion through the power of the Holy Spirit are accompanied by the worshipful acts of justice, leading to peace and reconciliation. W-7.4002 includes the following:

Justice is the order God sets in human life ... for giving rights to those who have no power to claim rights for themselves. The biblical vision of doing justice calls for ...

- c. supporting people who seek the dignity, freedom, and respect that they have been denied. ...
- h. redressing wrongs against individuals, groups, and peoples in the church, in this nation, and in the whole world.

In following these constitutional admonitions, a minister may find the call to compassion and advocacy in tension rules of the church. The church's structure and discipline are to be heeded even while the minister's faithfulness to Christ is unquestioned.

Concurring Opinion and Dissenting Opinion in Part of  
Judy L. Woods, Patrick W. Notley, Mary Eleanor Johns, Fane Downs, and Susan J.  
Cornman for Specifications of Error 1 and 2

In rendering its decision, the majority has taken the liberty of legislating in the guise of interpreting inconsistencies between W-4.9001 on the one hand, and the 1991 AI and this Commission's decision in *Benton v. Presbytery of Hudson River*, Remedial Case 212-11 (2000), on the other hand. For the reasons stated herein, we respectfully concur in the result of the majority, but disagree with the decision of the majority to the extent that it rests on the 1991 AI or *Benton*. Spahr was charged with and found guilty of violating W-4.9001 and the 1991 AI by *performing* "wedding" services for two same-sex couples. There is no prohibition in W-4.9001 or elsewhere in the Constitution against performing a same-sex wedding or other ceremonies to recognize or bless same-sex unions. The 1991 AI acknowledged that there is no mention in the *Book of Order* of same-sex unions or ceremonies.

The majority is correct that W-4.9001 defines "marriage" as between a man and a woman. Any ceremony, no matter what is called, between two men or between two women, is not and cannot be a marriage. As a definition, W-4.9001 does not prohibit a minister of the Word and Sacrament or authorized church officer from performing a same-sex union or blessing ceremony. Neither the 1991 AI, nor this Commission's decision in *Benton*, prohibited ministers from performing ceremonies intended to bless or recognize the union between two men or two women. Because a same-sex ceremony cannot be a "marriage" as marriage is defined by W-4.9001, it should not be necessary to say more. It is not the place of this Commission to go any farther and step into the legislative realm. The larger church has declined at least four times to amend W-4.9001 with regard to same-sex ceremonies. The majority now takes this step to amend the definition to include prohibitions. See the Annotations to W-4.9001 describing repeated unsuccessful attempts to change W-4.9001. Any steps to define or distinguish same-sex ceremonies or the nomenclature applied to them is best left to the General Assembly, not this Commission.

*Benton* attempts to draw a line between a marriage and a same-sex ceremony based on the conclusion that a marriage confers a new status on the couple, while a same-sex union blesses an existing relationship. The new status on which *Benton* differentiates marriages from same-sex ceremonies is not defined. Then in circular fashion, *Benton* concludes the status results from the pronouncement of "marriage" which is *a priori* defined by W-4.9001 as a status only available to a man and a woman. *Benton* and the 1991 AI "admonished" ministers and sessions to take special care to avoid confusing same-sex ceremonies with marriages. This advice is consistent with the current state of our Constitutional language, which makes it clear that there is no such thing as "marriage" between same-sex couples. W-4.9001. The majority purports that *Benton* (on which the SPJC relied heavily for its decision to censure Spahr) is not applicable. However, the holding in this case extends the holding in *Benton*. The majority refused to address *Benton* squarely or acknowledge that *Benton* is built on a foundation of sand. We dissent because the majority fails to point out the fallacies of *Benton*, and then converts admonitions in *Benton* into prohibitions. We disagree with that portion of the majority decision and do not join in it. In all other respects, we join in the majority decision as to Specifications of Error Nos. 1 and 2 and as to the remainder of the decision.

Dated this 28th day of April, 2008.

### C. *Governing Bodies Statements of Compliance with General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Decisions*

Section IV.B.2.d. of the *Organization for Mission* requires that when a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission contains an order directed to another governing body, the Stated Clerk report to the General Assembly a statement of the governing body's compliance. Below is a report of the statements of compliance received by the Stated Clerk from the governing bodies for cases decided by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission during the years 2004–2006.

#### 1. *217-12 Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church v. National Capital Presbytery*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic be affirmed, with the clarification that the Constitution requires a congregational meeting on property matters only as specified in G-7.0304, G-8.0501, and G-8.0502.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the National Capital Presbytery report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church report this Decision and Order to the Session at its next meeting, that the Session enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of Mid-Atlantic Stated Meeting on July 24, 2007, and by the Presbytery of National Capital at its Stated Meeting on March 8, 2006.

2. *217-13 John R. Frye v. Session of First Presbyterian Church, Tecumseh, Michigan*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Maumee Valley convene and conduct a trial limited to an examination of the Session's process in responding or failing to respond to Frye's request of March 31, 2004, to be restored to the active roll of the First Presbyterian Church of Tecumseh, Michigan.

The Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission shall convene the trial within ninety days of this decision.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Maumee Valley report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of First Presbyterian Church, Tecumseh, Michigan, report this Decision and Order to the Session at its first meeting after receipt, that the Session enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing the entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of the Covenant Stated Meeting on October 4, 2006, the Presbytery of Maumee Valley Stated Meeting on May 17, 2006, and the First Presbyterian Church of Tecumseh Michigan session meeting on May 26, 2006.

3. *217-14 The Session of the Concord Liberty Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), v. The Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); The Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church to the 217th General Assembly (2006), a Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

The Permanent Judicial Commission dismisses the Complaint in the above-captioned matter on the grounds that the Complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

Case dismissed. No compliance required.

4. *218-1 (Formerly 217-15) Session of Colonial Presbyterian Church, Kansas City, Missouri, v. Session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Overland Park, Kansas*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Mid-America be reversed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Heartland be reversed, that all the preliminary jurisdictional questions be answered in the affirmative, and that this Complaint proceed to trial on the facts unless an alternative resolution is achieved.

The attention of all parties is directed to D-1.0103. In the spirit of this provision, this Commission strongly urges and encourages the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission to explore alternatives to resolve this case between the parties, including allowing time for the Presbytery to consider using a special administrative review of the elder-elect examination process of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church.

If a special administrative review is conducted by the Presbytery, it will determine, in accordance with G-9.0409a, whether the examination:

- (a) was regular and in accordance with the *Constitution*;
- (b) was prudent and equitable; and
- (c) was faithful to the mission of the whole church.

If the dispute between the parties is not resolved by means of a special administrative review or other alternative dispute resolution processes in accordance with G-9.0601, the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission shall proceed with the trial on the merits of the case. Whether the case goes to trial or an alternative method of resolution is used, the parties are enjoined to be mindful of the standards set in the *Wier* case.

The trial, should it be necessary, shall commence by June 1, 2007.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Colonial Presbyterian Church, Kansas City, Missouri, report this decision to the Session at its first meeting after receipt, that the Session enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Overland Park, Kansas, report this decision to the Session at its first meeting after receipt, that the Session enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Heartland report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Mid-America report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of Mid America Stated Meeting on February 24, 2007, the Presbytery of Heartland Stated Meeting on November 8, 2006, the Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church session meeting on October 17, 2006, and the Colonial Presbyterian Church on November 20, 2006.

#### 5. *218-2 (Formerly 217-16) Patricia Fair-Booth v. National Capital Presbytery*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic be affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the National Capital Presbytery report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of Mid-Atlantic Stated Meeting on July 23, 2007, and the Presbytery of National Capital Stated Meeting on September 26, 2007.

#### 6. *218-3 The Session of the Palos Park Presbyterian Community Church v. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the following agreement of the parties is made the Consent Order of the GAPJC concerning the parties' dispute:

The parties have agreed to conclude this case by agreement on the following issues and to the entry of their agreement as a final decision and order in this matter.

##### The Role of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution in Advising the General Assembly

With respect to all questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* that have been referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) by the Stated Clerk (G-13.0112c), the parties agree that the ACC may include in its advice (*i.e.*, findings and recommendations under G-13.0112d) to the General Assembly, given no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly (G-13.0112b), a single response that collectively addresses plural questions, along with other responses directed to individual questions. The parties further agree that where the ACC chooses to issue a collective response, such a collective response must provide a reasonable person with sufficient basis to understand how the findings and recommendations in its collective response address every question posed. The ACC acknowledges that the Constitution obligates it to provide advice to the General Assembly that a reasonable person would recognize is responsive to every question requiring a constitutional interpretation (G-13.0112d), and the ACC will comply with this responsibility. See *Manual of the General Assembly Standing Rule A.5.a.*

## 04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

### The General Assembly's Open Meeting Policy

The ACC acknowledges that it is an entity subject to the provisions of the General Assembly Open Meeting Policy. The ACC agrees that it will secure advice from the Office of the Stated Clerk about whether the Open Meeting Policy permits it to close its meeting to discuss a particular subject and, that prior to closing its meeting to discuss that subject, it will announce the advice it has received and record in its official record the advice it received and the reason it is going into executive session. Whenever the ACC considers or acts upon subjects not enumerated in section 3(a) of the Open Meeting Policy, such as a request for reconsideration of prior advice, the Policy obliges the consideration or action to be done in open session.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly report this Consent Order to the General Assembly at its first meeting after receipt, that the General Assembly enter the full Consent Order upon its minutes.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of Palos Park Community Presbyterian Church report this Consent Order to the Session at its next meeting, that the Session enter the full Consent Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Consent Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

This decision is reported in the *Minutes* of the 218th General Assembly (2008), and was reported at the Palos Park Presbyterian Community Church session meeting on May 22, 2007.

### 7. *218-4 George R.. Stewart v. Mission Presbytery*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Order of Dismissal dated March 23, 2007, of the Executive Committee of this Commission is affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of Mission Presbytery report this decision to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Sun report this decision to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of the Sun Stated Meeting on October 26, 2007, and the Presbytery of Mission Stated Meeting on June 9, 2007.

### 8. *218-5 Douglas J. Essinger-Hileman and Sandra D. Essinger-Hileman v. The Presbytery of Miami*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant is affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of Miami Presbytery report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

This decision was reported at the Synod of the Covenant Stated Meeting on October 5, 2007, and the Presbytery of Miami Stated Meeting on June 12, 2007.

### 9. *218-6 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Through the Presbytery of Wyoming v. Gordon R. J. King.*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains is hereby affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Wyoming report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Presbytery of Wyoming Stated Meeting on September 15, 2007.

10. *218-7 The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Through the Presbytery of The Redwoods Prosecuting Committee v. Jane Adams Spahr*

The following order was entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

*This Request for Reference dated December 22, 2006, was submitted to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) by the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific (SPJC), under D-4.0100.*

Whether to accept a reference from a lower body's judicial commission is a matter of discretion to be exercised by the permanent judicial commission of the higher body. GAPJC considered the Request and hereby refuses to accept reference of this case. Responding to the reasons suggested by SPJC for the reference, GAPJC, under D-4.0203, states the following reasons for the refusal:

1. A Matter of First Impression. While this may be a case of first impression as to an appeal by a prosecuting committee, now permitted under D-13.0102, it is not a matter of first impression as to the substance of the complaint. See, for example, *Benton et al., v. Presbytery of Hudson River, Minutes*, 2000, p. 586. The complexity of the issues invites consideration through the full judicial structure of the PC(USA).

2. An Appeal Inevitable. Despite an assertion by SPJC that an appeal is inevitable, it is not for GAPJC to speculate whether a non-prevailing party at the SPJC level will appeal a decision of SPJC. Further, the judicial framework established by the *Book of Order* provides an intermediate level of appellate review at the synod level. Acceptance of this reference would deny the parties one level of review.

3. Undue Expense and Delay. The expense and delay, if any, that may result from this refusal of reference is not likely to be extraordinary, as SPJC claims.

THEREFORE, this case is returned to the SPJC for action in accordance with D-4.0203.

Returned to the Synod of the Pacific for hearing. No compliance required.

11. *218-8 Hyung K. Yun, Yun Soo Kim, Young Yoon Kim, Kwan Young Lee, Seung G. Ahn, In Bae Chun, Richard Yun, and Kee Ho Lim v. Session of Korean United Presbyterian Church of New Jersey*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that this case is remanded for further proceedings before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast as provided above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of Session of the Korean United Presbyterian Church of New Jersey report this Decision and Order to the Session at its next meeting, that the Session enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly (D-8.0404f).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Newark report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

This decision was reported at the Synod of the Northeast Stated Meeting on October 19, 2007\*, the Presbytery of Newark Stated Meeting on September 25, 2007, and the Korean United Presbyterian Church session meeting on August 5, 2007.

*\*The Synod of the Northeast meets annually. The decision was reported at the October 2007 meeting and is included in the draft of the minutes. The minutes of that meeting will not formally be approved until the October 2008 stated meeting.*

12. *218-13 Presbytery of South Louisiana v. Synod of the Sun*

The Executive Committee of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly further finds that the Complaint fails to state one or more claims upon which relief can be granted. This remedial case is dismissed.

Case Dismissed. No compliance required.



**D. Votes of Presbyteries****218th General Assembly (2008)**

Presbytery	Amendment 06-A			Amendment 06-B.1.			Amendment 06-B.2.			Amendment 06-B.3.			Amendment 06-C.			Amendment 06-D.			Amendment 06-E.			Amendment 06-F.		
	A	N	NA	A	N	NA	A	N	NA	A	N	NA	A	N	NA	A	N	NA	A	N	NA	A	N	NA
Abingdon		N			N		A			A			A			A			A			A		
Alaska		N			N					A			A			A			A			A		
Albany	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Arkansas	A			A					N			A			A			A			A			
Atlantic Korean-Amer	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Baltimore		N			N				N			A			A			A			A			
Beaver Butler		N			N				N				N		A			A			A			
Blackhawk		N		A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Boise	A			A			A			A				N		A			A			A		
Boston		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			
Carlisle		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			N
Cascades		N		A					N				N		A			A			A			
Cayuga-Syracuse	A			A			A			A				N		A			A			A		
Central Florida		N		A			A			A			A			A			A			A		N
Central Nebraska	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Central Washington		N			N		A				N			N		A				N		A		
Charleston-Atlantic		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			
Charlotte		N			N				N				N		A			A			A			
Cherokee		N			N				N				N		A			A			A			
Chicago		N			N				N			A			A			A			A			
Cimarron	A			A			A			A				N		A			A			A		
Cincinnati	A			A					N			A			A			A			A			
Coastal Carolina	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Dakota	A			A					N			A			A			A			A			
de Cristo		N		A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Denver	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		N
Des Moines	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Detroit		N			N				N				N		A			A			A			
Donegal		N		A					N				N		A			A			A			
East Iowa	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
East Tennessee		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			N
Eastern Korean	A			A					N			A			A			A			A			
Eastern Oklahoma	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Eastern Oregon	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Eastern Virginia		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			
Eastminster		N				NA			N					NA			NA			NA				NA
Elizabeth		N		A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Flint River		N			N		A			A			A			A			A			A		
Florida		N			N				N			A			A			A			A			
Foothills		N			N		A			A			A			A			A			A		
Genesee Valley		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			
Geneva		N		A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Giddings-Lovejoy	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Glacier	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		N
Grace	A			A					N			A			A			A			A			
Grand Canyon		N			N				N			A				N		A			A			
Greater Atlanta		N		A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Great Rivers	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Hanmi	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Heartland	A			A					N			A			A			A			A			
Holston	A			A					N			A			A			A			A			
Homestead		N			N				N			A			A			A			A			
Hudson River	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
Huntingdon		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			N
Indian Nations		N		A					N			A				N		A			A			
Inland Northwest		N		A					N			A				N		A			A			
James		N			N				N				N		A			A			A			
John Calvin	A			A			A			A			A			A			A			A		
John Knox		N		A					N			A			A			A			A			

04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

Kendall		N		N		A		A		A		A		A		A		N
Kiskiminetas		N		A			N	A		A		A		A		A		A
Lackawanna		N		N		A		A		A		A		A		A		
Lake Erie		N		A		A		A		A		A		A		A		
Lake Huron	A			A		A		A		A		A		A		A		
Lake Michigan	A			A		A		A		A		A		A		A		
Lehigh	A			A		A		N		A		A		A		A		
Long Island	A			A			N	A			N		A		A		A	
Los Ranchos	A			A			N	A			A		A		A			N
Mackinac	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Maumee Valley	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Mid-South		N			N		N		N		A		A		A		A	
Miami	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Middle Tennessee		N		A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Mid-Kentucky	A			A		A		A			N		A		A		A	
Midwest Hanmi		N			N		N	A			A		A		A		A	
Milwaukee	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Minnesota Valleys	A			A		A		A			N		A		A		A	
Mission		N		A			A	A			A		A		A		A	
Mississippi		N			N		N		N		N		A		A		A	
Missouri River Valley	A			A		A		A			N		A		A		A	
Missouri Union	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Monmouth	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Muskingum Valley	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
National Capital	A			A			N	A			N		A		A		A	
Nevada		N			N		N		N		N		A		A		A	
New Brunswick	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
New Castle	A			A				NA			NA			NA		A		NA
New Covenant		N			N		N	A			N		A		A		A	
New Harmony	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
New Hope		N		A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
New York City		N			N		N			NA		N			NA		NA	
Newark	A			A		A		A			N		A		A		A	
Newton	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
North Alabama	A				N		N	A			A		A		A			N
North Central Iowa	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
North Puget Sound		N			N		N	A			A		A		A		A	
Northeast Georgia	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Northern Kansas	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Northern New Eng.	A				N		N	A			N		A		A		A	
Northern New York	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Northern Plains		N		A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Northern Waters	A			A		A		A			N		A		A			N
Northumberland		N			N		N	A			N		A			N	A	
Northwest PR	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Ohio Valley	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Olympia		N		A		A		A			N		A		A		A	
Pacific		N		A			N	A			N		A			N	A	
Palisades		N		A			N	A			N		A		A		A	
Palo Duro			NA			NA		NA			NA		NA		NA		NA	NA
Peace River	A			A			N	A			N		A		A		A	
Peaks	A			A			N	A			N		A		A			N
Philadelphia	A			A			N	A			N		A		A		A	
Pines	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Pittsburgh		N			N		N	A			A		A		A		A	
Plains and Peaks		N			N		N	A			N		A			N		N
Prospect Hill	A			A		A		A			A		A		A			N
Providence	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	
Pueblo		N			N		N	A			A		A		A		A	
Redstone		N			N		N	A			A		A		A		A	
Redwoods	A			A		A			N		A		A		A		A	
Riverside		N			N		A	A			A		A		A		A	
Sacramento		N			N		N		N		N			N		N		N
St. Andrew		N			N		A	A			A		A		A		A	
St. Augustine	A			A			N	A			A		A		A		A	
Salem	A			A		A		A			A		A		A		A	

04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

San Diego	A			A			A			A			A			A			A					
San Fernando		N		A			A			A			N			A			A					
San Francisco	A			A			N			A			A			A			A					
San Gabriel		N			N			N		A			N			A			A					
San Joaquin		N			N			N		N			A			A			N		A			
San Jose		N		A				N		A			A			A			A					
San Juan	A			A			A			A			N			A			N		N			
Santa Barbara		N			N			N		N			A			A			N		N			
Santa Fe	A			A				N		A			A			A			A					
Savannah	A			A				N		A			A			A					N			
Scioto Valley	A			A				N		A			N			A			A					
Seattle		N			N			N		A			A			A			A					
Shenango		N		A			A			A			A			A					N			
Shenandoah		N		A			A			A			A			A			A					
Sheppards/Lapsley	A			A			A			A			A			A			A					
Sierra Blanca		N		A			A			A			N			A			A					
South Alabama	A			A			A			A			A			A			A					
South Dakota	A			A			A			A			N			A			A					
South Louisiana		N			N			N		N			N			A			N		A			
Southeastern Illinois	A			A				N		A			A			A			A					
Southern Kansas		N			N			N		A			A			A			A					
Southern New Eng.		N			N		A			A			A			A			A					
Stockton		N			N			N		N			N			A			A					
Suroeste	A			A			A			A			A			A			A					
Susquehanna Valley	A			A			A			A			N			A			A					
Tampa Bay	A				N		A			A			A			A			A					
Transylvania	A			A			A			A			N			A			A					
Tres Rios		N			N			N		A			A			A			A					
Trinity		N		A				N		A			A			A			A					
Tropical Florida		N			N		A			N			A			A			A					
Twin Cities Area	A			A				N		A			A			A			N		A			
Upper Ohio Valley		N		A				N		A			N			A			A					
Utah		N			N		A			A			N			A			A					
Utica	A			A			A			A			A			A			A					
Wabash Valley	A			A			A			A			A			A			A					
Washington		N		A			A			N			A			A			A		N			
West Jersey	A			A				N		N			A			A			N		A			
West Virginia	A			A				N		A			A			A			A					
Western Colorado	A			A				N		A			A			A			A		N			
Western Kentucky	A			A			A			A			A			A			A		N			
Western New York		N		A				A					N			A			A					
Western NC	A			A				N		A			A			A			A		N			
Western Reserve		N		A				N		A			N			A			A					
Whitewater Valley	A			A			A			A			A			A			A					
Winnebago	A			A			A			A			A			A			A		N			
Wyoming		N			N			N		N			A			A			A		N			
Yellowstone		N		A				N		A			A			A			A					
Yukon	A			A			A			A			A			A			A		N			
	<b>89</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3</b>

**REPORT OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OF THE 217TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2006)**

(Amendments require 87 votes to pass)

	Affirm.	Neg.	No Action
<b>06-A. Revision of Form of Government, Chapter XIV with Additional Amendments to Book of Order Preface and G-6.0500, G-6.0600, G-6.0700, G-9.0405, G-11.0405, G-11.0408 and G-11.0504.</b>	89	83	1
<b>06-B.1. Moving Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning Questions and Service Information to the Directory for Worship—On Amending G-14.0206 - .0209, G-14.0405, G-14.0510-.0511, G-14.0801g and h, and W-4.4000.</b>	124	47	2
<b>06-B.2. Adding Licensure of Candidates—On Amending G-14.0309.</b>	79	92	2
<b>06-B.3. Removing Synod Approval of Extraordinary Exam Process—On Amending G-14.0313b.</b>	147	22	4
<b>06-C. Enabling New General Assembly Council Structure—On Amending G-9.0703, G-13.0107, G-13.0201 and G-13.0202.</b>	125	45	3
<b>06-D. Opening COM to Access by Commissioned Lay Pastors—On Amending G-11.0503.</b>	169	1	3
<b>06-E. Members of the Synod—On Amending G-12.0101.</b>	158	11	4
<b>06-F. Naming Certified Christian Educators as Mandated Reporters—On Amending G-14.0701.</b>	145	25	3

## Item 05-01

[The assembly answered Item 05-01 by the action taken on Item 05-12. See p. 42.]

*On Rescinding the Action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on Recommendation 5 of the Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana.*

The Presbytery of South Louisiana overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to rescind the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on Recommendation 5, the “authoritative interpretation” of the Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, 514–15).

### *Rationale*

The recent approval of Recommendation 5 of the Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church does not seem to be promoting the peace, unity, and purity of the church.

With one significantly divided vote, the General Assembly apparently made the Constitution’s standards for ordination optional: “Ordaining and installing bodies, acting as corporate expressions of the church ... determine ... whether a candidate being examined for ordination and/or installation ... has departed from scriptural and constitutional standards [and] ... whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith ... thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515).

This “authoritative interpretation” has been perceived by many as accomplishing a change that would more properly have been done through a constitutional amendment for action by the presbyteries.

In 1998, 66 percent of the presbyteries, and in 2001, 73 percent of the presbyteries voted to retain G-6.0106b as an ordination standard.

The approval of this “authoritative interpretation” has resulted in the loss of several churches, and may result in the loss of more churches and members throughout the denomination.

General Assembly actions now take twice the time to address since the decision to move to biennial assemblies.

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**Concurrence to Item 05-01 from the Presbytery of St. Andrew.**

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**Concurrence to Item 05-1 from the Presbytery of Sacramento (with Additional Rationale).**

### *Rationale*

Since the passage of Recommendation 5 (authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108) by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, 514–15), there has been among churches, sessions, and presbyteries, confusion, greater mistrust, tension, fragmentation, and a lack of peace, unity, and purity. We have witnessed large churches leaving or attempting to leave the PC(USA). These churches are our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ and watching their departure is grief-provoking.

In the aftermath of Recommendation 5, instead of being about the business of Jesus Christ and kingdom growth, we are consumed by property concerns, by drafting resolutions to set our own policy, by trying to understand what words mean now that they have lost their real meaning, e.g., “shall” and “standards,” by debates, by process, and by legal battles.

Instead of scrupling over a nonessential item in a confession of faith, scrupling is now occurring (and permitted by higher governing bodies) over the polity of the church—over standards in the *Book of Order*—when scrupling was never intended to cause us to escape the provisions of our polity.

Recommendation 5 has accomplished a change in the interpretation of the ordination standards of the *Book of Order*, which does change the *Book of Order* because by definition a standard is something everyone agrees to and if a standard is up for individual interpretation, then it is no longer a standard. And under the ruse that there was no change to the *Book of Order*, the presbyteries were not permitted to vote aye or nay.

With confusion, mistrust, tension, and distraction from working for the kingdom abounding, all as a result of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, this overture seeks to rescind Recommendation 5 and return to total focus on Jesus Christ.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-01

*Advice on Item 05-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 05-01.

If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Item 05-01, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to answer Item 05-01 with an action that takes into account the concern identified in the Rationale below.

#### *Rationale*

Item 05-01 is part of a group of items before the 218th General Assembly (2008) addressing the ordination and/or installation of candidates for office in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). No issue has absorbed as much energy and attention from General Assemblies over the past two decades as this one. For a variety of reasons, the issue is not only one that evokes deep passion, but also one with a complex history. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution strongly believes that a clear understanding of this history and the current interplay of constitutional provisions and authoritative interpretations is an absolute prerequisite to discerning where the Holy Spirit is leading the 218th General Assembly (2008) with respect to the variety of options before it. In order to assist the assembly in understanding this history and interplay of constitutional provisions, this advice therefore sets out: (1) a summary of the items before the 218th General Assembly (2008) related to ordination and/or installation; (2) an explanation of the means by which the *Book of Order* is amended and interpreted; (3) background concerning the approval and interpretation of G-6.0106b prior to the 217th General Assembly (2006); (4) background concerning the 217th General Assembly (2006)'s approval of an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108b as it applies to the examination of candidates for ordination and/or installation in office; (5) a review of recent decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission pertaining to the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108b; and (6) a review of the options available to the 218th General Assembly (2008) with respect to these items.

Accordingly, while Item 05-01 itself is short and on its face straightforward, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) consider it within the broader context of the various items addressing the ordination and/or installation of candidates for office. The last section of this rationale specifically addresses Item 05-01 in light of this broader advice.

#### 1. *Business Before the 218th General Assembly (2008) Related to Ordination and Installation of Church Officers*

The 218th General Assembly (2008) has before it a wide variety of items addressing how governing bodies should determine whether a candidate should be ordained and/or installed, and what conduct bars such ordination and/or installation. These items generally fall into four categories, with some overlap between these categories:

- a. Proposals to eliminate or substantially amend G-6.0106b and to approve a new authoritative interpretation withdrawing the authoritative interpretation regarding ordination and installation that was in place prior to the adoption of G-6.0106b.
- b. Proposals to preserve the current provisions of G-6.0106b but reaffirm the use of G-6.0108b in the examination of candidates for ordination or installation by reaffirming or clarifying the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006).
- c. Proposals to withdraw the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) or to approve a replacement authoritative interpretation limiting the use of G-6.0108b in ordination and installation decisions.
- d. Proposals to amend G-6.0108b (and in one instance G-6.0106b) to preclude its application to the examination of candidates with respect to their satisfaction of G-6.0106b's prerequisites to ordination or installation.

A variety of responses are possible to these various proposals. Evaluation of those options requires an understanding of the implications of constitutional amendment as opposed to authoritative interpretation, as well as of the history of these is-

sues and the current status of both these constitutional provisions and of the authoritative interpretations governing those provisions.

## 2. *How the Book of Order Is Amended and Interpreted*

There are three sources of constitutional authority for the PC(USA):

(a) The Constitution itself and amendments to it. The process of constitutional amendment is carefully defined in the *Book of Order* (Chapter XVIII).

(b) General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission decisions interpreting the Constitution. The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission makes such decisions in the context of hearing the appeal of particular disputes (remedial cases) or of allegations against an individual (disciplinary cases), or, fairly rarely, in an action originating in the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission itself. The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission only interprets the constitution in the context of such particular cases and appeals.

(c) Deliberate General Assembly interpretations approved pursuant to process described in G-13.0112. The General Assembly approves such interpretations not in the context of particular disputes, but for the broader guidance of the church. Any General Assembly is free to modify or withdraw an authoritative interpretation approved by a previous General Assembly or by a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission.

Decisions by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission and General Assembly interpretations under G-13.0112 together are referred to as “authoritative interpretations” (G-13.0103r). The most recent interpretation of a provision of the *Book of Order* is binding.

In this context, the constitutional structure of the church is not modeled on the United States federal system with the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission as a supreme court that has final authority in constitutional matters because the General Assembly itself also has power to provide authoritative interpretations of the Constitution in accordance with G-13.0103r. The General Assembly is not permitted to overturn the resolution of a particular dispute between the parties to a case before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, but it is permitted to overturn a constitutional interpretation adopted by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission by approving an authoritative interpretation setting forth a different interpretation than the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission used in deciding the particular case before it.

## 3. *The Adoption and Interpretation of G-6.0106b prior to the 217th General Assembly (2006)*

In 1978, the former UPCUSA adopted a policy statement that came to be called “definitive guidance.” The next year, 1979, the former PCUS adopted a similar statement. Both sought to prohibit the ordination of “self-affirming practicing homosexual persons.” The General Assembly of this church determined in a permanent judicial commission (PJC) decision (*Union Presbyterian Church of Blasdell v. The Presbytery of Western New York, Minutes*, 1985, Part I, p. 118 et seq.) that those earlier statements carried the authority of the present Constitution. Thus, the earlier “definitive guidance” became an “authoritative interpretation” prohibiting the ordination of “self-affirming practicing homosexual persons.”

In 1996, the General Assembly proposed, and in 1997 the presbyteries adopted, an amendment to the Form of Government found at G-6.0106b, which provides:

Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

The provisions of G-6.0106b have been interpreted by the General Assembly PJC on several occasions.

In *Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church* (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 831) [Wier I], the General Assembly PJC held that G-6.0106b does not authorize the nullification of an ordination that has been completed, even if the ordination might have been contrary to G-6.0106b’s provisions.

In *Benton, et al v. Presbytery of Hudson River* (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 586), the General Assembly PJC limited the application of G-6.0106b, finding: “The Appellants argue that since G-6.0106b is a foundational standard derived from the Confessions, it should be applied to standards for worship as well. This is unpersuasive. The plain language of G-6.0106b speaks only to ordination. The adoption of G-6.0106b did nothing to change the constitutional interpretation concerning worship practices set out in the 1991 Authoritative Interpretation ....” (Ibid, 587).

In *Londonderry, et al v. Presbytery of Northern New England* (Minutes, 2001, Part I, p. 577), the General Assembly PJC held that a higher governing body had an obligation to exercise pastoral oversight when an ordaining body (a session) adopted the position that “we vow to continue welcoming persons living singly or in committed relationships, regardless of sexual orientation, into the life, membership and leadership of this congregation on an equal basis, including eligibility for election and ordination as a ruling elder or deacon” (Ibid, pp. 577–78). In reaching this conclusion, the PJC noted: “G-6.0106b presents the qualifications established by the corporate judgment of the whole church for ordination to service as minister of the Word and Sacrament, elder, and deacon. The Historic Principles of Church Order are explicit as to the right of the church to make and to enforce these standards ....” (Ibid, p. 579). Further, the PJC noted: “It is not unusual for a document such as our Constitution, written at different periods of time and under different circumstances, to exhibit tensions and ambiguities in its provisions. Nevertheless, it is the task of governing bodies and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions.”

In *Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church of Ft. Lauderdale* (Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 339) [Wier II], the General Assembly PJC held that an allegation that the accused was a “practicing homosexual” was an insufficient allegation of an irregularity against the respondent, and that the complaint must allege that the person purportedly disqualified from ordination or installation must have self-acknowledged the proscribed sin. The PJC further explained: “Self-acknowledgment may come in many forms. In whatever form it may take, self-acknowledgment must be plain, palpable, and obvious, and details of this must be alleged in the complaint” (Ibid, p. 341). Finally, the PJC went on to hold that “[s]ince the standard for self-acknowledgment is that it be plain, palpable, and obvious, the ordaining and installing governing body is in the best position to make any such determination based on its knowledge of the life and character of the candidate” (Ibid).

In *Presbytery of San Joaquin v. Presbytery of the Redwoods* (Minutes, 2003, Part I, p. 277), the General Assembly PJC held that “sexual orientation alone would be no more sufficient or reasonable grounds for further questioning than would singleness, obesity or any other categorization. In other words, stereotypical profiling is not a reasonable or valid ground for singling out a candidate for additional questioning. Therefore, if a person does not self-acknowledge a practice that the confessions call sin, then a governing body has a positive obligation to make further inquiry only if it has direct and specific knowledge that said person is in violation of the ordination and installation standards of the Constitution” (Ibid, p. 280).

In *McKittrick v. Session, West End Presbyterian Church of Albany, New York* (Minutes, 2003, Part I, p. 272), the General Assembly PJC held that where an “elder had admitted during his examination that he was a gay man in a fifteen-year relationship, and that this information had previously been shared with his pastors and the nominating committee of the church” (Ibid, p. 272), a remedial case could seek a declaration that the installation was irregular. Further, the PJC held that a remedial case could challenge the procedures followed by the installing body, as opposed to the conduct of the individual installed. Finally, the PJC noted that “when, as in this case, an installation occurs immediately following the examination process, there may be no practical opportunity for a protesting or dissenting party to seek a stay of enforcement of the decision to install. The Presbyterian custom of conducting business ‘decently and in order’ should not be converted into a race in which the swift prevail. We undermine our system of mutual accountability when the proceedings such as ordination or installation are rushed with the consequence (whether intended or otherwise) that certain remedies become unavailable. Therefore, we encourage governing bodies to permit sufficient time between the examination and installation or ordination of a candidate so that there can be no intimation that any governing body intended to shield its action from scrutiny” (Ibid, 274).

These cases before the General Assembly PJC thus established the following authoritative interpretations of G-6.0106b:

(1) Governing bodies are not free to declare that they will disobey the constitutional standards for ordination and installation established by the whole church, and when faced with such a declaration higher governing bodies must exercise oversight, whether pastoral or administrative over the disobedient governing body.

(2) Section G-6.0106b applies to ordination and installation, and does not otherwise set constitutional limitations for governing bodies.

(3) Section G-6.0106b requires that the conduct complained of be self-acknowledged for it to constitute a basis for challenging a governing body’s decision to ordain or install, as opposed to its process for making such a decision. Self-acknowledged means that by words or actions, the person seeking ordination or installation has made it plain, palpable, and obvious that he or she is engaged in conduct “the confessions call sin.” Alleged sexual sin (lack of chastity in singleness or fidelity in marriage) is subject to the same high standard of self-acknowledgment as any sinful behavior in precluding ordination or installation.

(4) With respect to a challenge based on an alleged lack of chastity or fidelity, sexual orientation alone is not sufficient ground to require a governing body to make further inquiry into a person’s fitness for office.

(5) A challenge made to the process by which a governing body makes a decision to ordain or install is subject to review, and presumably to correction of the process by which such decisions are made.



The authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) answered a question raised by G-6.0106b that neither the General Assembly nor the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission had previously addressed: how an ordaining or installing body should determine which practices the confessions call sin.

#### 4. *The 217th General Assembly's Approval of an Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the following authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 based on the recommendation of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church:

- a. *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government of the *Book of Order* set forth the scriptural and constitutional standards for ordination and installation.
- b. These standards are determined by the whole church, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries. These standards may be interpreted by the General Assembly and its Permanent Judicial Commission.
- c. Ordaining and installing bodies, acting as corporate expressions of the church, have the responsibility to determine their membership by applying these standards to those elected to office. These determinations include:
  - (1) Whether a candidate being examined for ordination and/or installation as elder, deacon, or minister of Word and Sacrament has departed from scriptural and constitutional standards for fitness for office,
  - (2) Whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation.
- d. Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.
- e. All parties should endeavor to outdo one another in honoring one another's decisions, according the presumption of wisdom to ordaining/installing bodies in examining candidates and to the General Assembly, with presbyteries' approval, in setting standards. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) that this proposed authoritative interpretation G-6.0108 was a permissible interpretation if the assembly chose to approve it. Section G-6.0108 provides:

- a. It is necessary to the integrity and health of the church that the persons who serve in it as officers shall adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government. So far as may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained.
- b. It is to be recognized, however, that in becoming a candidate or officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. His or her conscience is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek or hold office in that body. The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the governing body in which he or she serves.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has pointed out that G-6.0108 reflects an important principle of Presbyterian polity—the balance between the individual right of conscience recognized in the Westminster Confession and the necessity of uniformity within our denomination in those things our community has found to be essential. While the principle originated at the time of the Adopting Act in 1729 based on certain ministers' objections to portions of the Westminster Confession relating to the relationship between the church and civil government, over the history of the denomination the view of what is essential and nonessential broadened to other issues.

In response to the question as to whether the authoritative interpretation was impermissible because it allowed individuals to “obstruct the constitutional governance of the church,” the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006):

“[O]bstructing the constitutional governance of the church” means a refusal to carry out the duties of office. For example, a candidate could say that he (presumably it would be a he) did not believe in the ordination of women and be ordained or installed as long as he was willing to participate in the functions of the office, including such ordinations or installations. See *Hambrick v. PJC, Synod of North Carolina* (No. 1-1983) and *Simmons v. Presbytery of Suwannee* (No. 197-4). A formal declaration not to comply with a *Book of Order* provision goes beyond bounds of freedom of conscience. Application of G-6.0108b in the examination process to interpret the bounds of acceptable belief does not. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, Errata Page)

Prior to the approval of this authoritative interpretation, the relationship between G-6.0108 and G-6.0106b had not been authoritatively interpreted by either previous General Assemblies or the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. In its advice to the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution discussed the relationship between these two provisions:

By using the phrase “practice which the confessions call sin” rather than delineating practices that bar ordination, G-6.0106b creates an intersection between belief and practice. A person can only repent of conduct he or she genuinely believes to be sinful. If a person does not believe conduct to be sinful, he or she may abstain from that conduct out of concern for the well-being of the community (e.g., 1 Corinthians 8), but he or she cannot be said to repent of that conduct. The authoritative interpretation allows an ordaining or installing governing body, when faced with a particular practice that is described as sinful at some place in the confessions, that the candidate does not believe to be sinful, to ordain or install the candidate on the basis that the candidate's *belief* that the practice was not sinful does not depart from the essentials of the Reformed faith. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 529)

During the course of the 217th General Assembly (2006), the proposed authoritative interpretation recommended by the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church was amended both by the committee and on the floor of the assembly. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) that these amendments did not change the effect of the authoritative interpretation from that described in the rationale offered by the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church.

#### 5. *Permanent Judicial Commission Application of the Authoritative Interpretation*

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission recently issued three decisions—*Buescher v. Presbytery of Olympia* (Remedial Case 218-09); *Bush v. the Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (Remedial Case 218-10); *Session of First Presbyterian Church of Washington v. Presbytery of Washington* (Remedial Case 218-15)—applying the authoritative guidance to particular controversies. Each of these cases arose from the adoption by presbyteries of resolutions declaring certain “mandatory” provisions of the Form of Government as “essential,” and therefore not provisions from which a candidate for ordination or installation could depart without being barred from ordination or installation. In each case, the PJC determined that the presbytery under the authoritative interpretation was not permitted to determine outside the scope of a particular examination of a particular candidate what was a departure from what was essential:

[T]he broad reference in G-6.0106b to “any practice which the confessions call sin” puts the responsibility first on the candidate and then on the examining body to determine whether a departure is a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity and the remainder of G-6.0108(a) with respect to freedom of conscience. The ordaining body must examine the candidate individually. The examining body is best suited to make decisions about the candidate’s fitness for office, and factual determinations by examining bodies are entitled to deference by higher governing bodies in any review process.

*Bush* further states that G-6.0108 protects “freedom of conscience, but *only* with respect to the interpretation of Scripture.” However, as the decision goes on to point out, such departures may relate to the Presbyterian system of doctrine, government, or discipline. In other words, Presbyterians may depart from our denomination’s doctrine, government, or discipline if they determine their interpretation of Scripture leads them to such a departure. In the context of an examination of a candidate for office, the governing body must determine, in light of the interpretation of Scripture offered, whether that departure is from something essential to the Reformed doctrine, government or discipline.

In addressing the meaning of the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission indicated that the follow limitations apply: “It is up to the examining body to determine whether a candidate’s actions and beliefs, including with respect to G-6.0106b, are a serious departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity, or are such that they infringe on the rights and views of others, or would obstruct the constitutional governance of the church (G-6.0108a).”

The permanent judicial commission then went on to address the ability of governing bodies to apply the authoritative interpretation to the provisions of G-6.0106b:

As finally adopted, the Authoritative Interpretation does not equate “polity” with “behavior.” Nevertheless, the church has required those who aspire to ordained office to conform their actions, though not necessarily their beliefs or opinions, to certain standards, in those contexts in which the church has deemed conformity to be necessary or essential. Section G-6.0106b contains a provision where conformity is required by church officers “to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or in chastity in singleness.” The church has decided to single out this particular manner of life standard and require churchwide conformity to it for all ordained church officers. Therefore, the specific “fidelity and chastity” standard in G-6.0106b stands in contrast to the provisions of G-6.0106a, including those concerning faith, discipleship, belief and manner of life in the church and the world, and also the remainder of G-6.0106b. The candidate and examining body must follow G-6.0108 in reaching a determination as to whether the candidate for office has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity, but that determination does not rest on distinguishing “belief” and “behavior,” and does not permit departure from the “fidelity and chastity” requirement found in G-6.0106b.

*Bush* reached this conclusion based upon its view that the rationale of the Theological Task Force and of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution were not accepted by the final action of the assembly and its view that the requirements of G-6.0108 that bar obstruction of the constitutional governance of the church would be offended by a different understanding of the authoritative interpretation.

Thus, after *Bush*, the following are true:

a. Earlier holdings of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) remain in place, including the holdings that G-6.0106b requires that the conduct complained of be self-acknowledged for it to constitute a basis for challenging a governing body’s decision to ordain or install, as opposed to its process for making such a decision. Lack of chastity in singleness or of fidelity in marriage is subject to the same standard of self-acknowledgment as any sinful behavior in precluding ordination or installation. Self-acknowledged means that by words or actions, the person seeking ordination or installation has made it plain, palpable, and obvious that he or she is engaged in conduct “the confessions call sin.”

b. The authoritative interpretation approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) remains in effect and governing bodies are not permitted to determine outside the examination of a particular candidate whether a departure is from the

essentials of Reformed faith and polity. However, the authoritative interpretation does not apply to the second sentence of G-6.0106b.

#### 6. *Options Available to the 218th General Assembly (2008)*

The 218th General Assembly (2008) may address the various items related to ordination and installation in a number of ways:

- a. The General Assembly may take no action, leaving in place the 2006 authoritative interpretation, as applied by *Bush*.
- b. The General Assembly may modify the authoritative interpretation to overturn its modification by *Bush* by clarifying how G-6.0108b may be used in the application of the second sentence of G-6.0106b. Item 05-12 recommends this course of action.
- c. The General Assembly may withdraw the 2006 authoritative interpretation. This item and Item 05-02 suggest this course of action.
- d. The General Assembly may approve a different authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108b. Items and 05-04 and 05-05 recommend this course of action.
- e. The General Assembly may submit to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote an amendment to G-6.0106b to limit a governing body's ability to find a departure to be from a nonessential tenet of Reformed faith and polity. Items 05-10 and 06-15 recommend this course of action.
- f. The General Assembly may submit to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote an amendment to repeal G-6.0106b (or replace it with a different standard), and either withdraw or leave in place the authoritative interpretation of gay and lesbian persons found in *Blasdell*. Items 05-06, 05-08, 05-09, 05-11, and 05-13 recommend this course of action.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution's advice as to each of these approaches is set forth in the items suggesting that approach.

#### 7. *Advice Concerning Item 05-01*

Item 05-01 requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) "rescind" the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108b approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006). Initially, the General Assembly should consider whether the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission decisions issued since the overture was offered have addressed the concerns raised by the rationale to the overture.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution reminds the General Assembly that a motion to rescind is not in order "[w]hen something has been done as the result of the vote on the main motion, that is impossible to undo" (*Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised* [10th ed.] p. 297, ll. 32–33). The authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) governed all examinations for ordination or installation since its approval, and so cannot be "rescinded" with respect to those actions already taken. An assembly may, however, withdraw or replace an authoritative interpretation of a provision of the *Book of Order* approved by a previous assembly. Withdrawal of an authoritative interpretation leaves governing bodies and individual Presbyterians free to interpret the *Book of Order* provision without the guidance or restrictions imposed by that authoritative interpretation. If the 218th General Assembly (2008) desires to allow governing bodies and individual Presbyterians to interpret G-6.0108b without being bound by the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006), then the proper action is to withdraw that authoritative interpretation and all subsequent judicial interpretations thereof. The General Assembly should note that the effect of such an action would not be to prohibit governing bodies and individual Presbyterians from continuing to follow this authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108. Rather, the effect of such a withdrawal of the authoritative interpretation would be to leave governing bodies and individual Presbyterians free to interpret G-6.0108 for themselves within the guidance provided by *Bush* absent the future approval of a new authoritative interpretation of that provision.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that Item 05-01 is identical in effect to Items 05-02 and 05-04, and that those items could also be answered by the assembly's response to this request.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at G-2.0103b. To extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the*

*current G-6.0108, the identical provision (although not divided into two paragraphs) in the proposed Form of Government is found at G-2.0104.*

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-01 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-12.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 05-01 urges rescinding the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on Recommendation 5 of the Report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 05-01 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-03.

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**Item 05-02**

**[The assembly answered Item 05-02 by the action taken on Item 05-12. See p. 42.]**

*On Requesting That All Actions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) Related to the Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity Be Fully Rescinded—From the Presbytery of Central Washington.*

The Presbytery of Central Washington overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to take the following action:

That all actions, either specifically noted or implied, of the 217th General Assembly (2006) of the PC(USA) related to the report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity (PUP) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, Item 06-01), be completely and fully rescinded.

Specifically, the authoritative interpretation of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of section G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*, in Recommendation 5, shall be given no further force or effect (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 514–18, Item 06-01, Recommendation 5); such that all previous actions of General Assemblies or other judicatories that may have been in any way effected by this authoritative interpretation, shall be restored to the status they held in the church before such action of the 217th General Assembly (2006).

***Rationale***

These actions have begun to have a significant negative and irreparable effect on the church in loss of members, congregations, and financial giving.

Inactions at this next General Assembly to repair this damage will likely accelerate the loss of membership, churches, giving, and mistrust within the denomination.

The true effect and scope of these actions are so poorly understood that even the Stated Clerk cannot fully understand or predict what they may be. Even many of the commissioners of the 217th General Assembly (2006) reported after the vote that they were unsure of the full effects or meaning of the actions they had passed.

While it may not be necessary to rescind all the elements of the PUP report, it is important to be sure that there are no elements of the report that may, by direct reference or by implication, unintentionally effect future actions of any judicial commission or other church body.

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-02**

*Advice on Item 05-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 05-02 with its action on Item 05-01, which is virtually identical to this item.

*Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which both sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers and the Advisory Committee on the Constitution's advice concerning a nearly identical item of business.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-02 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-12.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 05-02 requests that all actions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) related to the Report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church be fully rescinded.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that item 05-02 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-03.

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## **Item 05-03**

**[The assembly approved Item 05-03 with amendment. See p. 42.]**

*On Directing the Stated Clerk to Collect and/or Develop Models of Examination Procedures—From the Presbytery of Scioto Valley.*

**The Presbytery of Scioto Valley respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

- **Commend presbyteries and sessions that have incorporated serious theological reflection and prayerful discernment into their examination procedures, as recommended by the 217th General Assembly (2006) in its approval of the report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 513ff), and the authoritative interpretation approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Ibid*, pp. 514–15).**

- **Direct the Stated Clerk to collect and/or develop models of such procedures, and make them available to the whole church.**

~~• Remind sessions and presbyteries, as they carry out their constitutional responsibilities under G-6.0108, that~~

~~the purpose of ordination and installation examinations is to discern whether God has called and equipped persons for particular service, in order to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, engage in faithful ministry in the world, build up the church of Jesus Christ, and bring glory to God;~~

~~in light of this purpose, persons being examined should be treated with respect;~~

~~theological questions should offer the opportunity for the prospective member to demonstrate knowledge of the Reformed tradition and insight in application;~~

~~—personal questions on all topics should be posed with discretion and sensitivity, and questioners should recognize “that it would be a hindrance to God’s grace to make a specific inquiry into the sexual orientation or practice of candidates for ordained office or ordained officers where the person involved has not taken the initiative in declaring his or her sexual orientation” (Minutes, UPCUSA, 1978, Part I, p. 264).]~~

### *Rationale*

In its report to the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity and Purity of the Church reminded us all that:

Peace, unity, and purity are gifts of the Spirit to the church. They are also hard won virtues for any church, as our review of Presbyterian history reminds us. Presbyterians have regularly and sometimes vehemently disagreed about fundamental features of our confession, order, and discipline. How we deal with one another in controversy—especially how we accept judgment and reconciliation won for us in Christ—is a challenge to our discipleship, a test of our faith, and our most convincing witness to the truth and power of the gospel we proclaim. (*A Season of Discernment, Final Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church*, 2005, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), OGA-05-088, p. 32, lines 920–926; also found at <<http://www.pcusa.org/peaceunitypurity/finalreport.htm>>)

The 217th General Assembly (2006), in approving its recommendation, urged our denomination to be church in a new way, a new way that paradoxically arose out of some of our oldest, deepest principles. Included in these principles are:

All ministry in the Church is a gift from Jesus Christ. Members and officers alike serve mutually under the mandate of Christ who is the chief minister of all. His ministry is the basis of all ministries; the standard for all offices is the pattern of the one who came “not to be served but to serve.” (Matt. 20:28) (*Book of Order*, G-6.0101)

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One responsibility of membership in the church is the election of officers who are ordained to fulfill particular functions. The existence of these offices in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church. These ordained officers differ from other members in function only. (*Book of Order*, G-6.0102)

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38.287

Ordination is an act by which those God calls to necessary, representative offices of leadership in God’s service are identified and authorized for their work. The word ordination is derived from the word “order.” In ordination the church orders itself for the ministry of God’s service, authorizing and inducting women and men with particular gifts to equip and lead it in its service of God’s Reign in the world.

38.288

Within the Reformed tradition, ordination refers to more than the liturgical action of prayer with the laying on of hands. It also includes actions by which the church discerns whether someone has been called by God:

- Testing of someone’s sense of inner call—gifts, character, knowledge, and fitness for leadership;
- Election by some community of God’s people; and
- Ratification of these matters by some governing body of the church. (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 1046, Theology and Worship Ministry Unit Proposal of the Task Force on Theology and Practice of Ordination to Office in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)).

Regrettably, our old differences are hard to give up. In too many parts of our church, we have been unwilling to try the new way offered us. Nevertheless, signs of hope surround us. Many sessions and presbyteries have taken the actions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) seriously, and have tried to do church in a new way. It is hard work to rebuild trust in a denomination too long at odds within itself. It requires time and resources to (in the words of the task force): “school ourselves in the foundational theological commitments and the practical wisdom . . . that have allowed Presbyterian churches at their best to remain grounded and, at the same time, flexible and open to alternative means within and beyond their history and practice” (*A Season of Discernment*, p. 30). The Presbytery of Scioto Valley urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to commit the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to continue the work of building a faithful, trusting church that the last General Assembly began by reaffirming the actions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) and ensuring that resources that allow that work to be done are shared throughout our denomination.

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**Concurrence to Item 05-03 from the Presbyteries of Giddings-Lovejoy, Middle Tennessee, National Capital, and the Western Reserve.**

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**Concurrence to Item 05-03 from the Presbytery of Cayuga Syracuse (with Additional Rationale)**

### *Rationale*

We reaffirm our support of the Theological Task Force on Peace Unity and Purity’s report and recommendations approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and believe it still provides positive guidance to sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly as we together seek to be faithful to God in our examination of church officers.

We believe that the selection of church officers is an important part of our lives together. And our desire is to honor the standards and procedures of the examination of officers as part of our connection to the PC(USA).

We believe that all who serve in the church do so in response to the call and mandate of Jesus Christ and that persons ordained to positions of leadership are set apart to perform particular functions yet all are equally called to serve as Christ came to serve (1 Cor. 12:4–11; Eph. 4:1–6; G-5.0102, G-6.0101, G-6-0102).

We believe the process and act of ordination is a sacred one and is more than the liturgical action of prayer and the laying on of hands. We believe it includes the discerning process through which ordaining bodies seek affirmation of God’s call. This discerning process involves the testing of someone’s sense of inner call—gifts, character, knowledge, and fitness for leadership; election by the community of faith; and ratification of a governing body.

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### **Concurrence to Item 05-03 from the Presbytery of the Redwoods (with Additional Rationale).**

#### *Rationale*

Two years ago, the 217th General Assembly (2006) presented to the church—in its authoritative interpretation—a way of living together as Christ’s church, even in the presence of disagreements (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 514–15). Five years before that, the 213th General Assembly (2001) had appointed a task force to lead the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) “in spiritual discernment of our Christian identity, in and for the 21st century” (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 29), particularly in light of longstanding disagreements in the church. Faithful to its mandate, that task force proposed—and the 217th General Assembly (2006) approved—a process by which congregations and governing bodies throughout our church may reflect on and discern the matters that unite and divide us.

In its report to the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church reminded us all that:

Peace, unity, and purity are gifts of the Spirit to the church. They are also hard won virtues for any church, as our review of Presbyterian history reminds us. Presbyterians have regularly and sometimes vehemently disagreed about fundamental features of our confession, order, and discipline. How we deal with one another in controversy—especially how we accept judgment and reconciliation won for us in Christ—is a challenge to our discipleship, a test of our faith, and our most convincing witness to the truth and power of the gospel we proclaim. (Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church Final Report, p. 32, Lines 921–27)

The 217th General Assembly (2006) urged our denomination to be church in a new way, a new way that paradoxically arose out of some of our oldest, deepest principles. Included in these principles are:

- “All ministry in the Church is a gift from Jesus Christ. Members and officers alike serve mutually under the mandate of Christ who is the chief minister of all. His ministry is the basis of all ministries; the standard for all offices is the pattern of the one who came ‘not to be served but to serve.’ (Matt. 20:28)” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0101).
- “One responsibility of membership in the church is the election of officers who are ordained to fulfill particular functions. The existence of these offices in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church. These ordained officers differ from other members in function only” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0102).

The election of officers who are ordained to fulfill particular functions is an important and vital function of church members. Ordination is an act by which those God calls to necessary, representative offices of leadership in God’s service are identified and authorized for their work. In ordination the church orders itself for the ministry, authorizing and inducting women and men with particular gifts to equip and lead it in its service of God’s reign in the world.

Within the Reformed tradition, ordination requires the testing of a person’s inner call; gifts, character, knowledge, and fitness for leadership. In discerning God’s call, the church enters into a covenant relationship with the candidate, walks with the candidate during a period of preparation, and ultimately examines the candidate, assessing how the candidate’s life demonstrates the gospel of Jesus Christ in the church and in the world (*Book of Order*, G-6.0106a). Such examination should be thorough, respectful, and always guided by the Holy Spirit at work in the church.

It is not easy work the 217th General Assembly (2006) commended to us, but it is a proven way. Since 2006 many sessions and presbyteries have taken the actions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) seriously, and have tried to do church in a new way. It is hard work to rebuild trust in a denomination too long at odds within itself. It requires time and resources to (in the words of the task force) “school ourselves in the foundational theological commitments and the practical wisdom ... that have allowed Presbyterian churches at their best to remain grounded and, at the same time, flexible and open to alternative means within and beyond their history and practice” (Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church Final Report, p. 30, lines 877–82). The Presbytery of the Redwoods urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to commit the

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to continue the work of building a faithful and trusting church by reaffirming the actions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) and ensuring that resources that allow that work to be done are shared throughout our denomination.

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**Concurrence to Item 05-03 from the Presbytery of Maumee Valley (with Additional Rationale).**

***Rationale***

“All ministry in the Church is a gift from Jesus Christ. Members and officers alike serve mutually under the mandate of Christ who is the chief minister of all. His ministry is the basis of all ministries; the standard for all offices is the pattern of the one who came ‘not to be served but to serve.’ (Matt. 20:28)” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0101)

“One responsibility of membership in the church is the election of officers who are ordained to fulfill particular functions. The existence of these offices in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church. These ordained officers differ from other members in function only.” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0102)

Within the Reformed tradition, ordination refers to more than the liturgical action of prayer with the laying on of hands. It also includes actions by which the church discerns whether someone has been called by God:

- Testing of someone’s sense of inner call—gifts, character, knowledge, and fitness for leadership;
- Election by some community of God’s people; and
- Ratification of these matters by some governing body of the church. (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 1046, Theology and Worship Ministry Unit Proposal of the Task Force on Theology and Practice of Ordination to Office in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)).

While God has equipped us with gifts necessary to our calling, our ministry together is to be grounded in our love for one another.

“We are convinced that the Holy Spirit  
still calls people to various offices in the church  
and gives diverse gifts to believers.

We are to use them to speak and embody plainly  
the gospel of Christ in the world

No gift is of value without love.” (“A Declaration of Faith” published by the Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), PDS #OGA-91-005).

The 2005/2007 version of the *Book of Order* described the purpose of theological questioning in this manner: “This examination shall assess the candidate’s capacity to make effective use of the classical theological disciplines and of the confessional documents of the church in relating the gospel to the faith of the church in the contemporary world” (G-14.0310d(3)).

A previous assembly has clearly stated that “it would be a hindrance to God’s grace to make a specific inquiry into the sexual orientation or practice of candidates for ordained office or ordained officers where the person involved has not taken the initiative in declaring his or her sexual orientation. (Policy Statement and Recommendations, 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.)

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**Concurrence to Item 05-03 from the Presbytery of the Cascades (with Additional Rationale).**

***Rationale***

“All ministry in the Church is a gift from Jesus Christ. Members and officers alike serve mutually under the mandate of Christ who is the chief minister of all. His ministry is the basis of all ministries; the standard for all offices is the pattern of the one who came ‘not to be served but to serve.’ (Matt. 20:28)” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0101).

“One responsibility of membership in the church is the election of officers who are ordained to fulfill particular functions. The existence of these offices in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church. These ordained officers differ from other members in function only.” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0102).



Ordination is an act by which those God calls to necessary, representative offices of leadership in God Service are identified and authorized for their work. The word ordination is derived from the word “order.” In ordination the church orders itself for the ministry of God Service, authorizing and inducting women and men with particular gifts to equip and lead it in its service of God’s Reign in the world.

Within the Reformed tradition, ordination refers to more than the liturgical action of prayer with the laying on of hands. It also includes actions by which the church discerns whether someone has been called by God:

- Testing of someone’s sense of inner call—gifts, character, knowledge, and fitness for leadership;
- Election by some community of God’s people;
- Ratification of these matters by some governing body of the church. (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 1046, “Theology and Practice of Ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”)

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### Concurrence to Item 05-03 from the Presbytery of Albany (with Additional Rationale)

#### *Rationale*

1. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 and other recommendations of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church that remind the church of the primary role of sessions and presbyteries in decisions about the ordination and installation of officers. The task force report, which the assembly received with thanks, expressed the fervent hope that by reemphasizing the historic Presbyterian process of examination for ordination, the church could discern God’s will and the Spirit’s leading even while Presbyterians continue to disagree deeply about many topics, including biblical interpretation and human sexuality. The church has just begun to implement these recommendations, so it is important to keep them at the forefront. That is the purpose of this overture.

2. Recently, attention in the secular and church press has focused on congregations that are considering withdrawal from their denominations. Many more congregations and governing bodies, however, are working hard to keep together Christians who disagree but who share a deep bond in Christ. In our denomination, some sessions and presbyteries have led the way in developing practices of discernment and dialogue. They deserve the church’s thanks and commendation. The collection and distribution of examples and models already in use will help others to incorporate discernment practices.

3. “All ministry in the Church is a gift from Jesus Christ. Members and officers alike serve mutually under the mandate of Christ who is the chief minister of all. His ministry is the basis of all ministries; the [highest] standard for all [Christians] is the pattern of the one who came ‘not to be served but to serve.’ (Matt. 20:28)” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0101).

4. The election of officers who are ordained to fulfill particular functions is a solemn function of church members. Ordination is an act by which those God calls to necessary, representative offices of leadership in God’s service are identified and authorized for their work. In ordination the church orders itself for the ministry, authorizing and inducting women and men with particular gifts to equip and lead it in its service of God’s Reign in the world.

5. Within the Reformed tradition, ordination requires the testing of a person’s inner call—gifts, character, knowledge, and fitness for leadership. For this reason, serious examination of candidates for office is centrally important, especially in light of the responsibility of the ordaining/installing body to decide whether the candidate meets all essential standards of faith and practice.

6. It is critically important that examinations be conducted in a respectful manner that bespeaks gratitude for the candidates’ offer of their lives to God. Personal questioning about such matters as finances, family, and sexuality should be sensitive and considerate. Policy statements and court rulings have stressed the importance of fairness and sensitivity with respect to sexual matters. The 190th General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (which adopted the “Definitive Guidance”) said in its recommendations “that it would be a hindrance to God’s grace to make a specific inquiry into the sexual orientation or practice of candidates for ordained office or ordained officers where the person involved has not taken the initiative in declaring his or her sexual orientation.” The Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly confirmed in *Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church, Fort Lauderdale*, Remedial Case 214-5, that G-6.0106 applies to “self-acknowledged” practices that depart from standards and that such self-acknowledgement must be “plain, palpable and obvious.”

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-03

*Advice on Item 05-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding 05-03 with the following comment.

Item 05-03 does not seek constitutional action, but rather the distribution of resources related to the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108b to the denomination. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly may find useful in considering this item.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 05-03 directs the Stated Clerk to collect and/or develop models of examination procedures.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be approved.

#### *Rationale*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church’s recommendation to “urge governing bodies, congregations, and other groups of Presbyterians to follow the example of the task force and other groups that, in the face of difficult issues, have engaged in processes of intensive discernment through worship, community building, study, and collaborative work.”

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the task force’s commitment to listen for the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit in the faith community through respectful, open dialogue. As God’s people share their own personal stories and engage in respectful, honest conversation, we are often moved by the Holy Spirit to new understandings. Item 05-03 supports this kind of dialogue and provides a concrete way for congregations to engage in such conversations. We affirm our corporate belief in the Holy Spirit who calls us to “hear the voices of peoples long silenced” (*The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith). This recommendation provides a substantial means of hearing these previously silenced voices.

Opening ourselves to the Spirit, we expect new insights and pray for our church to grow new ears and eyes. We lift up the type of discernment discussed here and also found in Item 05-13.

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## Item 05-04

**[The assembly answered Item 05-04 by the action taken on Item 05-12. See p. 42.]**

*On Rescinding Recommendation 5 of the Report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, and Approving a New Authoritative Interpretation Regarding Ordination Standards—From the Presbytery of Huntingdon*

The Presbytery of Huntingdon overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Rescind the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on Recommendation 5, the authoritative interpretation, of the Report of the Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church.
2. Approve a new authoritative interpretation affirming that G-6.0106b, “Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament,” is an essential of the Reformed faith, any departure from which constitutes a serious breach of the standards and essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation (*Book of Order*, G-6.0108b). Furthermore, no inquirer who cannot affirm the standards of the requirements expressed in G-6.0106b shall be promoted to candidacy, and no candidate who cannot affirm the standards of the requirements expressed in G-6.0106b shall be deemed certified ready for examination for ordination. Any governing body that fails to uphold these standards shall be deemed to be obstructing the constitutional governance of the church (*Book of Order*, G-6.0108a).

*Rationale*

Recommendation 5 of the report of the Task Force on the Peace, Unity and Purity of the Church, approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) as an authoritative interpretation of the Constitution, stated:

- a. *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government of the *Book of Order* set forth the scriptural and constitutional standards for ordination and installation.
- b. These standards are determined by the whole church, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries. These standards may be interpreted by the General Assembly and its Permanent Judicial Commission.
- c. Ordaining and installing bodies, acting as corporate expressions of the church, have the responsibility to determine their membership by applying these standards to those elected to office. These determinations include:
  - (1) Whether a candidate being examined for ordination and/or installation as elder, deacon, or minister of Word and Sacrament has departed from scriptural and constitutional standards for fitness for office.
  - (2) Whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation.
- d. Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.
- e. All parties should endeavor to outdo one another in honoring one another's decisions, according the presumption of wisdom to ordaining/installing bodies in examining candidates and to the General Assembly, with presbyteries' approval, in setting standard. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515)

The approval of this statement as an authoritative interpretation does not seem to be promoting the peace, unity, and purity of the church.

The approval of this authoritative interpretation has created confusion and doubt about our constitutional standards and their applicability to the entire church, and specifically has created confusion about whether or not G-6.0106b is an essential of the Reformed faith, any departure from which constitutional standard "constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith ... thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation."

The General Assembly has repeatedly affirmed the gifts and requirements for ministry incorporated in the Form of Government of the *Book of Order* (G-6.0106b). Many persons in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have focused on Recommendation 5 of the report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, all of which was approved as an authoritative interpretation of the Constitution, that reminded governing bodies of their responsibility to determine membership by applying the standards of the Constitution, rather than on their responsibility to uphold the standards of that Constitution. This has contributed to controversy and division in the church. Section G-14.0480 reminds us that ordination for the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church, but the current authoritative interpretation encourages individual governing bodies to set their own individual standards, which breaks the unity of the church and makes a mockery of our Constitution, and brings the vow of all officers of the denomination to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church (W-4.4003g) into disrepute.

We believe that a clear statement, expressed as an authoritative interpretation, that the willingness to adhere to the standards of G-6.0106b is an essential requirement for ordination to and holding office in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would contribute greatly to the peace, unity, and purity of the denomination.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-04**

*Advice on Item 05-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 05-04.

*Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Item 05-04 requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) both rescind the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and approve a new authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108. With respect to the request to rescind this authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which also sets forth the relevant considerations if the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to address the prong of this overture seeking to rescind the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108.

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission decision in *Buescher v. Presbytery of Olympia* (Remedial Case 218-09) states as follows:

By declaring in advance the mandates to be “essentials,” and by establishing in advance the mandates to be an absolute bar to ordination and installation, the Presbytery violated G-6.0108 and the Authoritative Interpretation. As was stated in the 1927 Report of the Special Commission of 1925 (the “Swearingen Commission Report”) Presbyterian Church in the United States of America *Minutes*, 1927, pp. 78–79:

One fact often overlooked is that by the Act of 1729, the decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be in specific cases. It was no general authority that might be stated in exact language and applied rigidly to every case without distinction. It was an authority somewhat undefined, to be invoked in each particular instance . . . . It was clearly the intention that this decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be made after the candidate had been presented and had declared his [or her] beliefs and stated his [or her] motives personally, and after the examining body . . . had full opportunity to judge the man himself [or woman, herself] as well as abstract questions of doctrine.

The proposed authoritative interpretation in Item 05-04 would violate this prohibition by declaring in advance mandates to be essentials.

(The Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises disapproval of this overture because it seeks to expand the prohibitions of G-6.0106b to those seeking to become inquirers and candidates in the process leading to ordination. Section G-6.0106b does not have application to such individuals or the process by which individuals are approved to move to these stages in the discernment process. Moreover, the overture would bar individuals “who cannot affirm the standards of the requirements expressed in G-6.0106b” from becoming candidates or being certified for ordination. There is no basis in our polity for requiring agreement with specific provisions of the Form of Government, as opposed to conformity with its behavioral standards, as a precondition to ordination, installation or the steps leading thereto.)

As suggested in response to Item 05-05, if the 218th General Assembly (2008) does not believe that *Bush* addresses the concerns raised sufficiently and desires that G-6.0108b not be applied to making such a determination in the context of an examination for ordination or installation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly either (1) withdraw the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 and approve an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0106b defining which practices the confessions call sin; or (2) submit to the presbyteries an amendment to G-6.0106b that replaces the phrase “practices the confessions call sin” with a list of conduct the assembly believes should bar ordination or installation, or with some other standard that does not require definition through interpretation of the confessions.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at 2.0103b.*

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-04 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-12.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 05-04 is on rescinding Recommendation 5. of the Report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, and approving a new authoritative interpretation regarding ordination standards.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 05-04 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-03.

## Item 05-05

[The assembly answered Item 05-05 by the action taken on Item 05-12. See p. 42.]

*On Approving an Authoritative Interpretation to G-6.0108, “Freedom of Conscience—Interpretation of Scriptures”—From the Presbytery of Cherokee.*

The Presbytery of Cherokee overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA) to approve the following authoritative interpretation of subsection G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*:

A governing body is not permitted to ordain or install a candidate for deacon, elder, or minister of the Word and Sacrament after determining that the candidate has departed, without repentance, from the standards for ordination expressly provided in the *Book of Order*. Such unrepentant departure is a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed polity, and is a negative answer to the required constitutional question: Will you be governed by our church’s polity? Provisions of the *Book of Order* are signified as being standards by use of the term “shall,” “is/are to be,” “requirement,” or equivalent expression.

### *Rationale*

#### 1. *Summary*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved, with amendment, an authoritative interpretation (AI) of G-6.0108 recommended in the report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church. The AI sets forth the manner in which the church establishes ordination standards and the process that governing bodies are to follow in applying those standards. While the AI mentions departures from “essentials of *faith and polity*,” the absence of specificity regarding compliance with *Book of Order* requirements leaves considerable confusion. Particularly, the AI is not clear as to whether a governing body may ordain or install a candidate who has departed, without repentance, from standards for ordination expressly provided in the *Book of Order*.

This lack of clarity has created confusion and has led many sessions and presbyteries to adopt resolutions that set their own policies, so further interpretation is needed. The AI proposed in this overture clarifies the question in a manner that is consistent with the *Book of Order*, with previous authoritative interpretations, and with rulings of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission.

The contrary interpretation—that a governing body may ordain or install such a candidate—is not consistent with those authorities, and requires that certain express provisions of the *Book of Order* be ignored. It would be a *de facto* amendment to, rather than an interpretation of, the *Book of Order*, and would require approval of the presbyteries to be valid.

These summary statements are developed more fully, with references, below.

#### 2. *Lack of Clarity in the 2006 AI*

The 2006 AI is not clear as to whether ordaining bodies can override the plain meaning of provisions of the *Book of Order* and judicial directives that require compliance with expressed standards<sup>1</sup> for ordination. While the task force’s supporting rationale states that an ordaining body can ordain a candidate not compliant with G-6.0106b [lines 1222–30], the AI itself makes no such explicit statement. The Office of the General Assembly has issued Constitutional Musing #11 and Advisory Opinion #18 to clarify the matter, but they fail to do so, in large part because CM #11 contradicts portions of AO #18.

#### 3. *Consistency of the Proposed AI with the Church’s Constitution*

Sections G-1.0300, G-1.0400, and G-4.0300 set forth the historic basic principles of church government and polity. Four of these principles, together with express provisions of the *Book of Order* that are based on them, establish church polity related to standards for ordination. They are:

*The church’s right to establish ordination standards.* In its ruling on the *Londonderry* case, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission stated that G-1.0302 explicitly gives the church the right to make and enforce qualifications for ordination established by the whole church.<sup>2</sup> Several subsections of the *Book of Order* establish specific requirements for ordination. Among them are those relating to training and education [G-14.0240, G-14.0450], successful completion of an examination [G-14.0240, G-14.0482], affirmative response to the constitutional questions [G-14.0300, G-14.0490, W-4.4000], personal conduct [G-6.0106b], and adherence to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity [G-6.0108a]. As provisions of the *Book of Order*, these requirements are standards adopted by the whole church.

*The church's unity.* The ordination or installation of an elder, deacon, or minister of the Word and Sacrament by an appropriate governing body is an act of the whole church [G-1.0400, G-9.0103, G-14.0480]. With power to act on behalf of the whole church, a governing body must faithfully apply the ordination standards adopted by the whole church. The failure of governing bodies to do so, without prompt correction by higher governing bodies, would seriously damage the church's unity and diminish the authority of the church's constitution.

*The review of governing bodies' actions.* Ordination decisions and all other actions of a governing body are subject to review by the next higher governing body [G-4.0301f, G-9.0103].

*The freedom of conscience.* The first sentence of paragraph 6.109 of *The Book of Confessions* (Westminster Confession) proclaims freedom of conscience "in matters of faith or worship." This sentence is the foundation of the principle that the *Book of Order* reaffirms in G-1.0301a. But there are limits placed on this freedom in both *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*.

In *The Book of Confessions* (6.110), immediately following paragraph 6.109, is the warning: "They who, upon pretense of Christian liberty, do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty." Freedom of conscience is not intended to be a dispensation to continue sinful practices.

In the *Book of Order*, G-6.0108 limits freedom of conscience by providing that it is to be maintained unless there is: (1) a serious departure from "the essentials of Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government," (2) an infringement on the rights and views of others, or (3) an obstruction of the constitutional governance of the church. The proposed AI is consistent with these limitations, as explained below.

- In general, the Form of Government expresses essentials of Reformed polity by establishing requirements or mandates and, in relation to ordination, by adopting ordination standards. Therefore, a candidate's declaration of a scruple with respect to an ordination standard expressed in the *Book of Order* and his or her unrepentant failure to comply with it would be a serious departure from the essentials.

- An ordination standard adopted by the whole church necessarily represents the views of many Presbyterians. The ordination of a candidate who deliberately and without repentance refuses to comply with such a standard would be a clear infringement of the rights and views of many others.

- The ordination of a candidate who deliberately and without repentance refuses to comply with an ordination standard adopted by the whole church would be an obstruction of the constitutional governance of the church because the ordaining body would have ignored a requirement of the *Book of Order*. It also would indicate that the candidate could not honestly give an affirmative answer to the required constitutional question: Will you be governed by our church's polity?

It should be noted that paragraph c of the 2006 AI, which describes how governing bodies are to apply ordination standards, calls for them only to make a determination relative to the first bulleted item above. It does not include the determinations relative to the second and third bullets, which are clearly required by G-6.0108a. This is another reason that further interpretation is needed.

In the *Londonderry* ruling, the GAPJC rejected an assertion that G-1.0301a and G-6.0108 affirm freedom of conscience with respect to matters addressed by G-6.0106b.<sup>3</sup> The proposed AI is consistent with that ruling.

The interpretation that a governing body may ordain or install a candidate who has departed, without repentance, from standards for ordination expressly provided in the *Book of Order* would permit inconsistent application of standards that could be unfair to some candidates. One governing body may deny ordination to a candidate because it determines a particular manner-of-life practice of the candidate to be a departure from the essentials of Reformed polity, while another governing body may ordain a candidate who engages in that same practice. The question of whether a candidate's engaging in a particular practice is a departure from the essentials should apply to that practice, not to the candidate. Consistent application of the standards adopted by the whole church is required to assure fairness to all candidates.

This interpretation, which is contrary to the proposed AI, also would create a conflict between two parts of the *Book of Order*, the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline. A candidate's unrepentant declaration that his or her personal conduct does not comply with a manner-of-life mandate of the Form of Government is an admission of guilt of an offense. An offense is defined in the Rules of Discipline [D-2.0203b] as an act contrary to the Scriptures or the church's Constitution; it does not have to be a departure from the essentials of Reformed polity. If the ordaining body determines that the conduct is not a departure from the essentials and ordains the candidate, the candidate would be subject to censure and the ordaining body would be subject to correction by a higher body for failing to initiate disciplinary action. It should be noted that, in the *Londonderry* ruling, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission stated that tensions and ambiguities between provisions of the church's Constitution are to be resolved "in such a way as to give effect to all provisions. It is not within the

power of any governing body or judicial commission to declare a properly adopted provision of the *Constitution* to be invalid.”<sup>4</sup>

#### Endnotes

1. The word “standard” can have several meanings. In this interpretation, “standard” means “requirement.” (See *World Book Dictionary*, 2003, definition 2, and *American Heritage Dictionary*, 4th Ed., 2000, definition 6b.) That “requirement” is the proper meaning in this context is clearly shown by the text of the second sentence of G-6.0106b, the focus of this debate. It begins: “Among these standards is *the requirement* to live either....” [Emphasis added.]
2. *Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 579, paragraph 12.1045.
3. *Ibid*, p. 578, paragraph 12.1043.
4. *Ibid*, p. 578, paragraph 12.1044.

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### Concurrence to Item 05-05 from the Presbyteries of Charleston-Atlantic and Los Ranchos.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-05

*Advice on Item 05-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 05-05.

#### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Item 05-05 seeks to amend the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) in response to the recommendations of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, 523). The stated intent of this item is to clarify “whether a governing body may ordain or install a candidate who has departed, without repentance, from standards for ordination expressly provided in the *Book of Order*.”

Initially, the 218th General Assembly (2008) may wish to consider the application of this authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 in *Bush v. the Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10)*, as discussed in the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice with respect to Item 05-01. If the assembly believes that this application answers the concern raised in the rationale to the overture, it may answer the overture by disapproving it with the comment that the *Bush* decision has addressed the concern raised in the overture.

If the 218th General Assembly (2008) does not believe that the *Bush* decision has addressed the concern raised in the overture, the 218th General Assembly (2008) has the power to modify authoritative interpretations approved by previous assemblies. However, the language proposed by this overture would not accomplish its stated intent and fails to reflect the applicable provisions of the *Book of Order* relating to ordination and installation of church officers.

Specifically, the overture seeks to prohibit presbyteries and sessions from ordaining or installing individuals who depart from “the standards for ordination expressly provided in the *Book of Order*.” The overture then proposes to define “standards” as follows: “Provisions of the *Book of Order* are signified as being standards by use of the term ‘shall,’ ‘is/are to be,’ ‘requirement,’ or equivalent expression.”

While the overture speaks to “standards,” its rationale suggests that it is principally concerned with the provisions of G-6-0106b. “Required,” is not used in G-6.0106b. “Shall not” is used in reference to what is permissible on the part of an ordaining or installing body. The mandatory language in G-6.0106b is “Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.” The “shall not” modifies the verb “be ordained and/or installed.” The sentence is written in the passive voice, and so the “shall not” applies to what a governing body may not do.

Contrary to the suggestion of the overture, the existing authoritative interpretation does not change the mandatory nature of the “shall not” as it applies to the acts of ordination or installation. What the authoritative interpretation addresses is the means of ascertaining to whom the “shall not” applies, not what “shall not” be done.

The word “standards” is used in the first and second sentences of G-6.0106b. No General Assembly PJC decision or authoritative interpretation has interpreted the first sentence of G-6.0106b. The *Bush* decision found that the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 did not allow a governing body to find a departure from the standards of the second sentence to be found “non-essential.” To the extent that the 218th General Assembly (2008) does not believe that the *Bush* decision adequately addressed the concerns raised in the rationale to this overture, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution does not believe that the language proposed would satisfy those concerns either.

The overture assumes that G-6.0106b is clear as to who can and cannot be ordained and installed under the existing language of the *Book of Order*, and that the authoritative interpretation approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) departed from that clarity. If the 218th General Assembly (2008) does not believe that *Bush* addresses the concerns raised sufficiently and desires that G-6.0108b not be applied to making such a determination in the context of an examination for ordination or installation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly either (1) withdraw the authoritative interpretation or G-6.0108b and approve an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0106b defining which practices the confessions call sin; or (2) submit to the presbyteries an amendment to G-6.0106b that replaces the phrase “practices the confessions call sin” with a list of conduct the assembly believes should bar ordination or installation or some other standard that does not require definition through interpretation of the confessions.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at 2.0103b.*

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-05 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-12.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 05-05 is on approving the authoritative interpretation to *G-6.0108*, “Freedom of Conscience—Interpretation of Scriptures.”

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 05-05 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-03.

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## Item 05-06

**[The assembly answered Item 05-06 by the action taken on Item 05-09. See p. 42.]**

*On Deleting G-6.0106b, and on Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.*

The Presbytery of Hudson River respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Provide the following authoritative interpretation:

Interpretative statements concerning ordained service of homosexual church members by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the 119th General Assembly (1979) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and all subsequent affirmations thereof, have no further force or effect.



2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-6.0106b be stricken? [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]

~~“b. Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W 4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.”~~

### *Rationale*

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the foundational principle of Jesus’ teachings—God is love. From the early chapters in the First Testament where we read of Abraham and Sara inviting three strangers to stay for dinner (Genesis 18) to the frequent accounts of disciples in the early Second Testament churches creating an environment of welcoming, reconciliation, hospitality, and generosity (Romans 13 and 14, 1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 2, Colossians 3, Hebrews 13, 1 John, etc.), the story of our faith is one in which God and God’s people are instructed to practice love. Jesus himself makes it clear that the greatest commandment is love of God and that the second is like it: “you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22, esp. 22:39). There are no exceptions to this expectation and yet our ordination policies certainly do not communicate a message of God’s love.

Current denomination policies regarding ordination contradict the Great Commission of Christ, who instructed his followers to go into all the world, making disciples, baptizing, and teaching (Matt. 28:16–20). The Scriptures call the church out of itself and direct us to practice hospitality towards all—even strangers (Hebrews 13), thereby demonstrating the message of grace and welcome that draws people into the community of faith. The Apostle Paul points out that “... God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears [God] and does what is right is acceptable to [God]” (Acts 10:34–35).

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict Scripture’s teachings about the freedom of God’s Spirit to engage in surprising, new, and unpredictable activities (John 3). Who of us can say with absolute certainty precisely what is God’s will with regard to the leadership of the church? For centuries we used biblical texts as the basis of our opposition to the ordination of women and inclusion of African Americans in our congregations. Now we know both practices were sinful violations of God’s will. Likewise, A Brief Statement of Faith reminds us that same Spirit “calls women and men to all ministries of the Church” (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, line 64).

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the value Scripture places on inclusive welcome (Acts 8:26ff, 10:28, and 11:17). So, too, current ordination policies conflict with numerous parts of the *Book of Order* that underscore the church’s call to openness and inclusiveness (G-3.0401, G-4.0100–.0404) and the rights granted to members (G-5.0102 and G-5.0103, G-6.0107 and G-6.0108).

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the church’s understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism. The *Book of Order* tells us that in baptism “we die to what separates us from God” (W-2.3002). To be consistent with that teaching, we cannot then set up a barrier (ordination) that separates some of the baptized from their unity with God. Likewise we are told “Baptism is [a] sign and symbol of inclusion in God’s grace and covenant ...” (W-2.3004), and “barriers of race, gender, status, and age are to be transcended. Barriers of nationality, history, and practice are to be overcome” (W-2.3005). If we are willing to baptize all believers, then is it not incumbent upon us to ordain all believers who are called by God into service?

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the basic principle of the church that grants all men and women who are church members the right to respond to God’s call to special ministries as elders, deacons, or ministers of Word and Sacrament (G 6.0106a). There is only one status of church membership that means one’s sexual orientation should not be regarded when considering service.

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**Concurrence to Item 05-06 from the Presbyteries of Baltimore, National Capital, and New York City.**

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**Concurrence to Item 05-06 from the Presbytery of Albany (with Additional Rationale).**

*Rationale*

The present categorical exclusion of certain church members from service in ordained office is unjust to the excluded individuals and spiritually damaging to the body of the church. It creates a category of “second-class membership” and fosters the heretical attitude that those assigned to this category are not really deserving of membership at all, i.e., are not Christians. Profession of faith in Jesus Christ is and must be the only requirement for church membership (*Book of Order*, G-5.0103). Any policy that promotes erosion of this principle does damage to the Body of Christ.

According to the *Book of Order*, “a faithful member accepts Christ’s call to be involved ... in the ministry of his Church” (G-5.0102), including “participating in the governing responsibilities of the church” (G-5.0102e). Section G-6.0106b, which bars an entire class of persons from participating in some of the most important areas of church governance, violates the conditions of membership and sets the *Book of Order* in contradiction with itself.

Ordination is an important qualification for participation in the discernment process that sustains the spiritual life of the church at all judicatory levels. Our goal is not to “make” decisions, but to seek to discern God’s intention for us. It has been a long-standing article of faith in our tradition that discernment requires a democratic inclusion of many voices. To rule out certain voices in advance as ineligible is both undemocratic and unjust. True reconciliation that seeks to restore peace, unity, and purity to the church is possible only between equals who mutually share access to power and who acknowledge that all power, ultimately, comes from God.

When Christians fall into two sides through disagreement, all involved are obliged to think charitably of those on the opposite side. If G-6.0106b is removed from the *Book of Order*, the “losers” will not have lost their status as full members of the church, eligible to participate in all decisions, including future decisions about ordination on an individual basis. On the other hand, if G-6.0106b remains in the *Book of Order*, the “losers” will continue to feel that their very humanity has been cast in doubt by a church that condemns what they understand to be their God-given nature. Deletion of G-6.0106b will honor everyone as a child of God and will permit the assignment of particular duties on the basis of the particular gifts that God has granted.

Injustice that exists now demands to be remedied now. Many a prophet would have preferred to exercise the call to prophecy at a more opportune time, but God has always made clear that the prophetic call is immediate. To appeal now for relief from the injustice fostered by G-6.0106b is simply to obey God’s command with humility and love for all those who now serve and for those who earnestly desire to serve God in the future.

**Concurrence to Item 05-06 from the Presbytery of the Redwoods (with Additional Rationale).***Rationale*

Current denominational policies regarding ordination require interpretation of ambiguous words and phrases in order to determine who has or has not met the standards for ordination. The battle over interpretation, and in particular, the attempt to root out all those with whom we disagree, has fractured the fellowship of our brothers and sisters in the church. Deletion of G-6.0106b returns to the presbyteries and sessions the oversight of who is to be ordained to the offices of the church, and returns the entire church to the Reformed understanding that we read the same Scripture but come to different conclusions.

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict Scripture’s teachings about the freedom of God’s Spirit to engage in surprising, new, and unpredictable activities (John 3). Who of us can say with absolute certainty precisely what is God’s will with regard to the leadership of the church? For centuries we used biblical texts as the basis of our opposition to the ordination of women and inclusion of African Americans in our congregations. Now we know both practices were sinful violations of God’s will. Likewise, A Brief Statement of Faith reminds us that same Spirit “calls women and men to all ministries of the Church” (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, line 64). Current denominational practices deny God’s freedom to “do a new thing” (Isa. 43:19).

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the value Scripture places on inclusive welcome (Acts 8:26ff, 10:28 and 11:17). So, too, current ordination policies conflict with numerous parts of the *Book of Order* that underscore the church’s call to openness and inclusiveness (G-3.0401, G-4.0100-.0403) and the rights granted to members (G-5.0102 and G-5.0103, G-6.0107 and G-6.0108).

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the Great Commission of Christ, who instructed his followers to go into all the world, making disciples, baptizing, and teaching (Matt. 28:16–20). The Scriptures call the church out of itself and direct us to practice hospitality towards all—even strangers (Heb. 13), thereby demonstrating the message of grace and welcome that draws people into the community of faith. The Apostle Paul points out that “God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears [God] and does what is right is acceptable to [God]” (Acts 10:34–35).

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the church's understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism. The *Book of Order* tells us that in baptism "we die to what separates us from God" (W-2.3002). To be consistent with that teaching, we cannot then set up a barrier (ordination) that separates some of the baptized from their unity with God. Likewise we are told "baptism is [a] sign and symbol of inclusion in God's grace and covenant" (W-2.3004), and "barriers of race, gender, status, and age are to be transcended. Barriers of nationality, history, and practice are to be overcome" (W-2.3005). If we are willing to baptize all believers, then is it not incumbent upon us to ordain all believers who are called by God into service?

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the basic principle of the church that grants all men and women who are church members the right to respond to God's call to special ministries as elders, deacons, or ministers of Word and Sacrament (G 6.0106a). There is only one status of church membership; one's sexual orientation should not be regarded when considering service.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-06

*Advice on Item 05-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 05-06 with the following comment.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Item 05-06 and 05-08 seek to delete G-6.0106b from the Form of Government and to set aside previous authoritative interpretations regarding ordination standards. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 213th General Assembly (2001), and assemblies since then, that the removal of G-6.0106b alone would not alter the church's position on ordination standards unless the General Assembly also amended or rescinded current authoritative interpretations regarding the eligibility of homosexual persons to hold church office. Approval of this overture would accomplish its intent to modify the church's position on ordination standards by taking both of the actions the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has advised are necessary to achieve that result.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at 2.0103b.*

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 05-06, on deleting G-0106b, and on providing a new authoritative interpretation.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) respectfully offers its comment in the form of this earnest prayer with and for the whole church:

Holy God, who alone is our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we pray to become more and more your good news people. Indeed, we would pray day by day to see you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly.

In all our daily prayers, wondrous God, there is much to celebrate, for which we praise and thank you:

- For the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Scriptures, whereby we, as that part of Christ's church who call ourselves the PC(USA), have committed ourselves to become a beloved community of all baptized believers who would exhibit inclusive welcome, rich diversity, fair representation, and full participation of your whole people;
- For every modest and significant stride taken in recent years toward the full inclusion of women and people of color;
- For every call and effort made to diminish unjust myth, stereotype, prejudice, discrimination, and oppression of people with regard to their race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual identity;

- For all persons and groups who urge us onward in discerning your living Word and Way for us, by listening prayerfully and carefully to each other, and by believing that your Holy Spirit and Scripture reveal still more new insights and learnings that will enrich and expand our commitments to inclusive welcome and rich diversity among all of your people.

In all our daily prayers, gracious God, there is much to concern us too, for which we seek forgiveness and transformation:

- For often daring neither to preach what we actually practice nor to practice what we actually preach about your diverse and inclusive beloved community;
- For continuing internal conflicts and divisions that especially harm all those sisters and brothers who already are marginalized by our church and world, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people;
- For letting your blessed gifts of time, energy, money, and countless other resources be sinfully consumed by our interecine activities rather than by Christ's mission and ministries to which we are called;
- For appearing to deny what we confess, that Christ Jesus alone gives us our oneness and our Great Commission as your people; and
- For being a divided church that is a scandal to you and to the world.

Holy God, who alone is our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we pray for more and more discernment of Spirit-guided and promising ways for our PC(USA) to move from a time of disgrace to a state of grace, when our unity in Christ Jesus will lead us all into the diverse and inclusive fullness of your beloved community. You alone, O God-in-Christ, are the One who holds all things together. Just as you hold on to us, may we hold on to you and to each other, so that together, day by day, we will see you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly. Amen.

## Item 05-07

[The assembly answered Item 05-07 by the action taken on Item 05-12. See p. 42.]

*On Amending G-6.0106b and G-6.0108b to Clarify the Requirement That Mandatory Provisions of the Book of Order Be Enforced by Ordaining Bodies—From the Presbytery of St. Andrew.*

The Presbytery of St. Andrew overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall G-6.0106b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown in italics.]

“b. Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice ~~which the confessions call sin~~ *that does not conform to this standard* shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.”

2. Shall G-6.0108b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown in italics.]

“b. It is to be recognized, however, that in becoming a candidate or officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. His or her conscience is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek or hold office in that body. The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the governing body in which he or she serves (G-1.0301; G-1.0302); *however, an ordaining body shall not proceed to enroll as a candidate or ordain and/or install to office any person who is unwilling to abide by all mandatory provisions of the Book of Order.*”

### *Rationale*

We are making these recommendations believing that the only appropriate way to amend the constitutional ordination standards should be to amend the standards themselves, referring proposed changes to the presbyteries in the form of a con-

stitutional amendment so that the whole church has the opportunity to participate in the decision through the ratification process. We believe that in doing this, we reaffirm the strength of our polity, our connectedness, and our unity as one Body by encouraging all voices to be heard.

While G-6.0106b has been repeatedly upheld by the church since its inclusion in the *Book of Order*, it has also been exceedingly controversial and confusing. Part of the controversy has surrounded the core issue of the ordination of self-affirming, practicing homosexuals. At the same time, some of the controversy and confusion has resulted from the awkward reference in G-6.0106b to “any ... practice which the confessions call sin,” which must therefore include the entire lists of sins in, for example, the Westminster Larger Catechism’s illustrative examples of sins, including such practices as the undue delay of marriage, and the wearing of immodest apparel.

Another issue related to G-6.0106b and its enforcement is the confusion that it creates about the relationship of G-6.0106b to G-6.0108b. Ordaining bodies have the authority and responsibility to determine the suitability of candidates for office. However, it is unclear whether that authority supersedes the *Book of Order*’s mandatory provisions.

The proposed amendments would clarify the requirement that those who have agreed to “exercise [their] freedom of conscience within certain bounds” (G-6.0108b) must abide by all such mandatory provisions, even while they are free to seek changes to those provisions through the constitutional process for amendment.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-07

*Advice on Item 05-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 05-07.

#### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Item 05-07 proposes to amend both G-6.0106b and G-6.0108b. Specifically, the overture seeks to amend G-6.0106b with the express intention of limiting its restrictions on ordination and installation to individuals not meeting the requirement of fidelity in marriage or chastity in singleness. The overture seeks to amend G-6.0108b to add a provision that a governing body cannot ordain or install a candidate who is “unwilling to abide by all of the mandatory provisions of the *Book of Order*.”

As with other items related to the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 before it, the 218th General Assembly (2008) may wish to consider whether the application of the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 in *Bush v. the Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (Remedial Case 218-10), as discussed in the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice with respect to Item 05-01 satisfies the intent of the overture. If the assembly believes that this application answers the concern raised in the rationale to the overture, it may answer the overture by disapproving it with the comment that the *Bush* decision has addressed the concern raised in the overture.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends disapproval of the proposed amendment to G-6.0106b first because it would have the effect of making standards of sexual conduct the only standard for ordination or installation of church officers. Elevating standards of sexual conduct above and to the exclusion of all other standards of conduct has neither scriptural nor confessional foundation. Moreover, the proposed amendment to G-6.0106b does not bring the clarity its rationale suggests. While the proposed amendment eliminates the phrase “practices the confessions call sin,” the phrase “fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness” is still set out as a “historic confessional standard,” thus requiring the interpretation of the words based on their use in confessional documents. The confessions offer a variety of possible interpretations of the terms “fidelity in marriage” and “chastity.” [See, for example, Heidelberg Catechism (C-4.109) and the Westminster Larger Catechism (C-7.249), which list a variety of conduct as unchaste.] Thus, replacing the phrase “practices the confessions call sin” with a reference to a lack of fidelity or chastity does not end debate as to what G-6.0106b means in practice.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution also recommends disapproval of the proposed amendment to G-6.0108b for two reasons. First, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution does not believe that modifying the language of a provision that reflects a fundamental principle of Presbyterian polity is an appropriate means of addressing concern with the application of that standard to G-6.0106b. If the 218th General Assembly (2008) is concerned with the application of G-6.0108b to

G-6.0106b, the appropriate course would be to redraft G-6.0106b to set forth clear and specific limitations on the conduct of candidates for ordination or installation in place of the current incorporation of confessional references to sinful conduct.

Second, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution does not believe that the reference to “mandatory provisions of the *Book of Order*” is a useful standard. The apparent intent in the proposed amendment is to revise G-6.0108b to bar the authoritative interpretation approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006). However, the proposal is premised on the assumption that this authoritative interpretation allows governing bodies to ignore mandatory language in the examining and approving candidates for ordination or installation. However, as the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has previously advised, the mandatory language in G-6.0106b is “Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.” The “shall not” is part of the verb “be ordained and/or installed.” The sentence is written in the passive voice, and so the “shall not” applies to what a presbytery or session may not do.

Contrary to the suggestion of the overture, the existing authoritative interpretation does not change the mandatory nature of the “shall not” as it applies to the acts of ordination or installation. What the authoritative interpretation addresses is the means of ascertaining who the “shall not” applies to, not what “shall not” be done.

If the 218th General Assembly (2008) does not believe that the *Bush* decision addresses the concerns raised by this overture, and wishes to offer amendments to the Form of Government that eliminate the application of the principles of G-6.0108b to the decision whether to approve a candidate for ordination or installation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly submit to the presbyteries an amendment to G-6.0106b that replaces the phrase “practices the confessions call sin” with a list of conduct the assembly believes should bar ordination or installation or some other standard that does not require definition through interpretation of the confessions.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-07 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-12.

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## Item 05-08

[The assembly answered Item 05-08 by the action taken on Item 05-09. See pp. 42, 43.]

*On Deleting G-6.0106b and Approving an Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.*

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

1. Approve the following authoritative interpretation, which shall take effect immediately upon the affirmative vote of the 218th General Assembly (2008):

“In order to live more closely in accordance with the spirit of the theological and constitutional principles of our Presbyterian tradition, which require hospitality, compassion, and justice for all people, the Definitive Guidance adopted by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in response to *Overture 9* (1976) and the interpretive statement approved by the General Assembly (1979) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States concerning ordained service (as set forth in the *Minutes*, PCUS, 1979, Part I, p. 200 et seq.), and all subsequent affirmations thereof, shall be given no further force and effect.”

2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-6.0106b of the Form of Government be stricken from the *Book of Order*?

#### *Rationale*

Love, compassion, hospitality, and justice are basic theological and constitutional cornerstones of the Christian faith set by the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Gospels and writings of early apostles:

Jesus said, "... love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 19:19, Matt. 22:39, Mark 12:31).

The Apostle Paul declared, "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" (Gal. 3:28).

More recent additions to *The Book of Confessions* offer guidelines in practicing the spirit of Scripture:

The Confession of 1967 (9.44) states "Congregations, individuals, or groups of Christians who exclude, dominate, or patronize their fellowmen, however subtly, resist the Spirit of God and bring contempt on the faith which they profess."

The 1983 Brief Statement of Faith (10.3, lines 29–32) declares "In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community."

We affirm the standards for ordination set forth in G-6.0106a of the *Book of Order*, which provide that candidates "... should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world."

We affirm fidelity and chastity as guides for our faith and practice, believing that we are all called to lead chaste and disciplined lives, whether in marriage or in single life (*The Book of Confessions*, 4.108 and 4.109).

We affirm our ordination vows, including our commitment to be "continually guided by our Confessions" as they have evolved.

We affirm our freedom of conscience, which is honored in our Historic Principles of Church Order (G-1.0301(1)(a) and in G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*).

We affirm the provisions in the *Book of Order* that mandate an inclusive church (G-3.0401; G-4.0403; G-5.0103 and G-5.0202).

We affirm the rights and responsibilities of sessions and presbyteries to examine and ordain persons based on their character and qualifications as individuals (authoritative interpretation approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998), *Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 68).

Section G-6.0106b of the Form of Government of the *Book of Order* and the related interpretative statements concerning ordained service are theologically and constitutionally flawed. Their elimination from the *Book of Order* will celebrate and renew basic theological and constitutional principles of love, compassion, hospitality, and justice, and will be a positive step toward healing human brokenness and building a stronger, more inclusive church.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-08

*Advice on Item 05-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 05-08 with the following comment:

Approval of this item would accomplish its intent to modify the church's position on ordination standards by taking both of the actions the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has advised are necessary to achieve that result. For further explanation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-06, which seeks similar action by the assembly.

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## Item 05-09

[The assembly approved Item 05-09 with comment. See pp. 42, 43.]

*On Deleting G-6.0106b and Substituting a New Paragraph in Its Place; on Amending G-14.0240 and G-14.0450; and on Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Boston.*

**The Presbytery of Boston respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

a. Strike the current text of G-6.0106b and insert new text to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“b. Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Those who are called to ordained service in the church, by their assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003), pledge themselves to live lives obedient to Jesus Christ the Head of the Church, striving to follow where he leads through the witness of the Scriptures, and to understand the Scriptures through the instruction of the Confessions. In so doing, they declare their fidelity to the standards of the Church. Each governing body charged with examination for ordination and/or installation (G-14.0240 and G-14.0450) establishes the candidate’s sincere efforts to adhere to these standards.”~~

b. Amend G-14.0240 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

#### “Preparation and Examination for Office

“When persons have been elected to the office of elder or deacon, the session shall confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the office. The session shall provide for a period of study and preparation, after which the session shall examine the officers-elect as to their personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; ~~and~~ *the duties of the office; and readiness to assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and installation.* If the examination is approved, the session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and installation (see W-4.4000). If the examination is not approved for one or more elected officers, the session shall report its action to the congregation’s nominating committee, which shall bring nomination(s) to a meeting of the congregation for any office(s) not filled.”

c. Amend G-14.0450 by inserting a new paragraph “b.” and by re-lettering current paragraphs “b.” through “d.” as “c.” through “f.” The text shall read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

#### “Final Assessment of Readiness to Begin Ordained Ministry

“In the final year of theological education or when a candidate has satisfied all of the requirements of this section, and before the candidate has received a call, the committee on preparation for ministry of the candidate’s presbytery shall conduct a final assessment of the candidate’s readiness to begin ordained ministry. A summary of this assessment shall be reported to the presbytery and shall be transmitted to a calling presbytery when requested. The committee on preparation for ministry shall report to the presbytery when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. This consultation shall focus on the outcomes of inquiry and candidacy and shall include each of the following requirements of certification:

“a. demonstration of readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament as required to fulfill the candidacy phase of preparation;

“b. *demonstration of readiness to assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and installation;*

“~~b.~~ c. presentation of a transcript showing satisfactory grades at a regionally accredited college or university, together with a diploma;

“~~e.~~ d. presentation of a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, the transcript showing satisfactory grades, and presentation of a plan to complete the theological degree including Hebrew and Greek and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek texts;

“~~d.~~ e. presentation of satisfactory grades together with the examination papers in the five areas covered by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.”



**2. Provide the following authoritative interpretation:**

**Interpretive statements concerning ordained service of homosexual church members by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the 119th General Assembly (1979) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and all subsequent affirmations thereof, have no further force or effect.**

***Comment:* Presbyteries are strongly encouraged to consider this overture using a process of listening and discernment.**

***Rationale***

The opening paragraphs of the Form of Government are a powerful statement of the fundamental Christian and Reformed affirmation that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. In support of this primary affirmation, Chapter I of the Form of Government calls Christians to attend to the Scriptures, insofar as they set forth “Christ’s will for the Church,” and Chapter II identifies the church’s confessions as its guides, subordinate to the authority of Jesus Christ and to the witness of Scripture. Our church thus has bound itself to a hierarchy of authority in which we are to obey Jesus Christ its Head, and, additionally, to heed first the Scriptures and then the confessions, to the extent that they accurately bear witness to Christ’s will. This fundamental hierarchy of authority is accurately and eloquently reflected in the first three of the constitutional questions, the assent to which is required of each candidate for ordination and/or installation.

Although the hierarchy of the church’s authority is clear, it is subverted by the current language of G-6.0106b, which substitutes for our obedience to Christ two concepts that are foreign to Reformed understanding: “obedience” to Scripture and “conformity” to the confessions. The proposed amendment would remove this paragraph and substitute new language, which (1) reflects the church’s understanding of where its authority is to be found, and (2) reaffirms the church’s reliance on the examination of candidates by its governing bodies as the principal means by which to ensure the commitment of its ordained officers to the duties of faith. The amendment additionally would insert appropriate language to ensure that each such examination would include discussion of the constitutional questions and the governing body’s determination of the candidate’s readiness to accept their principles and live by them to the extent any of us is able.

In order to be able to rely on Jesus Christ as its Head and as its chief guide in all of life, the church must shed any subordinate source of authority that would bind its ability to follow where he leads. The overture therefore also calls for the rescission of past interpretive statements that have had the effect of limiting Christ’s freedom to use his servants as he would choose.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-09**

*Advice on Item 05-09—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 05-09 with the following comment.

***Rationale***

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Item 05-09 seeks to delete G-6.0106b from the Form of Government, to substitute a new provision in its place, and to set aside previous authoritative interpretations regarding ordination standards. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 213th General Assembly (2001), and assemblies since then, that the removal of G-6.0106b alone (or likewise, substitution of new provisions for the existing G-6.0106b) would not alter the church’s position on ordination standards unless the General Assembly also amended or rescinded current authoritative interpretations regarding the eligibility of homosexual persons to hold church office. Approval of this overture would accomplish its intent to modify the church’s position on ordination standards by taking both of the actions the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has advised are necessary to achieve that result.

The proposed language for G-6.0106b substitutes a standard of obedience to Jesus Christ for the current provisions of G-6.0106b. Governing bodies would be given discretion in the application of this standard to particular candidates through the examination process. The proposed language is clear and not inconsistent with any other provision of the *Book of Order*.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at 2.0103b.*

## Item 05-10

[The assembly answered Item 05-10 by the action taken on Item 05-12. See pp. 42, 43.]

*On Amending G-6.0108b Freedom of Conscience “Within Certain Bounds,” to Include a Freedom of Ordaining Bodies within Certain Bounds—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.*

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-6.0108b (Freedom of Conscience “Within Certain Bounds”) be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“b. It is to be recognized, however, that in becoming a candidate or officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. His or her conscience is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek or hold office in that body. The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the governing body in which he or she serves. (G-1.0301; G-1.0302) *This responsibility does not give the governing body constitutional grounds to define essentials in ways that ignore clear indicators in the Book of Order regarding what is essential. These indicators include standards specified in ordination vows in the Book of Order; standards singled out in the Book of Order for compliance from amongst other standards; and standards oft repeated in diverse contexts in the Book of Order.*”

### ***Rationale***

The controversial, narrowly adopted (57 percent) 2006 Authoritative Interpretation (AI) of G-6.0108b (“Freedom of Conscience within Certain Bounds”) encourages local and regional ordaining bodies to ignore clear indicators in the *Book of Order* itself that certain standards are essential for ordained officers.<sup>1</sup>

Three such indicators are when a particular standard is *specified in ordination vows* (the affirmation Christ as Savior and Lord), *singled out from amongst other standards* for special compliance (the standard for sexual purity), or *repeated often in diverse contexts* (acceptance of the ministry of women).<sup>2</sup> These contexts create a reasonable expectation among reasonable readers that the particular standard must be essential. Otherwise, there would be no reason for including it in an ordination vow, singling it out from amongst other standards, or repeating it in diverse contexts.<sup>3</sup>

Yet the rationale for the 2006 AI states that an ordaining body can judge noncompliance with the sexuality standard in G-6.0106b not to violate essentials,<sup>4</sup> despite the fact that G-6.0106b clearly *singles out* from “among” “the historic confessional standards of the church” the “requirement” that ordained officers confine sexual intercourse to “the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman.”<sup>5</sup>

If an ordaining body can ignore such a clear literary indicator of what is essential,<sup>6</sup> then an ordaining body could just as easily judge a departure from the first ordination vow requiring trust in Christ as one’s “Savior” and “Lord of all” (W-4.4003) or the declaration of a scruple with regard to the acceptance of women’s ordination not to violate the essentials of Reformed faith and polity.<sup>7</sup> This is especially so since the task force rationale cites the Adopting Act of 1729 as establishing a virtual absolute right on the part of local and regional ordaining bodies to determine for themselves what standards are essential.<sup>8</sup>

Inasmuch as the spin given by 2006 AI on G-6.0108b runs counter to the purpose for which it was formulated—namely to protect a *national* standard (i.e. women’s ordination) from candidates who might declare a contrary scruple—it is necessary to reassert the freedom of the collective conscience of the denomination as a whole, especially as enshrined in its constitutional documents.<sup>9</sup>

*As to answering possible objections to the amendment* the following may be noted:

1. Someone might counter that the 217th General Assembly (2006) added to the task force’s AI a safeguard; namely, that higher governing bodies may review “whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the constitution of the PC(USA).” Even so, this addition did not offer the courts themselves any guidelines for determining es-

entials in the *Book of Order* that would safeguard against excessive judicial activism (as can be seen from the recent decision of the PJC of the Synod of the Trinity; cited in Endnote 7 below).

2. Someone might contend that not all “requirements” or “mandated” practices are essential and that consequently failure to comply with the “mandatory” sexual “requirement” in G-6.0106b is not a necessary bar to ordination. While such contentions regrettably make words mean what they do not normally mean and nullify clear distinctions in the *Book of Order*’s Preface between mandated practices on the one hand and practices merely recommended or permitted on the other hand, they are nevertheless beside the point here. We can all agree that the implicit literary force and effect of *singling out* for compliance a particular requirement from amongst all other standards is to establish the essential status of the requirement. The same holds true for inserting a standard in an ordination vow (so the affirmation of Christ as Savior and Lord) or repeatedly citing a standard in diverse contexts (the validity of women in ministry).

3. Some may fear that this amendment establishes too much certitude in interpreting texts or creates a detailed litmus text of orthodoxy. Such a fear would be misplaced. The purpose of this amendment is *not* to contend that *all* texts are equally obvious or to define what *all* the essentials are as regards ordination standards. Rather the purpose is to prevent arbitrary or ideologically-based circumventions of some obvious essentials.<sup>10</sup> Put differently, the purpose of this amendment is to establish that *some* standards in the *Book of Order* are clearly presented as essential (i.e. necessary barriers to ordination when not fulfilled by the candidate) even though the precise word “essential” is not used.

A related purpose is to reassert that, despite some radical postmodernist views to the contrary, the communication symbols that constitute the written text of the *Book of Order* and the literary conventions that accompany their use must be given their normal agreed-upon sense if church members are to have any confidence in the process of discernment. Certain literary moves such as placing a given requirement in the context of an ordination vow, singling it out to make a special point about the necessity of compliance, or citing it repeatedly in diverse contexts create an implicit contract of meaning with reasonable readers interpreting reasonably and contextually. Not to draw the obvious conclusion that such contexts establish the ordination requirement as *essential* is to violate that contract of meaning and engender distrust and cynicism regarding process.<sup>11</sup>

In short, there is nothing radical about this amendment. It simply reinstates the practice of reading literary indicators of meaning in the *Book of Order* reasonably—a practice that had generally operated before the passage of the 2006 AI on G-6.0108b.<sup>12</sup>

#### Endnotes

1. The AI states that “ordaining and installing bodies ... have the responsibility to determine ... whether any departure [from standards] constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation.”
2. While not an exhaustive list, these three indicators do have great relevance for current debates in the recent history of the PC(USA).
3. The necessity of accepting women’s ordination is repeated in diverse contexts throughout the Form of Government of the *Book of Order*. Section G-6.0105 makes clear that “Both men and women *shall* be eligible to hold church offices. ...” [emphasis added]. Likewise, G-14.0221 states: “Every congregation shall elect men and women from among its active members ... to the office of elder and to the office of deacon. ...” Section G-9.0105a (“Committee on Representation”) mandates: “Each governing body above the session shall elect a committee on representation, whose membership shall consist of equal numbers of men and women.” A specific duty of this committee is to “advocate for the representation of ... women” (G-9.0105c). According to G-13.0111a, “Consideration shall be given to the nomination of equal numbers of ministers (both women and men) ...” Section G-1.0100b (“Christ Calls the Church Into Being”) refers to Christ “exercising his authority by the ministry of women and men ...” Section G-3.0401b (“Called to Openness”) states: “The Church is called ... to a new openness” about “becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men ...”
4. The text of G-6.0106b is as follows: “Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament” [emphasis added].
5. According to the Final Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church: “If an ordaining or installing body determines that an officer-elect has departed from G-6.0106b, ... [and judges this departure] not to violate the essentials of Reformed faith and polity.... then there is no barrier to ordination” (*A Season of Discernment*, pp. 40–41, ll. 1222–29).
6. If a teacher or parent should say, “Among all my requirements I want to point out this particular requirement as something that must be complied with,” then a student or child, respectively, who contended that the requirement was not “essential” would be in obvious, even perverse, error.
7. An example of how this might happen occurred on May 16, 2007, when the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Trinity ruled in case no. 06-09 that the Presbytery of Pittsburgh could not define *any* essentials prior to specific cases and then must redefine essentials for each new ordination examination: “Essentials of the faith ... cannot be predetermined. ... [D]epartures from essential tenets, must be determined on a case by case basis within the ordination process.” The problem with this reasoning is that if an

essential has to be determined on a case-by-case basis, then it is not “essential” as a churchwide standard. It can only be an essential for the particular case of a particular person. By this decision the presbytery could not “predetermine” that believing in Christ as Savior and Lord or accepting the validity of women’s ordination is an “essential” for ordination. The ordaining body would have to revisit the question of whether this is an essential at each and every ordination examination.

8. In point of fact, the Adopting Act of 1729 addressed finer points of Calvinist doctrine contained in a voluminous, undifferentiated document like the Westminster Standards. It was certainly never intended to allow local or regional ordaining bodies the autonomy to ordain someone who denied the lordship of Jesus Christ or who engaged in sexual intercourse outside the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman.
9. What was the point of the majority of the presbyteries in voting to incorporate this sexuality standard in the *Book of Order* in 1996–97 and then to deny by ever greater margins vigorous attempts to remove it in 1997–98 and 2001–2002 if not to communicate this: “Failure to comply with this singled-out standard would be a *necessary* barrier to ordination”? If the majority of presbyteries had only wanted to have a standard that could be viewed as nonessential, there would have been no reason to single it out for compliance in the Form of Government.
10. The Presbyterian Church operates on a principle of connectionalism. This includes the right to establish on a national level some minimal beliefs and practices for officers of the church that, when met with noncompliance, become necessary barriers to ordination. For example, the national governing body today could not, and would not, allow the ordination of avowed racists, participants in loving adult-consensual incest or polyamory, persons who declared Jesus to be delusional, or even persons who rejected the validity of women’s ordination.
11. The alternative is a way of reading texts where there are no generally accepted conventions for expected meaning. This would render all texts, including every standard expressed in the *Book of Order*, as meaningless. Then there would be no point to reading, interpreting, citing, adjudicating by means of, or amending the Constitution of the PC(USA) except as an exercise of raw, arbitrary power. And then there would be no point to the existence of the PC(USA) as a denominational entity.
12. At the time of the writing of this overture, it is unclear whether the proposed extensive revisions of the Form of Government will replace the current version. If it does, then the appropriate adjustments in the proposed amendment are to be made. Based on the draft of the proposed new FOG retrieved from <http://www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment/pdfs/form-of-government.pdf> on 1/7/08, “G-6.0108b” would have to be replaced with “G-2.0104”; “Freedom of Conscience within Certain Bounds” with just “Freedom of Conscience”; and “governing body” with “council.”

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-10

*Advice on Item 05-10—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 05-10.

#### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Initially, the 218th General Assembly (2008) may wish to consider the application of this authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 in *Bush v. the Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (Remedial Case 218-10), as discussed in the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice with respect to Item 05-01. If the assembly believes that this application answers the concern raised in the rationale to the overture, it may answer the overture by disapproving it with the comment that the *Bush* decision has addressed the concern raised in the overture.

Item 05-10 seeks to amend G-6.0108b to prevent governing bodies from concluding that a departure from certain “clear indicators” are not departures from that which is essential in Reformed faith and polity. The proposed amendment defines these “clear indicators” as including three categories: (1) standards specified in ordination vows in the *Book of Order*; (2) standards singled out in the *Book of Order* for compliance from among other standards; and (3) standards “oft repeated in diverse contexts in the *Book of Order*.” In effect, this proposed amendment has an intent similar to the proposed amendment to G-6.0108b proposed in Item 05-07, which seeks to amend G-6.0108b to add a provision that a governing body cannot ordain or install a candidate who is “unwilling to abide by all of the mandatory provisions of the *Book of Order*.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises disapproval of the proposed amendment for three reasons. First, the proposed category of “clear indicators” is less than clear. Unclear standards do not build up the peace and unity of the church.

Second, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution does not believe that modifying the language of a provision that reflects a fundamental principle of Presbyterian polity is an appropriate means of addressing concern with the application of

that standard to G-6.0106b. As was stated in the 1927 Report of the Special Commission of 1925 (the “Swearingen Commission Report”) *Minutes*, PCUSA, 1927, Part I, pp. 78–79:

One fact often overlooked is that by the Act of 1729, the decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be in specific cases. It was no general authority that might be stated in exact language and applied rigidly to every case without distinction. It was an authority somewhat undefined, to be invoked in each particular instance . . . . It was clearly the intention that this decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be made after the candidate had been presented and had declared his [or her] beliefs and stated his [or her] motives personally, and after the examining body . . . had full opportunity to judge the man himself [or woman, herself] as well as abstract questions of doctrine.

As the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has advised with respect to other matters, if the 218th General Assembly (2008) is concerned with the application of G-6.0108 to G-6.0106b, the appropriate course would be to redraft G-6.0106b to set forth clear and specific limitations on the conduct of candidates for ordination or installation in place of the current incorporation of confessional references to sinful conduct. Likewise, if the intent is to examine candidates concerning each of the questions for ordination or concerning their beliefs regarding the appropriateness of the ordination of women, amendment to G-6.0106b making such examination questions mandatory is a more appropriate avenue to attain that goal.

Consistent with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice concerning Item 05-10, if the 218th General Assembly (2008) does not believe that *Bush* addresses the concerns raised sufficiently and desires that G-6.0108b not be applied to making such a determination in the context of an examination for ordination or installation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to either (1) withdraw the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 and approve an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0106b defining which practices the confessions call sin; or (2) submit to the presbyteries an amendment to G-6.0106b that replaces the phrase “practices the confessions call sin” with a list of conduct the assembly believes should bar ordination or installation or some other standard that does not require definition through interpretation of the confessions.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at G-2.0103b. To extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0108, the identical provision (although not divided into two paragraphs) in the proposed Form of Government is found at G-2.0104.*

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-10 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-12.

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## Item 05-11

**[The assembly answered Item 05-11 by the action taken on Item 05-09. See pp. 42, 43.]**

*On Amending G-6.0106b and Providing a New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of Cincinnati.*

The Presbytery of Cincinnati overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Strike the current text of G-6.0106b and insert new text to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“b. Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W 4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Those who are called to ordained service in the church are to lead lives of obedience to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures and guided by the confessional standards of the church. Suitability for the offices to which they have been elected is determined by the governing bodies where the examinations for ordination/installation take place. By their assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and/or installation, officers declare their fidelity to the~~

*standards of the church. Whether the examination/installation decision complies with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.”*

2. Provide the following authoritative interpretation:

Interpretive statements concerning ordained service of homosexual church members by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the 119th General Assembly (1979) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and all subsequent affirmations thereof, have no further force or effect.

**Rationale**

The qualifications for leadership based on sexual orientation, which is the overt or covert purpose of G-6.0106b, discount the constitutional questions to those preparing to be ordained or installed. These questions focus broadly on the faith and manner of life expected of church officers, without exploration of personal sexual matters or orientation (the questions are attached at the end of this document).

There is no doubt that the issue of ordination for persons who are not heterosexual has caused much distress and consternation within the church for years and challenges the belief and conscience of varied perspectives within the church.

Current denominational policies regarding ordination contradict the church’s understanding of membership in the church and present a standard that creates second class membership—barring some persons, but not all, from “all the rights and privileges of the church, including the right to ... hold office” (*Book of Order*, G-5.0202).

The current denominational policies regarding ordination, by calling almost exclusive attention to the current G-6.0106b, place limits on the inalienable right of congregations to elect their own officers (G-6.0107), and on their freedom of conscience in interpreting Scripture and the call of the Gospel (*Book of Order*, G-6.0108).

This proposed overture also complies with the authoritative interpretation of the Constitution approved at the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church report, pp. 35–36, lines 1048–1072) regarding the examination process itself, assuring that it be rigorous, constitutional, and subject to judicial review.

Further, at Baptism, we make a promise of union with Christ and one another. “The body of Christ is one, and Baptism is the bond of unity in Christ. As they are united with Christ through faith, Baptism unites the people of God with each other and with the church of every time and place. Barriers of race, gender, status, and age are to be transcended. Barriers of nationality, history, and practice are to be overcome” (*Book of Order*, W-2.3005).

Let us recommit to the promise of Baptism with the same spirit and intention in regards to ordination, leaving no room for discrimination among God’s children. For the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who called us to demonstrate gracious hospitality to our friends and enemies, who called us to welcome and love all who seek his mercy, we submit this overture.

**Ordination Questions:**

- a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God’s Word to you?
- c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
- d. Will you fulfill your office in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
- e. Will you be governed by our church’s polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God’s Word and Spirit?
- f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- g. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
- h. Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?
- i. (1) (For elder) Will you be a faithful elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in governing bodies of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

- (2) (For deacon) Will you be a faithful deacon, teaching charity, urging concern, and directing the people's help to the friendless and those in need, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?
- (3) (For minister of the Word and Sacrament) Will you be a faithful minister, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the governing bodies of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?
- (4) (For commissioned lay pastor) Will you be a faithful commissioned lay pastor, serving the people by proclaiming the good news, teaching faith and caring for the people, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?
- (5) (For certified Christian educator) Will you be a faithful certified Christian educator, teaching faith and caring for people, and will you in your ministry try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ? (*Book of Order*, W-4.4003)

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**Concurrence to Item 05-11 from the Presbytery of Santa Fe.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-11**

*Advice on Item 05-11—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 05-11 with the following comment.

Comment: The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Item 05-11 seeks to amend G-6.0106b from the Form of Government and to set aside previous authoritative interpretations regarding ordination standards. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 213th General Assembly (2001), and assemblies since then, that the removal of G-6.0106b alone (or likewise, substitution of new provisions for the existing G-6.0106b) would not alter the church's position on ordination standards unless the General Assembly also amended or rescinded current authoritative interpretations regarding the eligibility of homosexual persons to hold church office. Approval of this overture would accomplish its intent to modify the church's position on ordination standards by taking both of the actions the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has advised are necessary to achieve that result.

The proposed substitute language for G-6.0106b substitutes a standard of obedience to Jesus Christ for the current provisions of G-6.0106b. Governing bodies would be given discretion in the application of this standard to particular candidates through the examination process, subject to an express provision for review by higher governing bodies. It is not clear what standard would govern such review. In other respects, the proposed language is clear and not inconsistent with any other provision of the *Book of Order*.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at G-2.0103b.*

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-11**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-11 be answered by the action taken on Item 05-12.

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**Item 05-12**

**[The assembly approved Item 05-12 with amendment. See pp. 42, 43.]**

*On Adopting an Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 to Ensure Proper Application of Ordination Standards—From the Presbytery of John Knox.*

**The Presbytery of John Knox overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve the following authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order*:**

**“[The 218th General Assembly (2008) affirms the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006). Further, the 218th General Assembly (2008), pursuant to G-13.0112, interprets] the requirements of G-6.0108 [to] apply equally to all ordination standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Section G-6.0108 requires examining bodies to give prayerful and careful consideration, on an individual, case-by-case basis, to any departure from an ordination standard in matters of belief or practice that a candidate may declare during examination. However, the examining body is not required to accept a departure from standards, and cannot excuse a candidate’s inability to perform the constitutional functions unique to his or her office (such as administration of the sacraments).”**

### *Rationale*

The 2006 Authoritative Interpretation. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 514–15) reminding the church of several important principles. First, ordination standards are set by the whole church, and must be applied in all cases by sessions and presbyteries. Second, in applying our ordination standards, sessions and presbyteries must make case-by-case assessments whether the particular candidate before them departs from any standard in a way that constitutes a failure to adhere to “essentials” of Reformed faith and polity (thus barring the candidate from ordained service).

Conscience and Ordination Standards. Section G-6.0108, the 217th General Assembly (2006)’s authoritative interpretation of it, our Historic Principles of Church Order (G-1.0300), and centuries of Presbyterian history all require that ordination standards be applied with respect for the candidate’s freedom of conscience in interpreting Scripture. The Apostle Paul urged the early church to respect the individual conscience (Rom. 14:1–13, Gal. 5:1–6, Col. 2:16–23). John Calvin declared that “The whole case rests on this: if God is the sole lawgiver, men are not permitted to usurp the honor” (*Institutes*, Bk. IV, Ch. 10 § 8). The Westminster Confession of Faith warns that “making men the lords of our faith and conscience” is idolatrous, and prohibited by the First Commandment (*The Book of Confessions*, § 7.215). Respecting conscience in the application of standards is not mere compromise or pragmatism—rather, it reflects our deep theological conviction that biblically formed conscience is the sacred court in which each individual stands accountable before God.

The Duty of Mutual Forbearance. The Historic Principles of Church Order (G-1.0305) recognize that “there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ,” and “in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.” In fulfillment of this duty, G-6.0108 as authoritatively interpreted by the 217th General Assembly (2006) requires ordaining bodies to consider whether any candidate’s departures from scriptural or constitutional standards “constitute a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity.” Departures that do not touch on essentials may be the sort over which Christians “of good character and principles” can disagree, making the practice of forbearance possible. This duty, of consistently evaluating all departures from the standards and considering in each case whether there is a possibility of forbearance, is not simply a practical expedient for making the church’s life run more smoothly. It is a faithful attempt to live out the Gospel command to imitate God’s own patience toward sinners by practicing forbearance toward our fellow Christians (Eph. 4:1–3, Phil. 2:3–11, Col. 3:12–13, 2 Tim. 2:24–25).

Examinations for Ordained Service. Section G-6.0108, as authoritatively interpreted by the 217th General Assembly (2006), makes clear that individuals may declare principled objections (what we historically have called “scruples”) to our ordination standards, with respect to both belief and behavior. In all cases, sessions and presbyteries must give prayerful and careful consideration to such declarations, with due respect for freedom of conscience. However, sessions and presbyteries exercise collective discernment during examination, and are not required to accept a person’s departure from standards; a scruple may be rejected if the body believes that the matter at issue is so important—that is, “essential”—it renders the candidate incapable of communion with the church (Adopting Act of 1729). Moreover, an examining body cannot find a person fit for office unless that person is willing to perform all of the constitutional functions unique to his or her office (e.g. a person aspiring to serve the church as a minister of Word and Sacrament must be willing and able to administer the sacraments).

Identifying “Essentials.” The Presbyterian church has always resisted efforts to define “essentials” in the abstract. When a person has been elected to serve, that person’s fitness must be assessed in light of his or her statement of faith, answers to questions posed during examination, demonstrated manner of life, interaction with the session or presbytery over the course of care, fit for the particular position to which he or she has been elected, and reasons (scriptural, theological, and intentional) for declaring a departure from our standards. Where the examining body determines that a departure must be considered “essential” with regard to a particular candidate, that person may not be ordained or installed. In all cases, however, we require that assessments of fitness be made pursuant to a conversation, not a checklist. For any governing body to declare a standard “essential” in the abstract, for all time and persons, is wholly at odds with the historic practice and theological commitments of the Presbyterian church.



A Single Exception. In *Bush v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10)*, decided February 11, 2008), the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission held that one standard—“the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman ... or chastity in singleness” (G-6.0106b)—should be elevated above all other standards, so as to permit no consideration of departures. That holding was contrary to our Constitution, history, and theology as Presbyterians.

The Effect of This Overture. Freedom of conscience and the practice of forbearance mean nothing unless they are respected on issues over which faithful Presbyterians disagree. In *Bush*, the GAPJC rendered conscience irrelevant and prohibited consideration of forbearance *precisely where they matter most*—where there is genuine disagreement that threatens the unity of the church. This overture would not repeal the standard set forth in the second sentence of G-6.0106b, but would restore it to its proper status as one among many standards—to be faithfully applied in case-by-case assessments of fitness. In doing so, it would restore theological integrity to the way our standards are applied; return us to the sound Presbyterian tradition that has prevented and healed schisms over past centuries; respect the efforts of the 217th General Assembly (2006) to end thirty years of polarized debate on intractable differences; and enable the church to refocus its energies on outreach and mission, to the glory of God and the service of Jesus Christ in the world.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-12

*Advice on Item 05-12—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 05-12 with the following comment:

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers. In particular, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution draws the assembly’s attention to the discussion of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission’s decision in *Bush v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10)* set forth in that advice.

This overture requests that the General Assembly approve an additional authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 that would replace the conclusion in *Bush* that the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) does not apply to the second sentence of G-6.0106b. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that such an authoritative interpretation is within the power of the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve. The effect of such an action would be to allow governing bodies to examine a candidate regarding his or her understanding of the terms “fidelity in marriage” and “chastity in singleness,” and if the candidates understanding of those confessional standards differed from the understanding of the governing body, to determine whether the departure was from an essential of Reformed faith and polity.

In its advice to the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution explained its views as to how belief and practice are related in the specific language of G-6.0106b:

By using the phrase “practice which the confessions call sin” rather than delineating practices that bar ordination, G-6.0106b creates an intersection between belief and practice. A person can only repent of conduct he or she genuinely believes to be sinful. If a person does not believe conduct to be sinful, he or she may abstain from that conduct out of concern for the well-being of the community (e.g., 1 Corinthians 8), but he or she cannot be said to repent of that conduct. The authoritative interpretation allows an ordaining or installing governing body, when faced with a particular practice that is described as sinful at some place in the confessions, that the candidate does not believe to be sinful, to ordain or install the candidate on the basis that the candidate’s *belief* that the practice was not sinful does not depart from the essentials of the Reformed faith or polity. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 529)

This intersection, and the proposed authoritative interpretation, only applies in the examination process for ordination or installation in the context of the specific language of G-6.0106b. It does not, for example, apply to a disciplinary allegation that an officer has acted “contrary to the Scriptures or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that the language proposed is clear in accomplishing the stated intent set forth in the rationale to this overture. However, for the sake of clarity, if the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to approve the proposal, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that it make clear that this paragraph is supplementary to, rather than a replacement of, the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006), as follows:

“The 218th General Assembly (2008) affirms the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006). Further, the 218th General Assembly (2008), pursuant to G-13.0112, interprets the requirements of G-6.0108 to apply equally to all ordination standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Section G-6.0108 requires examining

bodies to give prayerful and careful consideration, on an individual, case-by-case basis, to any departure from an ordination standard in matters of belief or practice that a candidate may declare during examination. However, the examining body is not required to accept a departure from standards, and cannot excuse a candidate's inability to perform the constitutional functions unique to his or her office (such as administration of the sacraments)."

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 05-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 05-12 from the Presbytery of John Knox overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve an authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 05-12 be approved, and consequently that Items 05-01, 05-02, 05-04, 05-05, 05-07, 05-10, and 05-11 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Since 1978, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and its predecessors have recognized that ordination issues are justice issues, linked to a range of cultural changes that have left few families untouched. At the same time, ACSWP has also been concerned that the church has sometimes been disproportionately preoccupied with these matters, weakening its witness to justice and peace in other areas of life. The 217th General Assembly (2006) action approving Paragraph 5 of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church report was intended to help us live together with mutual forbearance and respect in our continuing differences on the subject of ordination. The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) decision of February 11, 2008 (*Bush v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh*, Remedial Case 218-10), has in effect returned us to a debilitating struggle with one another: a devastating outcome that has dispirited many on both sides who wanted to get on with our ministry to the world while continuing to learn from one another. We believe, with many commentators, that the PJC decision was faulty in that it singled out a single provision of the *Book of Order* as "essential," despite the fact that our history has consistently given responsibility for determining what is "essential" exclusively to ordaining bodies acting in particular cases. To repair this damage, we agree with the general intent of Items 05-06, 05-08, and 05-09.

We support in particular, however, an assembly action giving a new authoritative interpretation to G-6.0108, as illustrated by Item 05-12, and we endorse its lucid rationale.

With regard to Items 05-01, 05-02, 05-04, 05-05, 05-07, 05-10, and 05-11, these overtures would appear to continue the inordinate and even idolatrous fixation on G-6.0106b, and to represent a step backward toward further legalism in the church. We affirm the need for ethical standards regarding the whole of life, and for reasonable regulation applied fairly by councils of the church. We acknowledge the ambiguities of relying on authoritative interpretation rather than amendment to the Constitution, but affirm the wisdom of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church in recommending another approach to this particular subject, one that re-centered the debate on the overall "content of the character" of candidates.

With regard to Items 05-06, 05-08, and 05-09, which would remove and/or replace G-6.0106b from the *Book of Order*, we believe the approach of the Theological Task Force, remedied by means such as Item 05-12's recommendation, has yet to be fully tested. We are aware that "justice delayed is justice denied." Commissioners may logically affirm any of Items 05-6, 05-8, and 05-9, as well as 05-12, since 05-12 speaks to the overall balance that spiritual discernment seeks and not to particular matters of belief and practice. Yet by keeping belief and practice together, as "truth is in order to goodness" (G-3.0104), Item 12 would restore wholeness to the exercise of freedom of conscience. It may well be that freedom of conscience under the guidance of Scripture and the confessions is one of the Reformed "essentials of faith" beyond the primary affirmations of the Christian faith and the practices of love and justice.

An historical analogy: The action of the General Assembly of 1818 is an ironic counterpoint to the General Assembly PJC's February 2008 decision about scrupling. After a long and difficult debate, this General Assembly declared for the first time that slavery was an unmitigated moral evil that should be abolished as quickly as possible. Given, however, the divisive nature of the issue, the General Assembly of 1818 gave no instructions for enforcing this finding. It was left to the individual presbyteries to decide how to enforce the rule according to their own wisdom.

It should be remembered that this decision was not simply a change in church policy. For most of the 18th century, the Westminster Confession, the single confession used by the emerging Presbyterian church to judge the fitness of candidates for ordination, had served as a key prop in the argument against abolition. That assembly's decision changed fundamentally the way this confession was understood in the church. It is particularly relevant to note that after 1818 the content or faith

component was not the focus of the continuing controversy about slavery in the church. The focus was in fact the behavior of pastors, elders, deacons, and church members who continued to own slaves. To state that the church does not recognize scruples in matters of behavior is to trivialize the long and bitter struggle to abolish slavery.

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## Item 05-13

[The assembly answered Item 05-13 by the action taken on Item 05-09. See pp. 42, 43.]

*On Replacing G-6.0106b with a New Paragraph, and Providing A New Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of New Hope.*

The Presbytery of New Hope respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Strike the current text of G-6.0106b and insert new text to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“b. Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W 4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Those who are called to ordained service in the church are to lead lives of obedience to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures, and interpreted by the confessions of the church. Their suitability for the offices to which they have been elected is determined by the governing bodies where the examinations for ordination and/or installation take place, subject to review by the next higher governing body. By their assent to the constitutional questions for ordination or installation, officers demonstrate their fidelity to the standards of the Gospel.”~~

2. Provide the following authoritative interpretation:

Interpretative statements concerning ordained service of homosexual church members by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the 119th General Assembly (1979) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and all subsequent affirmations thereof, have no further force or effect.

### *Rationale*

#### POLITY

Section G-6.0106b contradicts the church’s understanding of membership in the church and presents a standard that refuses some, but not all members, their entitlement to “all the rights and privileges of the church, including the right ... to hold office” (*Book of Order*, G-5.0202). Section G-6.0106b continues to relegate lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender members of the church to second-class status, dishonoring their committed relationships, and placing on them a burden of celibacy that is not required of other members (*The Book of Confessions*, The Scots Confession, 3.15). Current denominational policies regarding ordination, by calling almost exclusive attention to the current G-6.0106b, place limits on the inalienable right of congregations to elect their own officers (G-6.0107), and on their freedom of conscience in interpreting Scripture and the call of the Gospel (G-6.0108). Section G-6.0106b has not been a source of peace and unity in the church. It has not kept those who advocated these policies from schism. It has not silenced those who opposed them. The Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, after earnest study and prayer, was not able to come to a resolution of the divisive effects of G-6.0106b.

#### THEOLOGY

Our Reformed faith grounds us in faithful obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, the “Head of the Church.” We follow Christ faithfully by continual and grateful reference to the “unique and authoritative witness of the Scriptures” and the powerful interpretive framework of the confessions. Most importantly, Scripture becomes God’s living Word of guidance to us in “matters of faith and practice,” both individually and corporately, through “the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit.” The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) stays most faithful to its calling to be both reformed and always reforming when it honors this understanding of obedience. The proposed new language in this overture—“... obedience to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the

Scriptures, and interpreted by the confessions of the church . . .”—better reflects the heart of our Reformed theological tradition concerning the authority of Scripture and the role of the confessions.

#### CONGREGATIONAL WITNESS

“[Christ] is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” (Eph. 2:14).

Faith in Christ means building bridges where once there were walls. In 1994, after a two-year process of study, education, and intensive congregational discernment, we, the Church of Reconciliation in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, decided to answer the call of Christ’s barrier-breaking Spirit and build a bridge to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons in our midst and in our community.

Coming to know the gay and lesbian members of our congregation, and hearing their witness has helped us understand how vitally important their faith is to them. We have been blessed by moving testimonies of faith and courage, stories of grace under pressure, and powerful sermons. We have also been deeply disturbed to learn that they have been rejected by Presbyterian churches and presbyteries, whether through outright prejudice or through being feared, judged, and unwanted.

We asked ourselves how we could respond compassionately to our brothers and sisters in Christ who have been turned away from the church (1 Cor. 12:12–26).

We sought to repent of our own fears and judgments, to begin our own journey of transformation, and to do what Christ was all along urging us to do—to extend the open arms of God’s love and grace, and to become a sanctuary of acceptance where our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters would be neither disparaged nor excluded. We have done so, and found ourselves immeasurably blessed by a loving and gracious God. What we experienced first as a “nudge of the Spirit,” we now understand to be nothing less than an opened door to the new life all Christians are offered in baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

We certainly understand the fears and concerns many in our denomination feel about opening their hearts and minds, and the doors of the church, to gay and lesbian believers. When we first began this process of exploration, several members of our congregation feared this issue would “split the church” or cause many of our members to leave. We faced these fears and kept talking, learning, and growing. A few of our members did leave, but the overwhelming majority stayed and benefited enormously from the increased diversity in the congregation. A steady flow of new members has come to us because they find our demonstration of Christ’s radical hospitality a compelling and sorely needed example in our divisive times. Over a decade after publicly declaring our openness and welcome, we continue to experience an upsurge in vitality, energy, and growth. We perceive “the new thing” God is doing and have seen it “springing forth.” (Isa. 43:18–19).

It has been exhilarating to recognize our common humanity before God. The children of our congregation have led us to celebrate our oneness in Christ. Labels have disappeared. Our differences, neither hidden nor broadcast, have become insignificant compared to the faith and love in Christ that we hold in common. Our identity as brothers and sisters in Christ transcends everything else, binding us together as one. We are fully convinced the risen Christ accepts all, regardless of earthly differences, as full equals at the Table of God’s love.

We have no desire to be contentious, or to offend others in the Body of Christ. But we can do no other than to invoke the liberty of conscience that is a hallmark of our Presbyterian tradition, and to bear witness to what the Spirit and our congregational experience have shown us so clearly: that G-6.0106b is contrary to the spirit of Christ, hampers evangelistic outreach, diverts denominational energies, and denies the church the gifts of talented, devoted people of faith.

We believe that the same Holy Spirit that has enriched our worship and community is poised to revitalize the PC(USA). We submit that the hope of a renewed PC(USA) lies in our faithful response to Christ’s call to join Him in a redemptive future, not in clinging to the past. In the spirit of joyful thanksgiving, we respectfully request the removal of these impediments that we might live into the peace and oneness that Christ has prepared for us.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-13

*Advice on Item 05-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 05-13 with the following comment.

*Comment:* The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the 218th General Assembly (2008) to its advice concerning Item 05-01, which sets forth the background that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes the assembly should consider in addressing each of the items related to ordination and installation of church officers.

Item 05-13 seeks to amend G-6.0106b in the Form of Government and to set aside previous authoritative interpretations regarding ordination standards. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 213th General Assembly (2001), and assemblies since then, that the removal of G-6.0106b alone (or likewise, substitution of new provisions for the existing G-6.0106b) would not alter the church's position on ordination standards unless the General Assembly also amended or rescinded current authoritative interpretations regarding the eligibility of homosexual persons to hold church office. Approval of this overture would accomplish its intent to modify the church's position on ordination standards by taking both of the actions the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has advised are necessary to achieve that result.

The proposed language for G-6.0106b substitutes a standard of obedience to Jesus Christ for the current provisions of G-6.0106b. Governing bodies would be given discretion in the application of this standard to particular candidates through the examination process, subject to an express provision for review by higher governing bodies. It is not clear what standard would govern such review. In other respects, the proposed language is clear and not inconsistent with any other provision of the *Book of Order*.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-6.0106b, the identical provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at 2.0103b.*

## Item 05-14

[The assembly approved Item 05-14. See pp. 42, 43.]

*Section G-14.0482, Ordaining to Non-Called Positions—From Doska Ross, Manager for Polity Guidance and Training, Office of the General Assembly.*

**In response to Item 05-14, pursuant to G-13.0112d, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer the question presented with the following statement:**

**The language of G-14.0482 in the amended Chapter 14 was not intended to change the practice under the former G-14.0401 of allowing the ordination of positions other than installed pastoral relationships. Therefore, a position such as a mission worker, a chaplaincy, a part-time pastorate, or a tent-making position is an ordainable position.**

### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the question presented:

1. The former G-14.0401 referred to ordination for office when one has “received a call for service to a church *or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and the presbytery*” (emphasis added). This wording is no longer included in the new Chapter 14, at G-14.0482, which simply says that the presbytery “shall approve the call.”

2. In 1993, the General Assembly, when asked for an interpretation of this part of the former G-14.0401, made it clear that a presbytery could ordain a person to a “call” that is not an installed pastoral relationship. That authoritative interpretation clarified the definition of the term “call.” The language of G-14.0482 does not change the definition of “call”; it simply sets forth how a candidate's ordination is to be processed. A change to something as important as the definition of the term “call” should not be done by inference, but rather specifically and clearly. Without a clear indication that such a change was intended, the 1993 authoritative interpretation defining “call,” is still in effect.

### **Question Received**

Item 05-14 from the manager for polity guidance and training reporting that, since the amendment of Chapter 14 in the Form of Government, many presbyteries have asked whether a particular position, such as a mission worker or a chaplaincy or a part-time pastorate or a tent-making opportunity is an ordainable position.

## Item 05-15

[The assembly approved Item 05-15. See pp. 42, 43.]

*G-14.0550—Non-ministers as Temporary Supplies, Doska Ross, Manager for Polity Guidance and Training.*

In response to Item 05-15, pursuant to G-13.0112d, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends the 218th General Assembly (2008) to answer the question presented with the following interpretation and comment:

**Interpretation:** Section G-14.0550 in the amended Chapter 14 of the Form of Government does not change the practice of allowing a commissioned lay pastor, a candidate or inquirer under care, or an elder to serve a congregation as a temporary supply pastor. Therefore, persons in such positions are still permitted to serve a congregation as a temporary supply pastor.

**Comment:** The Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the question presented:

1. Prior to the amendment, the former G-14.0513e allowed a temporary supply pastor to “be a minister, a candidate, a commissioned lay pastor, or an elder . . .” and at former G-14.0513f inquirers under care were added to those who could be a temporary supply pastor. There are other sections of the *Book of Order* that make it clear that sessions and presbyteries may authorize a commissioned lay pastor, a candidate or inquirer under care, or an elder to serve in pastoral relationships (see G-6.0304a, G-11.0103z, G-14.0420, and G-14.0560).

2. In the amended Chapter 14, G-14.0550 on temporary pastoral relationships begins with these words, “All temporary relationships of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, full or part-time, are established by the session or commission of the presbytery with the approval of the presbytery, through its committee on ministry.” It would appear that the new wording is intended to give presbyteries flexibility to create or designate temporary pastoral relationships without specifying what those relationships should be. It would also appear that it was not intended to change the former practice of allowing a variety of persons to serve in temporary pastoral relationships, particularly since other the sections of the Form of Government cited above were not amended. Without a clear indication that a wholesale change in the identity of persons who may serve in temporary relationships was intended, we must assume that the former practice is still in effect.

3. The wording of the new section, G-14.0550, which refers to “temporary pastoral relationships of *minister of the Word and Sacrament*” [emphasis added] may create some confusion by suggesting that only ministers of the Word and Sacrament may serve in temporary pastoral relationships. If the General Assembly believes that this language creates such confusion and it wishes to eliminate that confusion, it may do so by directing the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to send to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote the following amendment:

Shall the *Book of Order* be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

### “G-14:0550 Temporary Pastoral Relations

“All temporary *pastoral* relationships of a ~~minister of the Word and Sacrament~~, full or part-time, are established by the session or commission of the presbytery with the approval of the presbytery through its committee on ministry. These temporary relationships have titles appropriate to the ministerial tasks to which the ~~minister~~ *person* is called, such as stated supply, temporary supply, organizing pastor, interim pastor, and others. A ~~minister~~ *person* serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is called for a specified time not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the committee on ministry. A written agreement, covenant, or terms of call signed by the ~~minister~~ *person*, the clerk of session or presbytery commission, and a representative of the committee on ministry shall specify the pastoral functions, compensation, and any special skills or training required for the ~~ministry~~ *pastoral relationship*. A temporary pastor is not installed and is not a member of the session. The presbytery may appoint a moderator of the session who may be the temporary pastor.”

*The issue involved in this request would not arise under the proposed new Form of Government*

### Questions Presented

Item 05-15 from the manager for polity guidance and training reporting that a number of questions have been raised since the approval of Amendment 06-A to the Form of Government (Chapter 14), especially with respect to temporary pas-

toral positions. The specific question raised is whether, under the new G-14.0550, a commissioned lay pastor, a candidate or inquirer under care, or an elder may at times be allowed to serve a congregation as a temporary supply pastor.

## Item 05-16

[The assembly approved Item 05-16. See pp. 42, 43.]

*Interpretation of PUP—From the Reverend Michael Herrin, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Port Gibson, Mississippi, Chaplain, Chamberlain-Hunt Academy.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 05-16 with the following response:

This request arises from footnote number 3 in *Bush et al v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (pp. 5–6), where the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) asks whether the movement of the question used in the ordination and installation of church officers from the Form of Government to the Directory for Worship recommended by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and approved by the presbyteries has created “an oversight that should be addressed by the General Assembly” by changing the reference from “Form of Government” to “*Book of Order*.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that no constitutional change is necessary, but believes that the question presents the opportunity to clarify confusion as to the recent amendment of the *Book of Order* that moved the ordination questions to the Directory for Worship.

Adherence to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government are determined by a governing body when it examines candidates for office prior to their ordination or installation (G-14.0240 and G-14.0482). Examination questions related to G-6.0100, including the questions now found at W-4.4003, are appropriately asked at this time in the ordination process, as are a variety of other questions. Governing bodies are required to engage in a thorough examination of candidates, but have wide discretion as to which questions are put to a particular candidate. The amendment moving the questions asked in the service of ordination or installation to the Directory for Worship in no respect limits members of a governing body from asking those questions in the examination of candidates.

However, W-4.4003 applies to a different step in the process—to the actual service of ordination and installation. This step occurs only after a governing body has approved the examination and has satisfied itself that the candidate adheres to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further notes that G-14.0540 now states, “Ordination questions and installation service information may be found at W-4.4000.” This provision links the ordination questions to the Form of Government and should be understood to make clear that the service of ordination and/or installation remains a requirement of the Form of Government but is found in the Directory for Worship. With this understanding, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that there is no need for any amendment to G-6.0108b.

While not directly raised by the question, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution reminds the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the Preface to the Directory for Worship describes the purpose of the Directory for Worship as follows:

... A Directory for Worship is not a service book with fixed orders of worship, a collection of prayers and rituals, or a program guide. Rather it describes the theology that underlies Reformed worship and outlines appropriate forms for that worship. This directory suggests possibilities for worship, invites development in worship, and encourages continuing reform of worship. It sets standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and the governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) As the constitutional document ordering the worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), this Directory for Worship shall be authoritative for this church.

The Directory for Worship is no less a part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) than the Form of Government.

### *Question*

Item 05-16 from a minister member of the Presbytery of Mississippi presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

Does the movement of the questions used in the ordination and installation of church officers from the Form of Government to the Directory for Worship recommended by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and approved by the presbyteries

require amendment of G-6.0108a's requirement that officers of the PC(USA) "adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government?"

## Item 05-17

[The assembly approved Item 05-17. See pp. 42, 43.]

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 05-17 with the following response:

This request is identical to Item 05-16 and the findings and recommendation of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is therefore likewise identical to its findings and recommendation as to that item.

This request arises from footnote number 3 in *Bush et al v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh* (pp. 5–6), where the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) asks whether the movement of the question used in the ordination and installation of church officers from the Form of Government to the Directory for Worship recommended by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and approved by the presbyteries has created "an oversight that should be addressed by the General Assembly" by changing the reference from "Form of Government" to "*Book of Order*." The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that no constitutional change is necessary, but believes that the question presents the opportunity to clarify confusion as to the recent amendment of the *Book of Order* that moved the ordination questions to the Directory for Worship.

Adherence to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government are determined by a governing body when it examines candidates for office prior to their ordination or installation (G-14.0240 and G-14.0482). Examination questions related to G-6.0100, including the questions now found at W-4.4003, are appropriately asked at this time in the ordination process, as are a variety of other questions. Governing bodies are required to engage in a thorough examination of candidates, but have wide discretion as to which questions are put to a particular candidate. The amendment moving the questions asked in the service of ordination or installation to the Directory for Worship in no respect limits members of a governing body from asking those questions in the examination of candidates.

However, W-4.4003 applies to a different step in the process—to the actual service of ordination and installation. This step occurs only after a governing body has approved the examination and has satisfied itself that the candidate adheres to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further notes that G-14.0540 now states, "Ordination questions and installation service information may be found at W-4.4000." This provision links the ordination questions to the Form of Government and should be understood to make clear that the service of ordination and/or installation remains a requirement of the Form of Government but is found in the Directory for Worship. With this understanding, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that there is no need for any amendment to G-6.0108b.

While not directly raised by the question, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution reminds the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the Preface to the Directory for Worship describes the purpose of the Directory as follows:

... A Directory for Worship is not a service book with fixed orders of worship, a collection of prayers and rituals, or a program guide. Rather it describes the theology that underlies Reformed worship and outlines appropriate forms for that worship. This directory suggests possibilities for worship, invites development in worship, and encourages continuing reform of worship. It sets standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and the governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) As the constitutional document ordering the worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), this Directory for Worship shall be authoritative for this church.

The Directory for Worship is no less a part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) than the Form of Government.

### Question

Item 05-17 from an elder commissioner to the Presbytery of Chicago presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

Does the movement of the questions used in the ordination and installation of church officers from the Form of Government to the Directory for Worship recommended by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and approved by the presbyteries



require amendment of G-6.0108a's requirement that officers of the PC(USA) "adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and *The Form of Government*?"

## Item 05-18

[The assembly answered Item 05-18 by the action taken on Item 05-03. See pp. 42, 43.]

*On Directing the Stated Clerk to Collect and/or Develop Models of Examination Procedures—From the Presbytery of Heartland.*

The Presbytery of Heartland respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to

1. Commend presbyteries and sessions that have incorporated serious theological reflection and prayerful discernment into their examination procedures, as recommended by the 217th General Assembly (2006) through its approval of the report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, and the authoritative interpretation approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006).
2. Direct the Stated Clerk to collect and/or develop models of such procedures that honor the authoritative interpretation and follow the *Book of Order* and make them available to the whole church.
3. Remind sessions and presbyteries, as they carry out their constitutional responsibilities under G-6.0108, that
  - a. the purpose of ordination and installation examinations is to discern whether God has called and equipped persons for particular service, in order to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, engage in faithful ministry in the world, build up the Church of Jesus Christ, and bring glory to God;
  - b. in light of this purpose, all persons being examined should be treated with respect, recognizing that God's Spirit blows where it chooses (John 3:8);
  - c. theological questions should offer the opportunity for the ordination candidates to demonstrate knowledge of the Reformed tradition and insight in application;
  - d. personal questions on all topics should be posed with discretion, respect, and sensitivity, and that specific inquiry cannot be made into the sexual orientation or practice of persons being examined if the persons have not, on their own initiative, made a declarative statement. If such inquiries are not made into the sexual orientation or practice of all persons being examined, then such inquiries may not be made into only select persons' orientation or practice. (See GAPJC rulings in *Presbytery of San Joaquin v. Presbytery of Redwoods*, Remedial Case 215-8 [*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 259] and *Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church*, GAPJC Re. Case 214-5 [*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, p. 339].)

### *Rationale*

Actions of the 217th General Assembly (2006) invite us to be church in a renewed and more faithful way. Building on the example of Jesus Christ, who prayed that we "may all be one ... so that the world may believe" (John 17:21), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) now has a unique opportunity to witness to unity without requiring uniformity.

While built upon tradition and history dating back to the first century, the church we are becoming needs to be shaped and guided if it is to be faithful to the principles and mission envisioned by the 217th General Assembly (2006).

Some presbyteries and sessions have moved forward by implementing the recommendations passed by the 217th General Assembly (2006). They are now practicing a healthy, faithful openness to the new thing God is doing (Isaiah 43:19) while others await assistance from those sisters and brothers in the church who are further along in this journey of discernment. Learning from these "pioneers" would be beneficial to the health, life, and mission of the denomination.

The commitment of the 217th General Assembly (2006) to both unity and diversity within the church sets a high standard, for we live in a time when divisions related to issues such as peace, global warming, economic disparity, biblical interpretation, ordination, and inclusion and religious pluralism threaten to pull us apart. Learning how to speak and to listen to one another with regard to the matter of ordination can and will serve as a model for conversations about other issues that challenge us to be church God calls us to be.

**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-18**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-18—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 05-18 directs the Stated Clerk to collect and/or develop models of examination procedures.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 05-03.

## Item 06-01

[The assembly referred Item 06-01, Recommendations A.–D. to the Office of the General Assembly with comment. See p. 21.)

### *Comment:*

The referral to the Office of the General Assembly is for a period of consultation and study with churches and presbyteries through a system or systems designed and implemented by the Form of Government Task Force and members of the 218th General Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions. The participation of every presbytery in the period of consultation and study will be strongly urged. New members of this expanded task force are to be chosen from the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions by the Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008), in consultation with the moderator and vice moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions.

The new task force will revise the Form of Government Task Force Report, taking into account the concerns and suggestions gleaned from the consultation and study process. The guidance of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, the overtures, and the testimony received by the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions and the committee's comments are referred to the task force for serious and studied consideration.

The revised report of the Form of Government task force is to be submitted to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than October 15, 2009, for distribution to the church at large no later than January 15, 2010, for consideration by the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revisions submits the following unedited comments, from subcommittees of the committee, for consideration in the continuing study and revision of the Form of Government (See Appendix A.)

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$8,275; (2009): \$64,530; (2010): \$25,350 (Per Capita-OGA)]

A. The Form of Government Task Force recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall the *Book of Order* be amended by striking the text of Chapters I–IV of the current “Form of Government” and inserting a new section entitled, “Foundations of Presbyterian Polity,” to read as follows:

“THE FOUNDATIONS OF PRESBYTERIAN POLITY

“CHAPTER ONE

“THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

“F-1.01 GOD’S MISSION

“The sovereign mission of the one triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—gives substance and form to the Church’s activity in the world. The Church knows God’s sovereign work in creation and redemption through God’s Word in Scripture, the witness of the confessions, and the presence of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. As the Church responds to God’s gracious call, it participates in the divine mission—proclaiming the time of the Lord’s favor, bringing good news to all who are impoverished, and announcing release to those who are imprisoned, sight to those who are blinded, and freedom to those who are oppressed. In its faithful mission, the Church is assured of God’s blessing and filled with hope in the fulfillment of God’s purpose. Along with Christians everywhere, Presbyterians have no higher goal in life or in death than to live in covenant fellowship with the triune God, to embrace and serve God’s mission, to glorify and enjoy God now and forever.

“F-1.02 JESUS CHRIST IS HEAD OF THE CHURCH

“1.0201 The Authority of Christ

“God has given to Jesus Christ all authority in heaven and on earth, not only in this age but also in the age to come. God has put all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and has made Christ Head of the Church, which is his body. The Church’s life and mission are a joyful participation in Christ’s ongoing life and work. Wherever Christ is, there is the Church; wherever Christ leads, the Church follows.

*“1.0202 Christ Calls and Equips the Church*

*“Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission to the world, for its strength, and for its service to God. Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word. Christ alone rules, teaches, calls, and uses the Church as he wills.*

*“1.0203 Christ Gives the Church Its Life*

*“Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Insofar as Christ’s will for the Church is set forth in Scripture, it is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*

*“1.0204 Christ Is the Church’s Hope*

*“In affirming with the earliest Christians that Jesus is Lord, the Church confesses that he is its hope and that the Church, as Christ’s body, is bound to his authority and thus free to live in the lively, joyous reality of the grace of God.*

*“1.0205 Christ Is the Foundation of the Church*

*“In Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Christ God reconciles all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross (Col. 1:16–23). In Christ’s name, therefore, the Church is sent out to bear witness to the good news of reconciliation with God and one another. In Christ the Church receives the universal scope of its truth and appeal. In Christ the Church receives its holiness. In Christ the Church receives its unity.*

*“F-1.03 THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH**“1.0301 The Church Is the Body of Christ*

*“The Church is the body of Christ, both in its corporate life and in the lives of its individual members.*

*“The Church of Jesus Christ is the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all of humanity. The Church is called to be a sign in and for the world of the new reality that God has made available to people in Jesus Christ. The new reality revealed in Jesus Christ is the new humanity, a new creation, a new beginning for human life in the world:*

*“Sin is forgiven.*

*“Reconciliation is accomplished.*

*“The dividing walls of hostility are torn down.*

*“The Church is called to give shape and substance to this truth. The Church is further called to undertake this mission even at the risk of losing its life, trusting in God alone as the author and giver of life, sharing the gospel, and doing those deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in Christ.*

*“1.0302 The Marks of the Church<sup>1</sup>*

*“With Christians of the Church catholic, we affirm that the Church is ‘one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.’*

*“a. The Apostolicity of the Church*

*“Apostolicity is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ, whose life manifests the triune God. The Church receives the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ through the testimony of those whom Christ sent, and then is itself sent into the world by Jesus Christ to bear that testimony to others. The mission of the Church is to proclaim in Word and Sacrament that the new age has dawned, and that God who creates life also frees those in bondage, forgives sin, reconciles brokenness, makes all things new, and is still at work in the world.*

*“The Church is called to be faithful to the Good News it has received and accountable to the standards of the confessions. The Church is called to present the claims of Jesus Christ, leading persons to repentance, acceptance of Christ alone as Savior and Lord, and new life as his disciples.*

*“The Church is called to be Christ’s faithful evangelist:*

*“going into the world, making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all he has commanded;*

<sup>1</sup>See ‘The Nicene Creed,’ The Book of Confession, I.3.

*“demonstrating by the love of its members for one another and by the quality of its common life the new reality in Christ; sharing in worship, fellowship, and nurture, practicing a deepened life of prayer and service under the guidance of the Holy Spirit;*

*“participating in God’s activity in the world through healing, reconciling, and binding up wounds; ministering to the needs of the poor, sick, and lonely; engaging in the struggle to free people from sin and oppression; giving itself in the service of those who suffer; and bearing witness to the establishment of Christ’s just, peaceable, and loving rule in the world.*

*“b. The Catholicity of the Church*

*“Catholicity is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ, whose life makes known the reconciling love of the triune God. Christ is Lord of all creation and Head of the Church. As the body of Christ, the Church catholic is a sign of God’s reconciling love, embracing all times and places, all races and nations, all genders and ages, all persons regardless of station in life. The Church catholic is marked by the fullness of faith, the wholeness of hope, and the completeness of love, lived in communion with all who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.*

*“A congregation consists of persons in a particular place and time who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, gather to worship God, listen for God’s Word in Scripture, celebrate the sacraments, commit themselves to God’s mission in the world, and order their common life in fidelity to the gospel, together with the children of the congregation. Congregations are called to participate in the catholicity of the Church, so that all are embraced within the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.*

*“c. The Holiness of the Church*

*“Holiness is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ, whose suffering love is an act of the triune God. By his love, Christ takes away the sin of the world. The holiness of the church comes from Christ, who calls it to bear witness to his suffering love, and not from the purity of its doctrine or the righteousness of its actions.*

*“In grateful response to Christ’s redemptive work, the Church, its members, and those in its ordered ministries, are called to lead lives worthy of the gospel we proclaim. We rely upon the work of God’s Spirit through Scripture and the means of grace to form every believer and every community for this holy living. At the same time, we acknowledge the persistence of sin in our corporate and individual lives, even as we are forgiven by Christ and called again and yet again to strive for the purity, righteousness, and truth revealed to us in Jesus Christ and promised to all people in the new reality of God.*

*“d. The Unity of the Church*

*“Unity is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ, who manifests the unity of the triune God. The Church is one because it belongs to one Lord, Jesus Christ. The Church is a fellowship of believers that seeks to include all people and is never content to enjoy the benefits of Christian community for itself alone. There is one Church, for there is one Spirit, one hope, “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:5–6).*

*“The unity of the Church is both God’s gift and our calling. To be united with Christ is to be united with all those who are in Christ. To be thus joined with one another is to become priests together, praying for the world and for one another and sharing the various gifts God has given to each Christian for the benefit of the whole community. Division into different denominations does not destroy unity in Christ, but it obscures it for both the Church and the world. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity, and is willing to seek and to deepen communion with all other churches within the one, catholic Church.*

*“1.0303 The Notes of the Reformed Church*

*“To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God’s reconciling community. This community, the Church catholic, is entrusted with God’s message of reconciliation and shares God’s labor of healing the enmities that separate us from God and from each other. Christ has called the Church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Reformed Christians have understood that the Church is faithful to this mission when it truly pro-*

<sup>2</sup>See *The Confession of 1967, II.1* (The Book of Confessions, 9.31)

*claims and hears the Word of God, rightly administers the sacraments of Christ Jesus, and nurtures the covenant community through ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered.*<sup>3</sup>

“1.0304 *The Great Ends of the Church*

“The great ends of the Church are:

“the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;

“the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;

“the maintenance of divine worship;

“the preservation of the truth;

“the promotion of social righteousness; and

“the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.”<sup>4</sup>

“CHAPTER TWO

“THE CHURCH AND ITS CONFESSIONS

“F-2.01 *The Purpose of Confessional Statements*

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ in the creeds and confessions in The Book of Confessions. In these statements the church declares to its members and to the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do. These statements identify the church as a community of people known by its convictions as well as by its actions. They guide the church in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures; they summarize the essence of Reformed Christian tradition; they direct the church in maintaining sound doctrines; they equip the church for its work of proclamation. The creeds and confessions of this church arose in response to particular circumstances within the history of God’s people. They are the result of prayer, thought, and experience within a living tradition. They serve to strengthen personal commitment and the life and witness of the community of believers.

“F-2.02 *The Confessions as Subordinate Standards*

“These confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him. While confessional standards are subordinate to the Scriptures, they are, nonetheless, standards. They are not lightly drawn up or subscribed to, nor may they be ignored or dismissed. The church is prepared to instruct, counsel with, or even to discipline one ordained who seriously rejects the faith expressed in the confessions. Moreover, a more exacting amendment process is required to change the confessions of the church than is required to change the Constitution in matters of government, worship, or discipline. Yet the church, in obedience to Jesus Christ, is open to the reform of its standards of doctrine as well as of governance. The church affirms *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei*, that is, ‘The church reformed, always to be reformed according to the Word of God’ and the call of the Spirit.

“F-2.03 *The Confessions as Statements of the Faith of the Church Catholic*

“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) witnesses to the faith of the Church catholic. The confessions express the faith of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church in the recognition of canonical Scriptures and the formulation and adoption of the ecumenical creeds, notably the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds with their definitions of the mystery of the triune God and of the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in Jesus Christ.

“F-2.04 *The Confessions as Statements of the Faith of the Protestant Reformation*

“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) identifies with the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation. The focus of these affirmations is the rediscovery of God’s grace in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. The Protestant watchwords—grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone—embody principles of understanding that continue to guide and motivate the people of God in the life of faith.

“F-2.05 *The Confessions as Statements of the Faith of the Reformed Tradition*

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<sup>3</sup> See *The Scots Confession, Ch. XVIII* (The Book of Confessions, 3.18)

<sup>4</sup> This statement of the great ends of the Church, slightly edited here, came from the United Presbyterian Church of North America, which united with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1958. The statement was then made a part of the Constitution of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, as the united body was called. This now classic statement was adopted by the United Presbyterian Church of North America in 1910, following various actions between 1904 and 1910 looking forward to the revision of the church’s Constitution.

*“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to this central affirmation of God’s sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:*

*“The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;*

*“Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;*

*“A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God’s creation;*

*“The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.*

### “CHAPTER THREE

#### “PRINCIPLES OF ORDER AND GOVERNMENT

##### “F-3.01 HISTORIC PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH ORDER<sup>5</sup>

*“In setting forth the following form of government, worship, and discipline, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirms the historic principles of church order, which have been a part of our common heritage in this nation and which are basic to our Presbyterian concept and system of church government, namely:*

##### “3.0101 God Is Lord of the Conscience.

*“a. That ‘God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men<sup>6</sup> which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.’<sup>7</sup>*

*“b. Therefore we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable: We do not even wish to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and at the same time, be equal and common to all others.*

##### “3.0102 Right of Self-determination

*“That, in perfect consistency with the above principle of common right, every Christian Church, or union or association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of its internal government which Christ hath appointed; that in the exercise of this right they may, notwithstanding, err, in making the terms of communion either too lax or too narrow; yet, even in this case, they do not infringe upon the liberty or the rights of others, but only make an improper use of their own.*

##### “3.0103 Officers

*“That our blessed Savior, for the edification of the visible Church, which is his body, hath appointed officers,<sup>8</sup> not only to preach the gospel and administer the Sacraments, but also to exercise discipline, for the preservation of both truth and duty; and that it is incumbent upon these officers, and upon the whole Church, in whose name they act, to censure or cast out the erroneous and scandalous, observing, in all cases, the rules contained in the Word of God.*

##### “3.0104 Truth and Goodness

*“That truth is in order to goodness; and the great touchstone of truth, its tendency to promote holiness, according to our Savior’s rule, ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ And that no opinion can either be more pernicious or more absurd than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it as of no consequence what a*

<sup>5</sup> This section, with the exception of the first paragraph, was first drawn up by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, and prefixed to the Form of Government as published by that body in 1788. In that year, the synod was divided into four synods and gave place to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, which held its first meeting the following year. The four synods formed were the Synod of New York and New Jersey, the Synod of Philadelphia, the Synod of Virginia, and the Synod of the Carolinas. The presbyteries of these four synods were represented in the first General Assembly, which met in Philadelphia on May 21, 1789. The general plan drawn up in 1788 became that by which the Presbyterian Church in the United States and The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America were subsequently governed.

<sup>6</sup> The words ‘men’ and ‘man’s’ throughout this quotation from the eighteenth century should be understood as applying to all persons.

<sup>7</sup> See the Westminster Confession of Faith (The Book of Confessions, 6.109).

<sup>8</sup> The term ‘officers’ and ‘office’ is preserved here as part of the historic language of the Principles. Elsewhere in the Form of Government the terms ‘ordered minister’ and ‘ordered ministry’ are used in place of ‘officer’ and ‘office.’

*man's opinions are. On the contrary, we are persuaded that there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it.*

*“3.0105 Mutual Forbearance*

*“That, while under the conviction of the above principle we think it necessary to make effectual provision that all who are admitted as teachers be sound in the faith, we also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.*

*“3.0106 Right of Election of Officers*

*“That though the character, qualifications, and authority of Church officers are laid down in the Holy Scriptures, as well as the proper method of their investiture and institution, yet the election of the persons to the exercise of this authority, in any particular society, is in that society.*

*“3.0107 Church Power*

*“That all Church power, whether exercised by the body in general or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative; that is to say, that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners; that no Church judicatory<sup>9</sup> ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority; and that all their decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God. Now though it will easily be admitted that all synods and councils may err, through the frailty inseparable from humanity, yet there is much greater danger from the usurped claim of making laws than from the right of judging upon laws already made, and common to all who profess the gospel, although this right, as necessity requires in the present state, be lodged with fallible men.*

*“3.0108 The Value of Ecclesiastical Discipline*

*“Lastly, that if the preceding scriptural and rational principles be steadfastly adhered to, the vigor and strictness of its discipline will contribute to the glory and happiness of any church. Since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its object, and not attended with any civil effects, it can derive no force whatever but from its own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church universal.*

*“F-3.02 PRINCIPLES OF PRESBYTERIAN GOVERNMENT*

*“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirms, within the context of its commitment to the Church universal, a special commitment to basic principles of Presbyterian polity:*

*“3.0201 One Church*

*“The particular congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) wherever they are, taken collectively, constitute one church, called the church.*

*“3.0202 Governed by Presbyters*

*“This church shall be governed by presbyters, that is, ruling and teaching elders, also called elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Ruling elders are so named not because they ‘lord it over’ the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Teaching elders, also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament, shall be committed in all their work to equipping the people of God for their ministry and witness.*

*“3.0203 Gathered in Councils*

*“These presbyters shall come together in councils in regular gradation. These councils are sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church performed by it through the appropriate council. The larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller.*

*“3.0204 Seek and Represent the Will of Christ*

*“Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ.*

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<sup>9</sup> The term ‘judicatory,’ employed here as part of the historical language of the Principles, is elsewhere in the Form of Government replaced with ‘council.’



*“3.0205 Decision by Majority Vote*

*“Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern.*

*“3.0206 Review and Control*

*“A higher council shall have the right of review and control over a lower one and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal.*

*“3.0207 Ordination by Council*

*“Presbyters (ruling and teaching elders) and deacons are ordained only by the authority of a council.*

*“3.0208 Shared Power, Exercised Jointly*

*“Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is a shared power, to be exercised jointly by presbyters gathered in councils.*

*“3.0209 General Authority of Councils*

*“Councils possess whatever administrative authority is necessary to give effect to duties and powers assigned by the Constitution of the church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries.*

*“F-3.03 OPENNESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*

*“3.0301 Heritage and Renewal*

*“The presbyterian form of government in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is grounded in Scripture and built around the marks of the true Church. Nonetheless, the presbyterian form of government is always subject to the Lord of the Church who calls it forth in different forms at different times and in different places. Jesus Christ draws worshiping communities and individual believers into the sovereign activity of the triune God in 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. In following Christ, 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).*

*“3.0302 Ecumenicity*

*“The presbyterian government, in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is grounded in Scripture but is not regarded as essential for the existence of the Christian Church nor required of all Christians.*

*“3.0303 Diversity and Inclusiveness*

*“As the unity of the One God is expressed in the diverse activity of the Trinity, so also the unity of the Church is expressed in the rich diversity of its membership. The Church is called to give full expression in its membership to the diversity of the human family, and shall be responsive to that diversity in its worship, government, and emerging life. It shall not deny participation or representation to persons or groups within its membership for any reasons other than those stated in this Constitution.*

*“3.0304 Openness*

*“The church is called:*

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

*“to a new openness to its own membership, by affirming itself as a community of diversity, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and conditions, and by providing for inclusiveness as a visible sign of the new humanity;*

*“to a new openness to 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;*

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

*“F-3.04 THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) DEFINED*

*“The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) consists of The Book of Confessions and the Book of Order.*

“The Book of Confessions *includes*:

“*The Nicene Creed*

“*The Apostles’ Creed*

“*The Scots Confession*

“*The Heidelberg Catechism*

“*The Second Helvetic Confession*

“*The Westminster Confession of Faith*

“*The Westminster Larger Catechism*

“*The Westminster Shorter Catechism*

“*The Theological Declaration of Barmen*

“*The Confession of 1967*

“*A Brief Statement of Faith—Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*.”

“The Book of Order *includes*:

“*The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity*

“*The Form of Government*

“*The Directory for Worship*

“*The Rules of Discipline*.”

### ***General Rationale***

The Form of Government Task Force was charged by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to draft a revised Form of Government (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 366; assembly action, pp.38–39). Our reflections on the church’s calling have been shaped and guided by the ideas of *missional ecclesiology*. Missional ecclesiology begins in the confession that God has sent the church into the world to bear witness to the activity of God. This witness lies at the heart of the church’s calling. The church does not exist to serve its own interests or to ensure its own survival. Rather, the church is called into being by the triune God’s ongoing engagement with the world to reconcile, transform, and finally fulfill the divine creative intent in it. Thus the church exists not so much to *do* mission work—where “mission” is understood only as one of a number of items on the church’s agenda—as to *participate in* the work of God as it worships and follows Jesus Christ. The point is not to spread the church, but to spread the kingdom.

Polity is the architecture of mission. Missional polity places the congregation in the forefront of the church’s witness because it is the place where the church engages the world. The councils of the church (i.e., sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly) exist to guide, support, and govern the work of the congregation, and to connect and coordinate that work with other congregations, so that the whole church may witness more effectively to the activity of God in the world. These recommendations seek to provide authority and responsibility without mandating particular structures.

### ***Rationale for Recommendation A***

A “Foundations” section clearly sets apart a foundation for our entire polity. The current Chapters I–IV are contained within the current Form of Government and may be considered foundational. Those initial chapters are also considered extraordinary by many across the church, if measured only by the depth of affection accorded to them in comments received by the task force. However, they only apply to the current Form of Government and not to the Directory for Worship or the Rules of Discipline. In addition, no material in the current Chapters I–IV is identified explicitly as “foundational” or “basic,” even to the Form of Government that includes them. Creating a new section of the *Book of Order*, called Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, resolves this lack of clarity.

The proposed new “Foundations” preserves the vast majority of the text of the current first four chapters. But the organization, logic, and flow of our foundational polity are improved. There are sixty-seven paragraphs in the current G-1.0000 through G-4.0000. Of those sixty-seven paragraphs, sixty-three of them have been brought over into the new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity.

The task force believes “Foundations” will lend itself to use as an instructional guide for confirmation classes, new member preparation, and education of ruling elders and deacons in ways that the current first four chapters do not.

The new “Foundations” begins with a very simple but important statement on the activity of God in the world (F-1.01). The task force believes it is important to start our polity—the description of what the church is called to do—with this orienting statement of what God has done and is doing in the world.

“Foundations” also reflects at some length on two key statements of the calling of the church that grows out of our confessional heritage. The first is the statement in the Nicene Creed that the church is “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.” The second is G-1.0303, drawn from the familiar three “Reformation Notes” of, among other places, the Scots’ Confession (*The Book of Confessions*, 3.18). These “notes” form the basic structure of the work of church councils in proposed G-3.0201 (the session), G-3.0301 (the presbytery), G-3.0401 (the synod), and G-3.0501 (the General Assembly). Together, these statements on the “marks” and “notes” of the church remind us of our heritage in shaping what the church is called to be and to do.

B. The Form of Government Task Force recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall the *Book of Order* be amended by striking the text of Chapters V–XVIII of the current “Form of Government” and inserting a new “Form of Government” to read as follows:

“THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

“CHAPTER ONE

“CONGREGATIONS AND THEIR MEMBERSHIP

“G-1.01 THE CONGREGATION

“1.0101 *The Mission of the Congregation*

“The congregation is the church engaged in mission in its particular context. All the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the church are present to the congregation. The congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. Thus congregations are bound together in communion with one another, covenanted in relationships of accountability and responsibility, and called collectively the church.

“Through the congregation God’s people carry out their ministries of proclamation, sharing the Sacraments, and living in covenant life with God and each other. In the life of the congregation, individual believers are equipped for their ministry of witness to the love and grace of God in and for the world. The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship, to offer care and nurture to God’s children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that is coming into the world.

“1.0102 *The Fellowship of the Congregation*

“The polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presupposes the fellowship of women and men with their children in covenanted relationship with one another and with God through Jesus Christ. The organization rests upon the fellowship and is not designed to work without trust and love.

“1.0103 *Governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

“Each congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be governed by this Constitution. The members of a congregation put themselves under the leadership of the session and the higher councils (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly). The government and guidance of the congregation are the responsibility of ruling elders, elected from among the members of the congregation, and teaching elders (ministers of the Word and Sacrament) who serve together as the session. The session leads the congregation in fulfilling its responsibilities for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.

“G-1.02 THE ORGANIZING OF A CONGREGATION

“A congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can be organized only by the authority of a presbytery and shall function under the provisions of this Constitution.

“G-1.03 THE MEMBERSHIP OF A CONGREGATION

“1.0301 *The Meaning of Membership and Baptism*

“God calls women and men to faith in Jesus Christ and to membership in the church, the body of Christ. The incarnation of God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives to the church not only its mission but also

*its understanding of membership. One becomes a member of the church through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and acceptance of Christ's Lordship in all of life. Baptism and a public profession of faith in Jesus as Lord are the visible signs of God's call and claim on a human life and of entrance into the membership of the church. The baptism of children witnesses to the truth that God's love claims people before they are able to respond in faith. The baptism of those who enter the covenant of membership upon their own profession of faith witnesses to the truth that God's gift of grace calls for fulfillment in a response of faithfulness. (W-2.3008b, c.)*

*“1.0302 Welcome and Openness*

*“A congregation shall welcome all persons who respond in trust and obedience to God's grace in Jesus Christ and desire to become part of the membership and ministry of his Church. No persons shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith. Each member must seek the grace of openness in extending the fellowship of Christ to all persons. Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of Christ himself and causes a scandal to the gospel.*

*“1.0303 Entry into Membership*

*“Persons may enter into active church membership in the following ways:*

- “a. Public profession of faith, made after careful examination by the session in the meaning and responsibilities of membership; if not already baptized, the person making profession of faith shall be baptized;*
- “b. Certificate of transfer, when a person is a member of another Christian church at the time of transfer;*
- “c. Reaffirmation of faith, for other previously baptized persons.*

*“1.0304 The Ministry of Members*

*“a. Accepting the privilege and responsibility of membership in the church is a commitment to Jesus Christ that binds the individual believer to fulfillment of the obligations of membership. A faithful member accepts Christ's call to bear witness to God's love and grace and to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ's Church. Such involvement includes:*

- “proclaiming the good news,*
- “taking part in the common life and worship of a congregation,*
- “praying and studying Scripture and the Christian faith,*
- “supporting the work of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents,*
- “demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church,*
- “responding to God's activity in the world through service to others,*
- “living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life,*
- “working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment,*
- “participating in the governing responsibilities of the church.*

*“b. Members shall regularly review and evaluate the integrity with which they are involved in the ministry of the church and consider ways in which their participation in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful.*

*“G-1.04 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP*

*“The membership of a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) includes baptized members, active members, and affiliate members.*

*“1.0401 Baptized Member*

*“A baptized member is a person who has received the Sacrament of Baptism, whether in this congregation or elsewhere, and who has been enrolled as a baptized member by the session but who has not made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Such baptized members receive the pastoral care and instruction of the church, and may participate in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.*

*“1.0402 Active Member*

*“An active member is a person who has made a profession of faith in Christ, has been baptized, has been received into membership of the church, has voluntarily submitted to the government of this church, and participates in the church's work and worship. Active members participate in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, take part and vote in meetings of the congregation, may present children for baptism (see W-2.0314), and may be elected to ordered ministry (see G-2.0102). Active members shall regularly, after prayerful consideration, recommit themselves*

*to the disciplines and responsibilities of membership outlined in G-1.0303. Other disciplines and responsibilities of active membership that meet the needs of the congregation and are consistent with the order and confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may be adopted by the session after careful study and discussion with the congregation. The session shall have responsibility for preparing those who would become active members of the congregation. The session shall review the roll of active members at least annually and shall counsel with those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership.*

*“1.0403 Affiliate Member*

*“An affiliate member is a member of another congregation of this denomination or of another denomination or Christian body, who has temporarily moved from the community where the congregation of membership is situated, has presented a certificate of good standing from the appropriate council or governing body of that congregation, and has been received by the session as an affiliate member. An affiliate member may participate in the life of the congregation in the same manner as an active member except that an affiliate member may not vote or be elected to ordered ministry.*

*“1.0404 Other Participants*

*“Persons who are not members of, or who have ceased active participation in, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are welcome and may participate in the life and worship of this church and receive its pastoral care and instruction. The invitation to the Lord’s Supper is extended to all who have been baptized remembering that access to the table is not a right conferred upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love (W-2.4011). Confessing members of other Christian churches may present children for baptism, in conformity with W-2.3014.*

*“G-1.05 MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION*

*“1.0501 Annual and Special Meetings*

*“The congregation shall hold an annual meeting and may hold special meetings as necessary. At least annually, the congregation shall review the adequacy of the compensation of the pastor or pastors, shall elect ruling elders, and may elect deacons and persons to other positions of elected service as determined by the congregation. Special meetings may be called for any or all of the purposes appropriate for congregational consideration. The business to be transacted at special meetings shall be limited to items specifically listed in the call for the meeting. Adequate public notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at a regular service of worship; congregations shall provide by their own rule for minimum notification requirements. Congregations shall also provide by rule the quorum necessary to conduct business. All active members of the congregation present at either annual or special meetings are entitled to vote.*

*“1.0502 Calling a Congregational Meeting*

*“Meetings of the congregation shall be called*

*“a. by the session,*

*“b. by the presbytery, or*

*“c. by the session when requested in writing by one fourth of the members on the roll of the congregation.*

*“1.0503 Business Proper to Congregational Meetings*

*“Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall be limited to matters related to the following:*

*“a. electing ruling elders, deacons, and trustees;*

*“b. calling of a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor;*

*“c. changing existing pastoral relationships, by such means as approving or changing the terms of call, or requesting, consenting to, or declining to consent to dissolution;*

*“d. buying, mortgaging, or selling real property;*

*“e. deciding to lodge all administrative responsibility in the session, or to request from presbytery an exemption from one or more requirements because of limited size.*

*“Whenever permitted by civil law, both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same congregational meeting.*

*“1.0504 Moderator*

*“The pastor or co-pastors shall ordinarily moderate all meetings of the congregation. If it is impractical for the pastor to preside, he or she shall invite another teaching elder (minister of the Word and Sacrament) who is a member of the presbytery or a person authorized by the presbytery to serve as moderator. If there is no pastor, the presbytery shall make provision for an alternate moderator.*

*“1.0505 Secretary and Minutes*

*“The clerk of session shall serve as secretary for all meetings of the congregation. If the clerk of session is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary for that meeting. The secretary shall record the actions of the congregation in minutes of the meeting.*

*“CHAPTER TWO**“ORDERED MINISTRY, COMMISSIONING, AND CERTIFICATION**“G-2.01 ORDERED MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH**“2.0101 Christ’s Ministry*

*“The Church’s ministry is a gift from Jesus Christ to the whole Church. Christ alone rules, teaches, calls and uses the Church as he wills, exercising his authority by the ministry of women and men for the establishment and extension of God’s new reality. His ministry is the foundation and standard for all ministry, the pattern of the one who came ‘not to be served but to serve’ (Matt. 20:28). The basic form of ministry is the ministry of the whole people of God, from whose midst some are called to ordered ministries. Members and those in ordered ministries serve together under the mandate of Christ who is the chief minister of all.*

*“2.0102 Ordered Ministries*

*“The Church’s ordered ministries mentioned in the New Testament, which this church has maintained, include those of presbyters (teaching elders and ruling elders) and deacons. Ordered ministries are gifts to the church to order its life so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish.*

*“The government of this church is representative, and the right of God’s people to elect presbyters and deacons is inalienable. Therefore, no person can be placed in any ordered ministry in a congregation or council of the church except by election of that body. One responsibility of membership in the church is the election of those ordained to fulfill particular functions. The existence of these ordered ministries in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church.*

*“2.0103 Gifts and Qualifications<sup>10</sup>*

*“a. To those called to exercise special functions in the church—deacons, elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament—God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world. They must have the approval of God’s people and the concurring judgment of a governing body of the church.*

*“b. Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.*

*“2.0104 Freedom of Conscience*

*“It is necessary to the integrity and health of the church that the persons who serve it in ordered ministries shall adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in this Constitution. So far as may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained. It is to be recognized, however, that in entering the ordered ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. His or her conscience is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek, or serve in, ordered ministry. The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and*

<sup>10</sup> The task force was directed by the 217th General Assembly (2006) not to alter the current wording in G-6.0106b. Elsewhere in this proposed Form of Government, we have used “ordered ministry” in place of “office.”

*polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member.*

“G-2.02 RULING ELDERS AND DEACONS

“2.0201 Ruling Elder Defined

*“As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in governing and ministry. Ruling elders are so named not because they ‘lord it over’ the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders (elders), together with teaching elders (ministers of the Word and Sacrament), exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as teaching elders, and they are eligible for any office.*

“2.0202 Deacon Defined

*“The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry. It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to engage in ministries that show the love and justice of Jesus Christ to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, to any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith. Deacons, whether individually commissioned or organized as a board of deacons, are under the supervision and authority of the session.*

“2.0203 Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons

*“Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-2.0303). Elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee drawn from and representative of the congregation’s membership. A majority of the committee shall be members not currently in active service as elders or deacons. This committee shall include at least two elders, at least one of whom is currently serving on session, and the pastor shall serve ex officio without vote. Full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nomination by any active member of the congregation from the floor of the congregational meeting when elections are held. A majority of all the active members present and voting shall be required to elect.*

“2.0204 Preparation for Ministry as a Ruling Elder or Deacon

*“When persons have been elected to the ordered ministry of ruling elder or deacon, the session shall provide a period of study and preparation, after which the session shall examine them as to their personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; and the duties of the ministry. The session shall also confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the ministry appropriate to the order. If the examination is approved, the session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and installation.*

“2.0205 Service of Ordination and Installation

*“The service of ordination and installation shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The moderator of session or person authorized to preside shall state briefly the nature of the ministry of ruling elder and deacon. The act of ordination and installation takes place in the context of worship. The order for that service of worship in the Directory for Worship (W-4.4000) shall be followed.*

“2.0206 Terms of Service

*“Elders and deacons shall be elected to serve terms of no more than three years and shall be eligible for reelection. However, no elder or deacon shall be eligible to serve more than six consecutive years, and an elder or deacon who has served six consecutive years shall be ineligible for election to the same board for at least one year. Election shall be to classes as nearly equal in number as possible, with the term of only one class ending each year. The presbytery may, upon written request and by majority vote, grant a congregation a waiver of this limitation on terms.*

“2.0207 Perpetual Ministry and Unique Ordination

*“Ordination to the ministry of ruling elder and to the ministry of deacon is unique to that order of ministry. Once ordained and while they are active members of any congregation of this denomination, elders or deacons not in active service on a session or board of deacons continue to bear the responsibilities of the ministry to which they have been ordained except as provided in G-2.0209, G-2.0210, or in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.*

*“2.0208 Dissolution of Relationship*

*An elder or deacon may resign from the session or board of deacons for good cause, with the session’s consent. On ceasing to be an active member of a congregation, an elder or deacon ceases to be a member of its session or board. When an elder or deacon, because of change of residence or disability, is unable to perform the duties of the ministry to which he or she was ordained for a period of one year, the active relationship shall be dissolved by the session unless there is good reason not to do so, which reason should be recorded.*

*“2.0209 Release from Ministry as a Ruling Elder or Deacon*

*“If an elder or deacon who is in good standing shall make application to the session of the congregation in which he or she holds membership to be released from the exercise of the ordered ministry, the session, upon granting the release, shall delete that person’s name from the appropriate roll of ruling elder or deacon of the congregation. No judgment of failure on the part of the ruling elder or deacon is implied in this action. Release from the exercise of the ministry of ruling elder or deacon requires a discontinuation of all functions of that ministry. The status of one so released shall be the same as any church member. Should a person released under this section later desire to be restored to that ordered ministry, that person shall make application to the session that granted the release, and upon approval of the session, that person shall be restored to the exercise of the ministry from which he or she was released without re-ordination.*

*“2.0210 Renunciation of Jurisdiction*

*“When an elder or deacon submits to the clerk of session a written statement renouncing the jurisdiction of this church, the renunciation shall be effective upon receipt. When an elder or deacon persists in work disapproved by the session, the session shall consult with him or her and shall give notice of its disapproval. If, after having been provided opportunity for consultation and upon written notice of its disapproval, the elder or deacon persists in the work, the session may then conclude that the elder or deacon has renounced the jurisdiction of this church.*

*“2.0211 Effect of Renunciation*

*“Renunciation of jurisdiction shall remove the elder or deacon from membership and ordered ministry and shall terminate the exercise of the ministry. The renunciation shall be reported by the clerk of session at the next meeting of the session, which shall record the renunciation, delete the elder or deacon’s name from the appropriate register and take such other administrative actions as may be required by this Constitution.*

*“G-2.03 TEACHING ELDERS: MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**“2.0301 Teaching Elder Defined*

*“As the Lord has set aside through calling certain members to be teaching elders to perform a particular ministry of the Word and Sacrament and has committed to them a variety of work, the church through the presbytery calls them to that service and responsibility. Teaching elders, also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament, shall be committed in all their work to equipping the people of God for their ministry and witness. They shall be members of the presbytery which shall designate them to such work as may be helpful to the church in mission, in the performance of which they shall be accountable to the presbytery. No pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery. They shall be responsible for participation in the larger ministry of the church in addition to the duties to which they are called and designated by the presbytery. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament have membership in the presbytery by action of the presbytery itself. The presbytery shall determine whether a particular work is a call to validated ministry requiring ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament.*

*“2.0302 Categories of Membership*

*“A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be engaged in a ministry validated by the presbytery, be a member-at-large as determined by the presbytery, or be honorably retired.*

*“a. Validated Ministry*

*“A validated ministry shall:*

*“(1) demonstrate conformity with the mission of God’s people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, The Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order of this church;*

*“(2) serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others;*

*“(3) give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God’s Word;*

*“(4) be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served;*



*“(5) include responsible participation in the deliberations and work of the presbytery and in the worship and service of a congregation;*

*“(6) include proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments.*

*“When ministers of the Word and Sacrament are called to validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of this church, they shall give evidence of a quality of life that helps to share the ministry of the good news. They shall participate in a congregation, in their presbytery, and in ecumenical relationships and shall be eligible for election to the higher councils of the church and to the boards and agencies of those councils.*

*“The presbytery shall review annually the work of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation.*

*“b. Member-at-large*

*“A member-at-large is a minister of the Word and Sacrament who has previously been admitted to the presbytery or another presbytery as an active member, and who now, without intentional abandonment of the exercise of ministry, is no longer engaged in a ministry that complies with all the criteria in G-2.0302a. A minister may be designated a member-at-large because he or she is limited in his or her ability to engage in a ministry fulfilling all of the criteria for a validated ministry because of family responsibilities or other individual circumstances that presbytery recognizes as important. A member-at-large shall comply with as many of the criteria in G-2.0302a as possible and shall actively participate in the life of a congregation. A member-at-large is entitled to take part in the meetings of the presbytery and to speak, vote, and hold office. The status of each member-at-large may be granted by the presbytery upon the minister’s application and shall be reviewed annually.*

*“c. Honorably Retired*

*“The status of honorable retirement may be granted by a presbytery because of age or because of physical or mental disability.*

*“2.0303 Pastoral Relationships*

*“When ministers of the Word and Sacrament are called as pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor of a congregation, they are to be responsible for a quality of life and relationships that commend the gospel to all persons and that communicate its joy and its justice. They are responsible for studying, teaching, and preaching the Word, for celebrating Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, for praying with and for the congregation. With the ruling elders, they are to encourage the people in the worship and service of God; to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world; to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying; to participate in governing responsibilities, including leadership of the congregation in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision making of the church, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole. With the deacons they are to share in the ministries of sympathy, witness, and service. In addition to these pastoral duties, they are responsible for sharing in the ministry of the church in the higher councils than the session and in ecumenical relationships.*

*“a. Installed Pastoral Relationships*

*“The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. A minister of the Word and Sacrament may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation. When a congregation determines that its strategy for mission under the Word so requires, the congregation may call additional pastors. Such additional pastors shall be called co-pastors or associate pastors, and the duties of each pastor and the relationship between the pastors of the congregation shall be determined by the session with the approval of the presbytery. When a congregation has two pastors serving as co-pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as pastor. The relationship of an associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a pastor. In no circumstance is an associate pastor eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation, except by at least a three-fourths vote of the presbytery.*

*“b. Temporary Pastoral Relationships*

*“Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, candidate, or elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued by the congregation and no formal installation shall take place.*

*“Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A minister of the Word and Sacrament serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. In no circumstance is a minister employed in a temporary pastoral relationship eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor except by a three-fourths vote of the presbytery. Presbyteries may determine that the mission strategy of the presbytery necessitates a further limit on eligibility of temporary pastors to serve as the next installed pastor of a congregation served in a temporary capacity.*

*“2.0304 Transfer of Ministers of Other Denominations*

*“a. When a minister of another Christian church is called to a work properly under the jurisdiction of a presbytery, the presbytery, after the constitutional conditions have been met, shall recognize the minister’s previous ordination to ministry. Such ministers shall furnish credentials and evidence of good standing acceptable to the presbytery, and shall submit satisfactory evidence of possessing the qualifications of character and scholarship required of candidates of this church. (See G-2.0407 and G-2.0410) In exceptional circumstances the following provisions will apply:*

*“(1) In the case of ministers for immigrant fellowships and congregations, a presbytery may, if it determines that its strategy for mission with that group requires it, recognize the ordination and enroll a new immigrant minister who furnishes evidence of good standing in a denomination in correspondence with the General Assembly as a member of the presbytery, even though at the time of enrollment that minister lacks the educational history required of candidates, and provide such educational opportunities as seem necessary and prudent for that minister’s successful ministry in the presbytery.*

*“(2) A minister of another Reformed church who has been ordained for five or more years may be granted an exemption for some or all of the examinations required of candidates for ordination by a two-thirds vote of the presbytery.*

*“b. Upon enrollment, the minister shall furnish the presbytery with evidence of having surrendered membership in any and all other Christian churches with which the minister has previously been associated.*

*“2.0305 Temporary Membership in Presbytery for a Period of Service*

*“A presbytery may enroll a minister of another Christian church who is serving temporarily in a validated ministry in this church, or in an installed relationship under the provisions of the Formula of Agreement, when the minister has satisfied the requirements of preparation for such service established by the presbytery’s own rule.*

*“2.0306 Release from Ministry as a Teaching Elder*

*“When a teaching elder who is in good standing shall make application to be released from the exercise of the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, the presbytery shall delete that person’s name from the roll and give that person a certificate of membership to a congregation. Release from the exercise of ordained ministry requires discontinuance of all functions of that ministry. The designations that refer to teaching elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament, shall not be used. The person so released shall engage in the ministry shared by all active members of congregations. Should a person released under this section later desire to be restored to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, that person shall apply through the presbytery which granted the release, and upon approval of that presbytery, the reaffirmation of the ordination vows, and the resumption of a ministry that qualifies that person for membership in the presbytery, shall be restored to the exercise of the ordained ministry as a teaching elder without re-ordination.*

*“2.0307 Renunciation of Jurisdiction*

*“When a minister of the Word and Sacrament submits to the stated clerk of the presbytery a written statement renouncing the jurisdiction of this church, the renunciation shall be effective upon receipt. When a minister of the Word and Sacrament persists in work disapproved by the presbytery having jurisdiction, the presbytery shall consult with the minister and shall give notice of its disapproval. If after having been provided opportunity for consultation and upon written notice of its disapproval, the minister of the Word and Sacrament persists in the work, the presbytery may then conclude that he or she has renounced the jurisdiction of this church.*

*“2.0308 Effect of Renunciation*

*“Renunciation of jurisdiction shall remove the minister from membership and ordered ministry and shall terminate the exercise of that ministry. The renunciation shall be reported by the stated clerk at the next meeting of the presbytery, which shall record the renunciation, delete her or his name from the appropriate roll, and take such*

*other administrative actions as may be required by this Constitution, including public communication of such a renunciation.*

*“G-2.04 PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY*

*“2.0401 Nature and Purpose of Preparation*

*“It is important that those who are to be ordained as minister of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the presbytery. For this purpose, a presbytery shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament and with their sessions and congregations. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy.*

*“2.0402 Time Requirements*

*“To be enrolled as an inquirer, the applicant shall be a member of the sponsoring congregation, shall have been active in the work and worship of that congregation for at least six months, and shall have received the endorsement of the session of the sponsoring congregation. The inquiry and candidacy phases shall continue for a period of no less than two years, including at least one year as a candidate.*

*“2.0403 Purpose of Inquiry*

*“The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ministry of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer’s suitability for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.*

*“2.0404 Purpose of Candidacy*

*“The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery’s support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate’s fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination.*

*“2.0405 Oversight*

*“During the phases of inquiry and candidacy the individual continues to be an active member of his or her congregation and subject to the concern and discipline of the session. In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is subject to the oversight of the presbytery within the context of their covenant relationship.*

*“2.0406 Service in Covenant Relationship*

*“Inquirers and candidates shall, with the permission of the presbytery of care, engage in some form of supervised service to the church. No inquirer or candidate who has not been previously ordained as a ruling elder may serve as moderator of a session, administer the Sacraments, or perform a marriage service. An inquirer or candidate previously ordained as a ruling elder may be authorized by the presbytery to administer the Lord’s Supper when invited by a session.*

*“2.0407 Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service*

*“A candidate may not, without approval of the presbytery, enter into negotiation for his or her service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness shall include:*

- “a. demonstration of readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament;*
- “b. presentation of a transcript showing satisfactory grades at a regionally accredited college or university, together with a diploma;*
- “c. presentation of a transcript of a course of study including Hebrew and Greek and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments, using Hebrew and Greek texts, from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, with satisfactory grades, and with presentation of a plan to complete the theological degree;*
- “d. presentation of satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination prepared and authorized by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.*

*“2.0408 Transfer of Relationship*

*“At the request of the inquirer or candidate and with the approval of the sessions and presbyteries involved, a presbytery may transfer the covenant relationship of an inquirer or candidate.*

*“2.0409 Removal from Relationship*

*“A presbytery may also, for sufficient reasons, remove an individual’s name from the roll of inquirers and candidates, reporting this action and the reasons to the session, to the individual, and, if appropriate, to the educational institution in which the individual is enrolled.*

*“2.0410 Exceptions*

*“By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery may waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.04, except for those of G-2.0407d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0407d, it shall approve by three-quarters vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.*

*“2.05 ORDINATION**“2.0501 Ordination*

*“Ordination to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Such a person shall have fulfilled the ordination requirements of the presbytery of care and received the call of God to service to a congregation or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and to the presbytery of call.*

*“2.0502 Place of Ordination*

*“The presbytery placing the call to the candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine, ordain, and install the candidate.*

*“2.0503 Service of Ordination*

*“The order for that service found in the Directory for Worship, W-4.4000, shall be followed.*

*“2.0504 Record of Ordination*

*“The presbytery of call shall record the ordination and installation and enroll the minister as a member of the presbytery. The stated clerk of the presbytery shall report these actions to the General Assembly and to the congregation of which the candidate was formerly a member.*

*“2.06 CALL AND INSTALLATION**“2.0601 Pastoral Vacancy*

*“When a congregation has a vacancy in a pastoral position, or after the presbytery approves the effective date of the dissolution of an existing pastoral relationship, the congregation shall, with the guidance and permission of the presbytery, proceed to fill the vacancy in the following manner.*

*“2.0602 Election of a Pastor Nominating Committee*

*“The session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee that shall be representative of the whole congregation. This committee’s duty shall be to nominate a minister of the Word and Sacrament to the congregation.*

*“2.0603 Call Process*

*“The pastor nominating committee shall confer with the presbytery on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call according to the process of that presbytery. When the committee is ready to report to the congregation and the presbytery concurs, the committee shall notify the session, which shall call a congregational meeting.*

*“2.0604 Dissent*

*“On the election of a pastor, if it appears that a substantial minority of the voters are averse to the nominee who has received a majority of the votes and that they cannot be persuaded to concur in the call, the moderator shall recommend to the majority that they not prosecute the call. If the congregation is nearly unanimous, or if the majority insist upon their right to call a pastor, the moderator shall forward the call to the presbytery, certifying the results of the vote and any other facts of importance. The moderator shall also inform the person being called of the nature and circumstances of the decision.*

*“2.0605 Terms of Call*

*“The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The congregation shall review annually the adequacy of the minister’s compensation and adjust the*

*compensation to meet changes in the presbytery's requirements. The call shall include participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.*

*“2.0606 Installation Service*

*“When the congregation, the presbytery, and the minister of the Word and Sacrament (or candidate) have all concurred in a call to a permanent or designated pastoral position, the presbytery shall complete the call process by organizing and conducting a service of installation. Installation is an act of the presbytery establishing the pastoral relationship. A service of installation occurs in the context of worship. The service outline found in the Directory for Worship, W-4.4000, shall be followed.*

*“G-2.07 DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS*

*“2.0701 Congregational Meeting*

*“An installed pastoral relationship may be dissolved only by the presbytery. Whether the minister of the Word and Sacrament or the congregation or the presbytery initiates proceedings for dissolution of the relationship, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation to consider the matter and to consent, or decline to consent, to dissolution, unless the presbytery expressly finds that the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands dissolution of the relationship without such a meeting.*

*“2.0702 Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor Requests*

*“A pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor may request the presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship. The minister must also state her or his intention to the session. The session shall call a congregational meeting to act upon the request and to make recommendations to the presbytery. If the congregation does not concur, the presbytery shall hear from the congregation, through its elected commissioners, the reasons why the presbytery should not dissolve the pastoral relationship. If the congregation fails to appear, or if its reasons for retaining the relationship are judged insufficient, the request may be granted and the pastoral relationship dissolved.*

*“2.0703 Congregation Requests*

*“If any congregation desires the pastoral relationship to be dissolved, a similar procedure shall be followed. When a congregation requests the session to call a congregational meeting to dissolve its relationship with its pastor, the session shall call the meeting and request the presbytery appoint a moderator for the meeting. If the pastor does not concur with the request to dissolve the relationship, the presbytery shall hear from him or her the reasons why the presbytery should not dissolve the relationship. If the pastor fails to appear, or if the reasons for maintaining the relationship are judged insufficient, the relationship may be dissolved.*

*“2.0704 Presbytery Action*

*“The presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it.*

*“2.0705 Officiate by Invitation Only*

*“Former pastors and associate pastors may officiate at services for members of a congregation, or at services within its property, only upon invitation from the moderator of the session or, in the case of the inability to contact the moderator, from the clerk of session. After the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, former pastors who remain within the community may not offer themselves in any pastoral capacity without the invitation of the pastor.*

*“G-2.08 COMMISSIONED PASTORS*

*“2.0801 Functions*

*“When the presbytery, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, determines that its strategy for mission requires it, the presbytery may authorize an elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery. An elder so designated may be commissioned to serve in a validated ministry of the presbytery. The commission for such service shall not exceed twelve months, but shall be renewable, and it shall specify the authority, responsibilities, and term of the service.*

*“2.0802 Training, Examination and Commissioning*

*“The elder shall be instructed in Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching. The elder shall be examined by the appropriate committee of the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction mentioned previously. An elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry may continue to be*

*listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform the functions of a commissioned pastor again until commissioned to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery.*

*“2.0803 Commissioning Service*

*“When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of an elder to serve a congregation providing the services described above, it shall commission the elder to pastoral service as designated by the presbytery, employing the vows contained in W-4.4000.*

*“2.0804 Supervision*

*“The commissioned pastor shall work under the supervision of the presbytery. The presbytery may at any time withdraw the commission for reasons it deems good and sufficient. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor.*

*“G-2.09 CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS*

*“2.0901 Skills and Training*

*“Christian educators are persons called to service in the ministry of education in congregations or councils. They shall have skills and training in biblical interpretation, Reformed theology, human development, faith development, religious educational theory and practice, and the polity, programs, and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). They should be encouraged by their session and presbytery to meet, or be prepared to meet, the certification requirements defined in the manual approved by the General Assembly.*

*“2.0902 Presbytery and Christian Education*

*“The presbytery shall encourage Christian educators to seek certification, shall encourage sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification, and shall provide a service of recognition at the time of certification. The presbytery may grant the privilege of the floor at all its meetings to all certified Christian educators, with voice and vote to certified Christian educators who are ordained elders.*

*“G-2.10 OTHER CERTIFIED CHURCH WORKERS*

*“2.1001 Other Certified Church Service*

*“Other persons may be certified and called to service within congregations, councils, and church-related entities. These individuals endeavor to reflect their faith through their work and to strengthen the church through their dedication. The presbytery may grant privilege of voice in its meetings to those who have been certified by any of the organizations acknowledged by the General Assembly. The presbytery shall affirm the skill and dedication of these certified persons by providing for recognition by the presbytery at the time of their certification.*

*“CHAPTER THREE*

*“COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH*

*“G-3.01 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS*

*“3.0101 Councils as an Expression of Unity of the Church*

*“The mutual interconnection of the church through its councils is a sign of the unity of the church. Congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while possessing all the gifts necessary to be the church, are nonetheless not sufficient in themselves to be the church. Rather, they are called to share with others both within and beyond the congregation the task of bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the world. This call to bear witness is the work of all believers. The particular responsibility of the councils of the church is to nurture, guide, and govern those who witness as part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to the end that such witness strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God.*

*“3.0102 Definition*

*“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by councils composed of presbyters elected by the people (F-3.0202). These councils are called the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries, and with the acts of each subject to review by the next higher council.*

*“3.0103 Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction*

*“Councils of this church have only ecclesiastical jurisdiction for the purpose of serving Jesus Christ and declaring and obeying his will in relation to truth and service, order and discipline. They may authorize the administration of the sacraments in accordance with the principles of the Directory for Worship (W-2.3011, W-2.4012, and W-3.6204). They have power to establish plans and rules for the worship, mission, government, and discipline of the church and to do those things necessary to the peace, purity, unity, and progress of the church under the will of Christ. They have responsibility for the leadership, guidance, and government of that portion of the church that is under their jurisdiction.*

*“3.0104 Participation and Representation*

*“The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and shall guarantee full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-3.0303). In fulfilling this commitment, councils shall give due consideration to both the gifts and requirements for ministry (G-2.0103) and the right of people in congregations and councils to elect their officers (F-3.0106).*

*“Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation.*

*“3.0105 Officers*

*“Each council higher than the session shall elect a moderator. Each council shall elect a clerk and may elect such other officers as the council requires.*

*“The pastor of a congregation shall be the moderator of the session of that congregation. In congregations where there are co-pastors, they shall both be considered moderators and have provisions for designating who presides at a particular meeting.*

*“The moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the body. He or she shall convene and adjourn the body in accordance with its own action.*

*“Moderators of councils higher than the session shall be elected for such terms as the council determines. At the time of their election, moderators must be continuing members of, or commissioners to, the council over which they are elected to preside. They shall preside at all meetings of the council during their term of office; councils shall provide by rule who shall preside in the absence of the moderator.*

*“The clerk shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, preserve its records, and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church. Such extracts, verified by the clerk, shall be evidence in any council of the church. The clerk of the session shall be an elder elected by the session for such term as it may determine. The clerk of a presbytery, a synod, and the General Assembly shall be called stated clerk, shall be elected by the council for a definite term as it may determine, and must be eligible for membership in the council.*

*“3.0106 Meetings*

*“Meetings of councils shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution. Councils may also make use of processes of discernment in their deliberations prior to a vote as agreed upon by the body. Each meeting shall be opened and closed with prayer.*

*“When a council makes a decision, a member of the body who voted against the decision is entitled to file a dissent or a protest. Filing a dissent or protest neither initiates nor prevents judicial process.*

*“a. A dissent is a declaration expressing disagreement with a decision of a council. It shall be made at the particular session during which the decision is made. The names of members dissenting shall be recorded.*

*“b. A protest is a written declaration, supported by reasons, alleging that a decision of a council is or contains an irregularity or a delinquency. Written notice of the protest shall be given at the particular session of the council during which it arose and shall be filed with the clerk before adjournment. It shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting, and may be accompanied by an answer prepared by the council.*

*“3.0107 Administration of Mission*

*“Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements decisions. All administration should enable the church to give effective witness in*

*the world to the new reality of God in Jesus Christ. Administration of mission should be performed by the council nearest the congregation that can most effectively and efficiently accomplish it.*

*“Councils higher than the session may provide examples of policies and procedures that may be gathered into advisory handbooks. These examples illumine practices required by the Constitution but left to councils for specific implementation. Such handbooks may also offer information that enhances or secures the ministry of the particular council.*

*“Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that body.*

*“A council may delegate aspects of its tasks to such entities as it deems appropriate, provided that those entities remain accountable to the council.*

*“The administration of mission demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church, in that councils share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers (F-3.0203). Through their members and elected commissioners, lower councils participate in planning and administration of the work of higher councils, and in consultation between bodies concerning mission, budget, staffing and fair employment practices, and matters of equitable compensation.*

*“The funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to the new reality of God in Jesus Christ. Each council shall prepare an annual budget. Councils higher than the session may request funds for their mission and for support of the meetings and ongoing functions through which the interdependence of the church is lived out. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for raising and timely transmission of requested funds to their respective synods and the General Assembly. Presbyteries may apportion requested funds to sessions within their bounds.*

#### *“3.0108 Records*

*“Each council shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. Minutes and all other official records of councils are the property in perpetuity of said bodies or their legal successors. When congregations, presbyteries, or synods are dissolved, their records are held for the church by the next higher council within whose bounds they were before dissolution. The clerk of each council shall make recommendation to that body for the permanent safe-keeping of the body's records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or other similarly equipped records storage facility.*

#### *“3.0109 Administrative Review*

*“Higher councils shall review the work of lower councils in the following ways:*

##### *“a. General Administrative Review*

*“Each council shall review annually or biennially, based on the body's meeting frequency, the proceedings and actions of all entities related to the body, all officers able to act on behalf of the body, and lower councils within its jurisdiction.*

##### *“b. Special Administrative Review*

*“If a higher council learns at any time of an alleged irregularity or delinquency of a lower council, it may require the lower body to produce any records and to take appropriate action. In reviewing the procedures of the lower council, the higher body shall determine whether the proceedings have been correctly recorded, have been in accordance with this Constitution, have been prudent and equitable, and have been faithful to the mission of the whole church. It shall also determine whether lawful injunctions of a higher body have been obeyed.*

*“The higher council may direct the lower council to reconsider and take corrective action if matters are determined to be out of compliance. In addition to administrative review, review and correction may be sought by initiating judicial process as described in the Rules of Discipline.*

#### *“3.0110 Committees and Commissions*

*“Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary and helpful for the accomplishment of the mission of the church, and may create such structures jointly with other comparable councils, in consultation with the next higher council, share such structures. In appointing such committees and commissions councils shall be mindful of the principles of diversity and participation consistent with the provisions of this Constitution. (F-3.0303, G-3.0104)*



*“A committee shall study and recommend action or carry out decisions already made by a council. It shall make a full report to the council that created it, and its recommendations shall require action by that body. Committees of councils higher than the session shall consist of both ministers of the Word and Sacrament and members of congregations, in approximately equal proportion.*

*“A commission is empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by a council. The designating council shall state specifically the scope of the commission’s powers and any restrictions on those powers.*

*“A council may designate two types of commissions:*

*“a. Judicial Commissions*

*“Judicial commissions shall consider and decide cases of process for the council according to the Rules of Discipline. Sessions shall perform the function of a judicial commission for the congregation; each council higher than the session shall elect a permanent judicial commission (see D-5.0000).*

*“b. Administrative Commissions*

*“Administrative commissions are designated to consider and conclude matters not involving ecclesiastical judicial process, except that in the discharge of their assigned responsibilities they may discover and report to the designating council matters that may require judicial action by the council.*

*“Functions that may be entrusted to administrative commissions include, but are not limited to:*

*“(1) (by sessions) ordaining and installing ruling elders and deacons, receiving and dismissing members, and visiting organizations within the congregation to settle differences therein;*

*“(2) (by presbyteries) ordaining and installing ministers of the Word and Sacrament;*

*“(3) (by presbyteries) examining and receiving into membership ministers seeking admission to presbytery, including approval of terms of call and commissions for ordination and installation; and receiving candidates under care;*

*“(4) (by presbyteries) developing immigrant fellowships, organizing new congregations, merging congregations, or forming union or federated congregations (G-5.05);*

*“(5) (by presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly) visiting particular councils, congregations, or agencies over which they have immediate jurisdiction reported to be affected with disorder, and inquiring into and settling the difficulties therein, except that no commission of a presbytery shall be empowered to dissolve a pastoral relationship without the specific authorization by the designating body;*

*“(6) (by all councils) making pastoral inquiry into persons accused of sexual abuse of another person (D-10.0401c) when jurisdiction in a judicial proceeding against such persons has ended due to death of or renunciation by that person; such inquiries shall not be understood as judicial proceedings but shall seek to reach a determination of truth related to the accusation and to make appropriate recommendations to the designating council.*

*“Commissions of presbytery, synod, or General Assembly shall be composed of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament in numbers as nearly equal as possible and sufficient to accomplish their work. A quorum of any commission shall be established by the designating body but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members (except as limited by D-5.0204).*

*“Commissions of a session shall be composed of at least two elders and a minister of the Word and Sacrament in an installed or temporary relationship with the congregation governed by that session or a commissioned pastor commissioned to that congregation.*

*“The commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings and shall submit that record to the council for incorporation into its records. Actions of a commission shall be regarded as actions of the council that created it. A commission may be assigned additional duties as a committee, which duties shall be reported and handled as the report of a committee.*

*“The decisions of an administrative commission shall be reported to the clerk of the designating council, who shall report it to the council at its next stated meeting. A council may rescind or amend an action of its administrative commission in the same way actions of the council are modified.*

*“When an administrative commission has been designated to settle differences within a particular organization or council, it shall, before making its decision final, afford to all persons affected by its decision fair notice and an opportunity to be heard on matters at issue.*

*“3.0111 Administrative Staff*

*“Councils higher than the session may employ such staff as is required by the mission of the body in accordance with the principles of diversity and inclusiveness (F-3.0303). Councils may, in consultation with the next higher council, share staff as required by the mission of the body. A council shall make provision in its manual of administrative operations (G-3.0107) for the process of election of executive staff and the hiring of other staff, description of the responsibilities of the position, method of performance review, and the manner of termination of employment.*

*“3.0112 Nominating Process*

*“All councils higher than the session shall have a process for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the council. The process shall ensure that nominations are made by an entity broadly representative of the constituency of the council, and in conformity with the church’s commitment to inclusiveness (F-3.0303).*

*“3.0113 Insurance*

*“Each council shall obtain property and liability insurance coverage to protect its facilities, programs, staff, and elected and appointed officers.*

*“G-3.02 THE SESSION**“3.0201 Composition and Responsibilities*

*“The session is the council for the congregation. It shall be composed of those persons elected by the congregation to active service as elders, together with all installed pastors and associate pastors. All members of the session are entitled to vote. The pastor shall be the moderator of the session, and the session shall not meet without the pastor or designated moderator. Presbyteries shall provide by rule for moderators when the session is without a moderator for reasons of vacancy or inconvenience.*

*“The session shall have responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes the sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to people in Jesus Christ. As it leads and guides the witness of the congregation, the session shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303).*

*“In light of this charge, the session has responsibility and power to*

- “a. provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard. This responsibility shall include providing a place where the congregation may regularly gather for worship, education, and spiritual nurture; providing for regular preaching of the Word by a minister of the Word and Sacrament or other person prepared and approved for the work; planning and leading regular efforts to reach into the community and the world with the message of salvation and the invitation to enter into committed discipleship; planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community; and initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God.*
- “b. provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered. This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at least quarterly and the administration of Baptism as appropriate, in accordance with the principles of the Directory for Worship; and exercising pastoral care among the congregation in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the congregation may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.*
- “c. nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline. This responsibility shall include receiving and dismissing members; providing programs of nurture, education, and fellowship; training, examining, ordaining, installing those elected by the congregation as elders and deacons; encouraging the graces of generosity and faithful stewardship of personal and financial resources; managing the physical property of the congregation for the furtherance of its mission; directing the ministry of deacons, trustees, and all organizations of the congregation; employing the administrative staff of the congregation; leading the congregation in participating in the mission of the whole church; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.*

*“3.0202 Relations with Other Councils*

*“Sessions have a particular responsibility to participate in the life of the whole church through participation in other councils. It is of particular importance that sessions:*

- “a. elect, as commissioners to presbytery, elders from the congregation, preferably for at least a year, and receive their reports;*
- “b. nominate to presbytery elders from the congregation who may be considered for election as commissioners to synod and General Assembly, and to serve on committees or commissions of the same, bearing in mind principles of inclusiveness and fair representation in the decision making of the church; (F-3.0303)*
- “c. observe and carry out the instructions of presbytery, synod, and General Assembly consistent with this Constitution;*
- “d. welcome representatives of the presbytery on the occasions of their visits;*
- “e. propose to the presbytery, or through it to the synod and General Assembly, such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church; and*
- “f. send annually to presbytery and General Assembly statistical and other information according to the requirements of those bodies.*

*“3.0203 Meetings*

*“The session shall hold stated meetings at least quarterly. The moderator shall call a special meeting when he or she deems necessary or when requested in writing by any two members of the session. There shall be reasonable notice given of all special meetings. The session shall also meet when directed by presbytery. Sessions shall provide by rule for a quorum for meetings; such quorum shall include the moderator and a specific number of elders.*

*“3.0204 Minutes and Records*

*“Minutes of the session shall be subject to the provisions of G-3.0108. They shall contain the minutes of all meetings of the congregation and all joint meetings with deacons and trustees.*

*“Each session shall maintain the following roll and registers:*

*“a. Membership Roll*

*“There shall be a membership roll in accordance with G-1.0402. The session may delete names from the roll of the congregation when requested to issue a certificate of transfer of membership to another congregation; when a member requests that his or her membership be terminated; when a member joins another congregation or otherwise renounces the jurisdiction of the session; when a member has moved or otherwise ceased to participate in the ministry of Christ’s Church as defined in G-1.0303 for a period of not less than two years and after efforts on the part of the session to encourage the member to return to meaningful participation have failed, and after provision of written notice; or when a member dies.*

*“b. Registers*

*“There shall be registers of baptisms authorized by the session, of ruling elders and deacons elected by the congregation, of marriages and deaths, and such other registers as the session may deem necessary.*

*“3.0205 Finances*

*“The session shall prepare and approve an annual budget and determine the distribution of the congregation’s benevolences. It shall authorize offerings for Christian purposes and shall account for the proceeds of such offerings and their disbursement. It shall provide full information to the congregation concerning its decisions in such matters.*

*“The session shall elect a treasurer for such term as the session shall decide and shall supervise his or her work or delegate that supervision to a board of deacons or trustees. Those in charge of various congregational funds shall report at least annually to the session and more often as requested. Sessions may provide by rule for standard financial practices of the congregation, but shall in no case fail to observe the following procedures:*

- “a. All offerings shall be counted and recorded by at least two duly appointed persons, or by one fidelity bonded person;*
- “b. Financial books and records adequate to reflect all financial transactions shall be kept and shall be open to inspection by authorized church officers at reasonable times;*

- “c. *Periodic, and in no case less than annual, reports of all financial activities shall be made to the session or entity vested with financial oversight;*
- “d. *A full financial review of all financial books and records shall be conducted every year by a public accountant or committee of members versed in accounting procedures. Reviewers should not be related to the treasurer(s). Terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community.*

“G-3.03 THE PRESBYTERY

“3.0301 *Composition and Responsibilities*

“*The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within that district. When a presbytery meets, each member congregation shall be represented by at least one elder. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and elders should be present in numbers as equal as possible. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many elders each session should commission to represent it at presbytery meetings. This plan shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-3.0303 and G-3.0104. Elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service.*

“*The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten ministers of the Word and Sacrament.*

“*The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become signs in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves through history (F-1.0302).*

“*In light of this charge, the presbytery has responsibility and power to*

- “a. *provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard. This responsibility shall include organizing, receiving, and merging congregations in consultation with their members; overseeing congregations without pastors; establishing pastoral relationships and dissolving them; guiding the preparation of those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament, or for other professional service in the church; establishing and maintaining those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its district; providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in the areas of mission action, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration to the end that the church’s witness to the love and grace of God may be heard in the world.*
- “b. *provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered. This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at its meetings at least annually and for fellowship groups, new church developments, and other non-congregational entities meeting within its bounds; authorizing and training specific ruling elders to administer or preside at the Lord’s Supper when it deems it necessary to meet the needs for the administration of the Sacrament; and exercising pastoral care for the congregations and members of presbytery, visiting sessions and ministers of the Word and Sacrament on a regular basis in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the presbytery may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.*
- “c. *nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline. This responsibility shall include ordaining, receiving, dismissing, installing, removing, and disciplining minister members; commissioning elders as commissioned pastors; promoting the peace and harmony of congregations and inquiring into the sources of congregational discord; supporting congregations in developing the graces of generosity, stewardship, and service; assisting congregations in developing mission and participating in the mission of the whole church; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.*

“3.0302 *Relations with Synod and General Assembly*

“*The presbytery has a responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship to synod and General Assembly by*

- “a. electing commissioners to synod and General Assembly and receiving their reports;*
- “b. electing elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament to be readers of standard ordination examinations;*
- “c. seeing that the orders of synod and General Assembly are observed and carried out;*
- “d. proposing to synod or General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church;*
- “e. sending annually to synod and General Assembly statistical and other information according to the requirements of those bodies.*

*“3.0303 Relations with Sessions*

*“Presbytery, being composed of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament and commissioners elected by the session of congregations within its district, has a particular responsibility to coordinate, guide, encourage, support, and resource the work of their member congregations for the most effective witness to the broader community. In order to accomplish this responsibility, the presbytery has authority to*

- “a. develop strategy for the mission of the church in its district;*
- “b. control the location of new congregations and of congregations desiring to move as well as to divide, dismiss, or dissolve congregations in consultation with their members;*
- “c. establish minimum compensation standards for pastoral calls and other Christian service within the presbytery;*
- “d. assume original jurisdiction in any situation in which it determines that a session cannot exercise its authority. After a thorough investigation, and after full opportunity to be heard has been accorded to the session, the presbytery may conclude that the session of a congregation is unable or unwilling to manage wisely its affairs, and may appoint an administrative commission with the full power of session. This commission shall assume original jurisdiction of the existing session, if any, which shall cease to act until such time as the presbytery shall otherwise direct.*
- “e. consider and act upon requests from congregations for permission to take the actions regarding real property as described in G-4.0206.*

*“3.0304 Meetings and Quorum*

*“The presbytery shall hold stated meetings at least twice each year, and may call special meetings in accordance with its own rules or at the direction of the synod.*

*“A presbytery may set its own quorum, but it shall not be fewer than three ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are members of the presbytery and three elder commissioners from three different congregations.*

*“3.0305 Minutes and Records*

*“Minutes and other official records of the presbytery are the property of the presbytery, and are subject to the review specified in G-3.0109. The stated clerk is responsible for the preservation of the presbytery’s minutes and records.*

*“3.0306 Finances*

*“The presbytery shall prepare and approve an annual general mission budget to support the church’s mission within its area.*

*“A full financial review of all financial books and records shall be conducted every year by a public accountant or committee of members versed in accounting procedures. Reviewers should not be related to the treasurer(s). Terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community.*

*“3.0307 Membership of Presbytery*

*“Each presbytery determines the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are its members. It shall be guided in this determination by written criteria developed by the presbytery for validating ministries within its bounds.*

*“The presbytery shall examine each minister of the Word and Sacrament or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church.*

*“The presbytery may designate ministers of the Word and Sacrament to work as teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and in other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery. Those so designated may administer the Sacraments at times and places as established by the presbytery.*

*“Every minister of the Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily be a member of the presbytery where his or her work is situated or of the presbytery where she or he resides.*

*“A minister of the Word and Sacrament who is serving in a church outside the United States may, with the approval of the presbytery, accept ministerial membership in that church for the period of such service without affecting his or her membership in a presbytery of this church.*

*“3.0308 Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor to Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Congregations*

*“Each presbytery shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to ministers of the Word and Sacrament, commissioned pastors, and certified Christian educators of the presbytery; to facilitate the relations between the presbytery and its congregations, ministers of the Word and Sacrament, commissioned pastors, and certified Christian educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery where possible and expedient.*

*“Each presbytery shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to guide, nurture and oversee the process of preparing to become a minister of the Word and Sacrament.*

*“To facilitate the presbytery’s oversight of inquirers and candidates, reception and oversight of minister members, approval of calls for pastoral services and invitations for temporary pastoral services, oversight of congregations without pastors, dissolution of relationships, dismissal of members, and its close relationship with both member congregations and member ministers, it may delegate its authority to designated entities within the presbytery. Such entities shall be composed of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament in approximately equal numbers, bearing in mind the principles of diversity and participation in F-3.0303. All actions carried out as a result of delegated authority must be reported to the presbytery at its next regular meeting.*

*“G-3.04 THE SYNOD*

*“3.0401 Composition and Responsibilities*

*“The synod is the intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its region. It shall consist of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographic region.*

*“When a synod meets, it shall be composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. Each presbytery shall elect at least one elder and one minister of the Word and Sacrament to serve as commissioners to synod. The presbyteries of a synod shall, by a vote of the majority of the presbyteries, determine a plan for the election of commissioners to the synod, as well as the method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-3.0303 and G-3.0104. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be divided equally between elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Each person elected moderator shall be enrolled as a member of the synod until a successor is elected and installed.*

*“Synod is responsible for the life and mission of the church throughout its region and for supporting the ministry and mission of its constituent presbyteries as they seek to support the witness of congregations to the end that the whole church becomes a sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ. As it leads and guides the witness of the whole church, it shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303).*

*“In light of this charge, the synod has responsibility and power to*

- “a. provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard. This responsibility may include developing, in conjunction with its presbyteries, a broad strategy for the mission of the church (The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, Chapter One: The Mission of the Church) within its bounds and in accord with the larger strategy of the General Assembly; assisting its member presbyteries when requested in matters related to the calling, ordaining, and placement of ministers of the Word and Sacrament; establishing and maintaining, in conjunction with its presbyteries, those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its region; facilitating joint action in mission with other denominations and agencies in its region; facilitating communication among its presbyteries and between its presbyteries and the General Assembly; providing services for presbyteries within its area that can be performed more effectively from a broad regional base.*
- “b. provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered. This responsibility may include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at its meetings and at other events and gatherings under its jurisdic-*

*tion; and exercising pastoral care among its constituent presbyteries in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the synod may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.*

- “c. nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline. This responsibility shall include providing such services of education and nurture as its constituent presbyteries may require; reviewing the work of its presbyteries; warning or bearing witness against error in doctrine or immorality in practice within its bounds; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.*

#### *“3.0402 Relations with General Assembly*

*“The synod has responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship with the General Assembly by seeing that the orders and instructions of the General Assembly are observed and carried out, and by proposing to the General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the whole church.*

#### *“3.0403 Relations WITH PRESBYTERIES*

*“Each presbytery shall participate in the synod’s responsibility and service through its elected commissioners to the synod. The synod has responsibility for supporting the work of the presbyteries within its bounds and as such is charged with*

- “a. developing, in conjunction with its presbyteries, joint plans and objectives for the fulfillment of mission, providing encouragement and guidance to its presbyteries and overseeing their work;*
- “b. developing and providing, when requested, resources as needed to facilitate the mission of its presbyteries;*
- “c. organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created.*

#### *“3.0404 REDUCED FUNCTION*

*“When a two-thirds majority of its constituent presbyteries so decide, the function of a synod may be reduced but shall in no case be less than the provision of judicial process and administrative review of the work of the presbyteries (G-3.0401c). Such a synod shall meet at least every two years for the purposes of setting budget, electing members to its permanent judicial commission, and admitting to record the actions of its permanent judicial and administrative commissions. Constituent presbyteries of such a synod shall assume for themselves, by mutual agreement, such other synod functions as may be deemed necessary by the presbyteries.*

#### *“3.0405 MEETINGS AND QUORUM*

*“The synod shall hold stated meetings at least biennially and may call special meetings in accordance with its own rules or at the direction of the General Assembly.*

*“A synod may set its own quorum, but it shall include an equal number of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament representing at least three presbyteries or one-third of its presbyteries, whichever is larger.*

#### *“3.0406 Minutes and Records*

*“The synod shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings that shall be submitted to the next succeeding meeting of the General Assembly for its general review and control. It shall report to the General Assembly the number of its presbyteries and, in general, all important changes that have occurred within its bounds.*

#### *“3.0407 Finances*

*“The synod shall prepare and approve a synod general mission budget to support the church’s mission within its region.*

*“The synod shall have a full financial review of all books and records relating to finances once a year by a public accountant or public accounting firm. Such auditors should not be related to the treasurer(s). Terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community.*

## “G-3.05 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

“3.0501 *Composition and Responsibilities*

*“The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and it is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It shall consist of equal numbers of ruling and teaching elders elected by the presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds (F-3.0303 and G-3.0104), to serve as commissioners according to the following proportions:*

*“8,000 members or less: 1 elder and 1 minister of the Word and Sacrament*

*“8,001–16,000: 2 elders and 2 ministers of the Word and Sacrament*

*“16,001–24,000: 3 elders and 3 ministers of the Word and Sacrament*

*“24,001–32,000: 4 elders and 4 ministers of the Word and Sacrament*

*“32,001–40,000: 5 elders and 5 ministers of the Word and Sacrament*

*“40,001–48,000: 6 elders and 6 ministers of the Word and Sacrament*

*“48,001 or more: 7 elders and 7 ministers of the Word and Sacrament*

*“Each person elected Moderator shall be enrolled as a member of the General Assembly until a successor is elected and installed.*

*“The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ. As it leads and guides the witness of the whole church, it shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303).*

*“In light of this charge, the General Assembly has responsibility and power to*

- “a. provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard. This responsibility shall include establishing a comprehensive mission strategy and priorities for the church; establishing and maintaining ecumenical relationships and correspondence with other ecclesiastical bodies; uniting with or receiving under its jurisdiction other ecclesiastical bodies consistent with the faith and order of this church, subject to the provision of G-5.02 and G-5.03; and commissioning, sending, and support of such mission personnel as will spread the good news of the grace of Jesus Christ to the world and foster the growth and development of God’s people.*
- “b. provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered. This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at meetings of the General Assembly; authorizing the participation in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in ecumenical gatherings attended by authorized representatives of the General Assembly; and exercising pastoral care throughout the whole church in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the church may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.*
- c. nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline. This responsibility shall include providing those services, resources, and programs performed most effectively at a national level; adopting a budget for the work of the General Assembly and its entities; communicating with the whole church on matters of common concern; warning and bearing witness against errors in doctrine or immorality in the church and in the world; serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline; deciding controversies brought before it and advising and instructing in cases submitted to it, in conformity with this Constitution; authoritatively interpreting the most recent edition of the Book of Order in a manner binding on the whole church, in accordance with the provisions of G-6.02; and establishing and maintaining an office of the Stated Clerk.*

“3.0502 *Relations with Other Councils*

*“The General Assembly has responsibility to maintain relationships with presbyteries and synods by*

- “a. consulting with and providing resources for presbyteries as they execute their constitutional responsibilities;*
- “b. overseeing the work of synods;*



- “c. reviewing the records of synods, taking care to ensure that they conform to this Constitution;*
- “d. organizing new synods, or dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining previously existing synods or portions of synods;*
- “e. approving the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries.*

*“3.0503 Meetings and Quorum*

*“The General Assembly shall hold a stated meeting at least biennially. The Moderator shall call a special meeting at the request or with the concurrence of at least one fourth of the elder commissioners and one fourth of the minister of the Word and Sacrament commissioners to the last preceding stated meeting of the General Assembly representing at least fifteen presbyteries, under the jurisdiction of at least five synods. Commissioners to the special meeting shall be the commissioners elected to the last preceding stated meeting of the General Assembly or their alternates. Notice of special meetings shall be sent no fewer than sixty days prior to convening and shall set out the purpose of the meeting. No other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.*

*“A quorum of the General Assembly shall be one hundred commissioners, with elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament in equal numbers, representing presbyteries of at least one fourth of its synods.*

*“3.0504 Finances*

*“The General Assembly shall prepare and approve a budget to support its work.*

*“The General Assembly shall have a full financial review of all books and records relating to finances once a year by a public accountant or public accounting firm. Such auditors should not be related to the treasurer (or treasurers). Terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community.*

*“CHAPTER FOUR*

*“THE CHURCH AND CIVIL AUTHORITY*

*“G-4.01 CONGREGATIONAL INCORPORATION AND TRUSTEES*

*“4.0101 Incorporation and Power*

*“Where permitted by civil law, each congregation shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained. If incorporation is not permitted, individual trustees shall be elected by the congregation. Where permitted by civil law, each presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained and shall determine a method to constitute the board of trustees.*

*“The corporation so formed, or the individual trustees, shall have the following powers: to receive, hold, encumber, manage, and transfer property, real or personal, for the church, provided that in buying, selling, and mortgaging real property, the trustees shall act only after the approval of the congregation granted in a duly constituted meeting; to accept and execute deeds of title to such property; to hold and defend title to such property; to manage any permanent special funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the church, all subject to the authority of the session and under the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The powers and duties of the trustees shall not infringe upon the powers and duties of the session or the board of deacons.*

*“4.0102 Members of the Corporation*

*“Only members of the congregation or council shall be eligible to be members of the corporation and to be elected as trustees. The ruling elders on the session of a congregation, who are eligible under the civil law, shall be the trustees of such corporation, unless the corporation shall determine another method for electing its trustees.*

*“G-4.02 CHURCH PROPERTY*

*“4.0201 Property as a Tool for Mission*

*“The property of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), of its councils and entities, and of its congregations, is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.*

*“4.0202 Decisions Concerning Property*

*“The provisions of this Constitution prescribing the manner in which decisions are made, reviewed, and corrected within this church are applicable to all matters pertaining to property.*

“4.0203 *Church Property Held in Trust*

“All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“4.0204 *Property Used Contrary to the Constitution*

“Whenever property of, or held for, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ceases to be used by that congregation as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in accordance with this Constitution, such property shall be held, used, applied, transferred, or sold as provided by the presbytery.

“4.0205 *Property of a Dissolved or Extinct Congregation*

“Whenever a congregation is formally dissolved by the presbytery, or has become extinct by reason of the dispersal of its members, the abandonment of its work, or other cause, such property as it may have shall be held, used, and applied for such uses, purposes, and trusts as the presbytery may direct, limit, and appoint, or such property may be sold or disposed of as the presbytery may direct, in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“4.0206 *Selling, Encumbering, or Leasing Church Property*

“a. *Selling or Encumbering Congregational Property*

“A congregation shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any of its real property and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the congregation.

“b. *Leasing Congregational Property*

“A congregation shall not lease its real property used for purposes of worship, or lease for more than five years any of its other real property, without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the congregation.

“4.0207 *Property of Congregation in Schism*

“The relationship to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of a congregation can be severed only by constitutional action on the part of the presbytery (G-3.0303b). If there is a schism within the membership of a congregation and the presbytery is unable to effect a reconciliation or a division into separate congregations within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the presbytery shall determine if one of the factions is entitled to the property because it is identified by the presbytery as the true church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This determination does not depend upon which faction received the majority vote within the congregation at the time of the schism.

“4.0208 *Exceptions*

“The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) except that any congregation which was not subject to a similar provision of the constitution of the church of which it was a part, prior to the reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America to form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), has been excused from that provision of this chapter if the congregation, within a period of eight years following the establishment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), voted to be exempt from such provision in a regularly called meeting and thereafter notified the presbytery of which it was a constituent congregation of such vote. The congregation voting to be so exempt shall hold title to its property and exercise its privileges of incorporation and property ownership under the provisions of the Constitution to which it was subject immediately prior to the establishment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This paragraph may not be amended (G-6.05).

“G-4.03 *CONFIDENCE AND PRIVILEGE*

“4.0301 *Trust and Confidentiality*

“Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and commissioned pastors who have been authorized by the presbytery to serve as pastor in a congregation, shall maintain a relationship of trust and confidentiality, and shall hold in confidence all information revealed to them in the course of providing care and all information relating to the exercise of such care. When the person whose confidences are at issue gives express consent to reveal confidential information, then a minister of the Word and Sacrament or commissioned pastor may, but cannot be compelled to, reveal confidential information.

“A minister of the Word and Sacrament or commissioned pastor may reveal confidential information when she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent bodily harm to any person.

*“4.0302 Mandatory Reporting*

*“Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.*

*“CHAPTER FIVE*

*“ECUMENICITY AND UNION*

*“G-5.01 MISSIONAL COMMITMENT*

*“5.0101 Ecumenicity*

*“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels seeks to manifest more visibly the unity of the body of Christ and will be open to opportunities for conversation, cooperation, and action with other ecclesiastical groups. It will seek to initiate, maintain, and strengthen relations with other Reformed and Christian entities.*

*“5.0102 Interfaith Relations*

*“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels seeks new opportunities for conversation and understanding with non-Christian religious entities.*

*“5.0103 Secular Organizations*

*“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all level seeks to initiate and respond to approaches for conversation and common action with secular organizations and agencies where such approaches show promise of serving the mission of the Church in the world.*

*“G-5.02 RELATIONS WITH OTHER DENOMINATIONS*

*“5.0201 Full Communion*

*“The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion with those churches so recognized by ecumenical agreements approved by the General Assembly. Full communion shall include the mutual recognition of baptism and the orderly exchange of ministers, as defined by ecumenical agreement. Councils of this church are encouraged to engage in opportunities to minister together in mutual affirmation and admonition with churches with which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion.*

*“5.0202 Correspondence*

*“The General Assembly is in correspondence with the highest council or governing body:*

*“a. of those churches with which it has had historical relations outside the United States, as recognized by the General Assembly,*

*“b. of those churches that are members of the ecumenical bodies in which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds membership,*

*“c. of those churches with which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has formal ecumenical dialogue approved by the General Assembly.*

*“5.0203 Ecumenical Statements*

*“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may from time to time receive for guidance statements of ecumenical consensus that regularly chosen representatives of this church have helped to formulate. Such statements shall serve to guide congregations and councils of this church as they share in joint action with other ecclesiastical bodies seeking ways to express the unity of the Church and to discover its future form. Such statements shall be approved by the General Assembly as a guide for shared action and submitted to the presbyteries for affirmative or negative vote. When the next General Assembly shall have received written advice that an ecumenical statement has received the affirmative vote of a majority of presbyteries, that statement shall serve as a guide for participation in ecumenical activities. Such statements shall be published as ‘Received Ecumenical Statements of Guidance’; they shall not be part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) unless adopted as amendments according to the manner described in Chapter Six, ‘Amendments.’*

*“G-5.03 FULL ORGANIC UNION*

*“Full organic union of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with any other ecclesiastical body shall be effected subject to the following approvals:*

- “a. the approval of the proposed plan of union by the General Assembly and its recommendation to the presbyteries;*
- “b. the approval in writing of two-thirds of the presbyteries;*
- “c. the approval and consummation by the next General Assembly, or other General Assembly specified in the proposed plan of union.*

*“G-5.04 UNION PRESBYTERIES*

*“A presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may unite to form a union presbytery with one or more comparable councils or governing bodies, with the approval of the synod or comparable council or governing body of which each is a part.*

*“5.0401 Constitutional Authority*

*“The union presbytery shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination represented in the union. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, any mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases where the others are permissive. Where there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the union presbytery shall overture the highest council or governing body of the denominations involved to resolve the conflict either by authoritative interpretation or by constitutional amendment.*

*“5.0402 Plan of Union*

*“A union presbytery shall be created by the adoption of a plan of union by two-thirds vote of each presbytery or governing body that is party to the union. The synod and/or governing body having jurisdiction over each of the uniting bodies shall approve the plan of union.*

*“G-5.05 JOINT CONGREGATIONAL WITNESS*

*“When its strategy for mission requires it, a presbytery may approve the creation of a joint witness between congregations of this denomination and congregations of other Christian churches.*

- “a. Such joint witnesses shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination involved. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the congregational council shall petition the next higher councils or governing bodies to resolve the conflict.*
- “b. Such joint witnesses shall be formed according to a plan approved by a two-thirds majority of the members of each of the congregations at duly called meetings of the congregation, and by the presbytery or comparable council or governing body of each church. No provision of a plan for joint witness shall be construed as modifying or amending the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*
- “c. After consultation with the congregation involved in joint witness and the next higher council or governing body of the other denomination involved, a presbytery may receive a congregation from or transfer a congregation to a denomination with which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion or correspondence when it determines that the strategy for mission of that congregation is better served by such a transfer (G-3.0303b).*

*“CHAPTER SIX*

*“INTERPRETING AND AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION*

*“G-6.01 REFORM*

*“In the faith that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to be ‘the church reformed, always to be reformed, according to the Word of God and the call of the Spirit’ (F-2.02), this Constitution may be amended in the manner specified in these provisions.*

*“G-6.02 INTERPRETING THE CONSTITUTION: THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION*

*“The General Assembly shall establish an Advisory Committee on the Constitution composed of nine persons, ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be a member ex officio without vote. No person who has served on the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for a full term of six years shall be eligible for reelection until four years have elapsed after the expired six-year term. The General Assembly shall provide by its own rule for the qualifications of members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

*“All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the Book of Order arising from councils of the church shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such questions of interpretation to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, except those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission, which shall report all responses to the next succeeding General Assembly.*

*“G-6.03 AMENDING THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS*

*“Amendments to the confessional documents of this church may be made only if all the following steps are completed:*

- “a. The proposal to amend The Book of Confessions is approved by the General Assembly for study in the church.*
- “b. The General Assembly appoints a committee of ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, numbering not fewer than fifteen, of whom not more than two shall be from any one synod, to consider the proposal. This committee shall consult with the committee or council from which the proposal originated. It shall report its findings to the next General Assembly.*
- “c. The next ensuing General Assembly considers the report of the study committee and approves the proposed amendment and recommends it to the presbyteries for vote.*
- “d. The proposed amendment receives the approval in writing of two thirds of the presbyteries.*
- “e. The proposed amendment is approved and enacted by the next ensuing General Assembly following the amendment’s receipt of the necessary two-thirds approval of the presbyteries.*

*“G-6.04 AMENDING THE BOOK OF ORDER*

*“Amendments to the Book of Order shall be made only if all the following steps are completed:*

- “a. All proposals requesting amendment of the Book of Order are communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.*
- “b. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such proposals to amend the Book of Order to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (G-6.02), which shall examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The advisory committee shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the committee. The General Assembly shall not consider any amendment until it has considered the report and any recommendations from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*
- “c. The same General Assembly approves the proposal to amend and transmits the proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their vote.*
- “d. The proposed amendment receives the approval in writing of a majority of the presbyteries.*  
*“Presbyteries shall transmit their votes to the Stated Clerk no later than one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendments.*
- “e. The Stated Clerk receives written advice that a proposed amendment to the Book of Order has received the affirmative votes of a majority of all the presbyteries. The proposed amendment so approved shall become effective one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendment.*

*“G-6.05 EXCEPTIONS**“6.0501 Amending The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity*

*“The provisions of The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity shall not be amended for a period of at least six years following their adoption. At any time after this initial six-year period, the provisions of The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity can be amended by the process described in G-6.04, and this paragraph shall be removed from the Constitution.*

*“6.0502 Amending G-4.0208, Exceptions*

*“The provisions of G-4.0208 of this Constitution shall not be amended.*

*“G-6.06 AMENDMENTS TO SPECIAL PROVISIONS*

*“The processes for amending the confessional documents and for effecting full organic union (G-5.03) can be amended only by the same method that they prescribe.”*

**Rationale**

The task force has kept in mind that the Form of Government is a constitutional document that grows out of its foundational principles. It expresses the ideas, visions, and principles that form the architecture of mission. However, it is not a manual of operations and avoids detailed descriptions of procedures that may finally serve to hinder rather than help the church. As a result, in the proposed Form of Government the councils of the church are frequently required to provide their own standing rules or policies. It describes authority and responsibility without dictating particular structures inside the councils.

The Form of Government begins where the church’s mission begins—with the gathered community of believers, the congregation. The initial chapter combines the subject matter and much of the language of present G-5.0000 (The Church and Its Members) and G-7.0000 (The Particular Church). In a missional polity, the basic form of the church is not the individual member, but the congregation. It therefore follows that the first chapter of the Form of Government should describe the congregation. Believers most effectively bear witness to God’s new creation when they are joined together by proclamation, sacramental practice, and covenanted life. Consequently, ministry is best understood as growing out of the ministry of the congregation.

From biblical times, gathered communities of believers have sought to order ministry. The ministry of the church’s offices is the gift of Jesus Christ (see F-3.0103), and should therefore follow the example of servanthood that Christ himself provided (cf. current G-6.0101). The election of ruling elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament is the inalienable prerogative of God’s people (see F-3.0106; cf. current G-6.0107 and 6.0102). [True to its mandate, the task force has preserved intact current G-6.0106a and b (G-2.0103). It has also preserved current G-6.0108a and b, but has combined them into a single paragraph (G-2.0104)].

In Chapter Two, the task force recommends replacing the terms ‘office’ and ‘officer’ with ‘ordered ministry’ and ‘ordered minister.’ The task force proposes this change out of the conviction that our use of ‘office/officer’ carries with it subtle implications that leadership in the church is about the exercise of power and authority, elevated above other members of the church. In fact, our theology of ordination would hold almost the precise opposite. Those called to leadership roles in the church do not ‘hold office’; they do ministry. Some believers are called to particular ministries of discernment, compassion and justice, and proclamation. The exercise of such ministries is ‘ordered’—that is, prescribed or defined—by the church so that it serves to build up the whole people of God.

The recommended change uses ‘ruling elder’ and ‘teaching elder’ to describe those elected and ordained to service on the session and in the councils of the church. These terms are not new. The task force recommends them for two reasons. First, they highlight the essential sharing of responsibility for the health and well being of the church. Second, the use of the terms ruling and teaching each highlights vital functions of the work of the presbyter. ‘Ruling’ does not mean governing or reigning over, but measuring—ruling elders are those whose work it is to measure the faithfulness of the congregation in their charge. ‘Teaching’ reminds us that the central work of the minister of the Word and Sacrament is to teach the faith—in classes, preaching, leading worship, administering the sacraments, pastoral care, and virtually all aspects of congregational life. [As it drafted this chapter, the task force based its work on the revised G-14.0000 approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and adopted in 2007 by a majority of presbyteries.]

Representative gatherings of officers to oversee and decide the life of the church have carried many names. Chapter Three proposes another significant change in the language of the church: the replacement of the current term ‘governing body/ies’ with ‘council/s.’ From its earliest days, the task force heard pleas to replace ‘governing body’ with some other term as a general descriptor for the gathering of presbyters to nurture and guide the witness of the church. These conversations

were prompted by the recognition that the language we use to describe ourselves carries with it the power to shape our self-understanding, in both obvious and subtle ways.

The purpose of 3.0101 is to frame the discussion of councils in the context of the church's calling (see F-1.0302d). The church is unified by its mutual connectedness through the structure of its polity (F-3.0201, F-3.0203). Though the particular congregation is the basic form of the church, a congregation is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. Just as the gathering of believers into congregations strengthens the witness of members, so their gathering into councils strengthens the witness of congregations. The recommendation seeks to embody this principle in the descriptions of tasks for each council, affirming its relationship to other higher and lower councils (G-3.0202, G-3.0302–.0303, G-3.0402–.0403, and G-3.0502).

The descriptions of the four councils share a common structure built on the three 'Notes of the True Church' (see F-1.0303, G-3.0201, G-3.0301, G-3.0401, and G-3.0501). These three tasks—true preaching of the Word, right administration of the Sacraments, and upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline—have defined the life and work of Reformed churches since the 17th century. The task force understands the 'Notes' broadly, as the work of the community of believers rather than as a to-do list of the pastor. More importantly, it understands them eschatologically, as acts that bear witness in the world to the Lordship of Christ and the new creation God has begun in him.

[In the structures of most presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly, there already exist bodies called 'councils' that perform specified functions on behalf of the larger entity. The Form of Government does not require that such bodies cease to exist. It does, however, omit explicit reference to them, so that presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly are free to assign those functions to such entities as they see fit to design and name.]

Chapter Four on 'The Church and Civil Authority' is composed of existing language in the current Form of Government. 'Congregational Incorporation and Trustees' (G-4.01) is the slightly reorganized content of current G-7.0401 and 7.0402. Proposed G-4.02, 'Church Property,' is the text of current G-8.0000, including G-8.0200, as mandated by the charter of the task force by the 217th General Assembly (2006). Proposed G-4.03, 'Confidence and Privilege,' is a summary statement of the provisions on the same subjects in current G-6.0204a and b, G-6.0304b, and G-6.0402b.

The contents of proposed Chapter Five are drawn from current G-15.0000, G-16.0000, and G-17.0000. The guiding principle here is the missional commitment to the unity of the church, which guides the church's commitment to ecumenicity, interfaith cooperation, and partnership with secular organizations (G-5.01).

The proposed sections G-5.03, 5.04, and 5.05 seek to reduce hindrances and require only that there be plans of union or joint congregational witness, that those plans and the plans and the resulting congregations or entities be subject to the Constitution, and be approved by the next higher council.

Proposed section G-5.05 deals with 'joint congregational witness.' This new term replaces the two terms in use in the present polity, 'union' and 'federated' congregations.

Chapter Six retains the processes for amending the Constitution (both *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*) already in place in current G-18.0000. It has redrafted the descriptions of those processes to make them clearer, but has not altered their substance.

The task force is recommending that Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (F-1.00 through F-3.00) be allowed to remain intact for a period of six years before being subject to the normal process of constitutional amendment. This would permit the church to live with the document for a period of time to determine whether the new section serves the church's needs.

[Note: To be considered if the second recommendation of the Form of Government Task Force (striking current text of Chapters V–XVIII of the Form of Government and inserting new text) is approved. The task force has heard from the church considerable comment reflecting differing opinions on certain matters proposed within the Form of Government. In light of this, the 218th General Assembly (2008) may wish to direct the Stated Clerk to send to the presbyteries for their positive or negative vote any or all of the amendments in C.]

C. The Form of Government Task Force recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Shall G-2.0303a be amended by striking from the last sentence the phrase, "except by at least a three-fourths vote of the presbytery," so that the section reads: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]

"a. The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. A minister of the Word and Sacrament may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the presbytery

in consultation with the congregation. When a congregation determines that its strategy for mission under the Word so requires, the congregation may call additional pastors. Such additional pastors shall be called co-pastors or associate pastors, and the duties of each pastor and the relationships between the pastors of the congregation shall be determined by the session with the approval of the presbytery. When a congregation has two pastors serving as co-pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as pastor. The relationship of an associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a pastor. In no circumstance is an associate pastor eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation, ~~except by a three-fourths vote of the presbytery.~~”

2. Shall the second paragraph of G-2.0303b be amended by striking the third sentence and inserting a new sentence, “*A minister employed in a temporary pastoral relationship other than that of interim pastor may, with the approval of a three-fourths vote of the presbytery, be declared eligible to succeed as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor of the congregation served in a temporary capacity,*” so that the section reads: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A minister of the Word and Sacrament serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with approval of the presbytery. ~~In no circumstance is a minister employed in a temporary pastoral relationship eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor except by a three-fourths vote of the presbytery.~~ *A minister employed in a temporary pastoral relationship other than that of interim pastor may, with the approval of a three-fourths vote of the presbytery, be declared eligible to succeed as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor of the congregation served in a temporary capacity.* Presbyteries may determine that the mission strategy of the presbytery necessitates a further limit on eligibility of temporary pastors to serve as the next installed pastor of a congregation served in a temporary capacity.”

3. Shall G-2.0302a be amended by striking (6):

~~“(6) include proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments,”~~

4. Shall the second paragraph of G-3.0104 be amended by inserting new text as follows:

“Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation. *Councils above the session may establish committees to advocate for diversity in leadership.*”

D. The Form of Government Task Force recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) commend to the councils of the church “Advisory Handbook for Councils for the Development of Policies and Procedures Required by the Form of Government.”

#### *Rationale*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) instructed the task force to provide handbooks to the councils of the church for developing required policies and procedures to carry out their mission. This handbook is an aid to that work. [The text of the handbook is as follows.]

Advisory Handbook for Councils for the Development of Policies and  
Procedures Required by the Form of Government  
Policies and Procedures Required for Sessions  
Policies and Procedures Required for Presbyteries  
Policies and Procedures Required for Synods  
Policies and Procedures Required for the General Assembly  
Recommended by the Form of Government Task Force  
Established by the 217th General Assembly (2006)  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Policies and Procedures Guide for the Work of the Session

“A congregation consists of those persons in a particular place who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, gathered to worship, listen for God’s Word in Scripture, celebrate the sacraments, commit themselves to God’s mission in the world, and order their common life in fidelity to the gospel, together with the children of the congregation” (F- 1.0302 b).



The session is the council charged with governance in the congregation under the oversight of the presbytery of which the congregation is a member. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity lists three primary purposes for the session in its administration. Known as the “Notes of the Reformed Church” (F 1.0303), they are summarized as:

- (1) the true preaching of the Word of God, in which God has revealed himself to us, as the writings of the prophets and apostles declare;
- (2) the right administration of the sacraments of Christ Jesus, with which must be associated the Word and promise of God to seal and confirm them in our hearts; and
- (3) ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered, as God’s Word prescribes, whereby vice is repressed and virtue nourished.

Councils within our denomination are mutually interconnected. Each council has an expansive range of unique responsibilities; however, the life and ministry of each council is subject to review by the next higher council (G 3.0109a). In this review, certain constitutional requirements must be addressed. What follows is a listing of those areas in which a presbytery is required to or justified in reviewing the work of the session of a congregation. The purpose of this review is for mutual awareness of and encouragement in mission. The value of review is in shared knowledge rather than meticulous compliance.

The proposed Form of Government requires that “each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that body” (G-3.0107). The following list does not intend to be exhaustive of all actions that might now be included in a presbytery’s Manual of Administrative Operations. It does seek to identify those instances in the proposed Form of Government where specific policies or rules are required. In every case, a session should ask whether any existing policies of the session meet the expectations of a particular provision.

Reference	Constitutional Provision	Questions or Options to Consider
F-1.01 G-1.0101	Each congregation is charged to “perform especially the ministries of proclamation, sharing the Sacraments, and living in covenant life with God and each other.”	Does the session give evidence of a defined mission?
F-3.0106 G-3.0200	Nurturing the faith of members & seeing to the proper preparation of persons for office.	Has the session sought out members to be encouraged to consider their call to the office of minister of Word and Sacrament and recommended and supported those who undertake this process?
G-3.0201	Session is directed to an expansive list of responsibilities	Are routine responsibilities carried out by the session? Is there evidence of energy, intelligence and imagination in the work of the session as it fulfills its work?
G-3.0107 G-3.0205 G-4.0101 G-4.0102	Certain corporate and financial practices and safeguards are defined for each congregation and session	Is the congregation incorporated? Do the minutes of the session and congregation give evidence of adequate insurance? Are financial reports regularly presented and annually reviewed or audited? Has the session prepared and approved a budget?
G-1.0303 G-1.0304 G-1.0400	Members are to be trained, received, and nurtured	What opportunities are given for members to be received? Is there a regular program of member nurture after joining the congregation?
G-1.0303 W-2.0311– .0314	The Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are acts of the whole church and authorized by a council.	Is there a program of preparation for Baptism offered to parents and unbaptized adults? Are regular observances of the Lord’s Supper authorized? ... special observances reported?
G-3.0108– 3.0204	Proper and adequate records	Is there evidence of minutes maintained and reviewed regularly? Is there evidence that membership rolls are current and justly managed?
G-1.0500	The congregation holds meetings	Is an annual meeting held? Has required business been dealt with? Are special meetings ap-

Reference	Constitutional Provision	Questions or Options to Consider
		appropriately called, reported and minutes approved?
G-3.0104 G-2.0203 G-2.0602	Elections in the congregation are to be fair, just, and inclusive	Is a nominating process in place that represents the diversity of the congregation and is made up of a majority not currently in active service as ruling elders or deacons? Is evidence given of the concerns for diversity being addressed?
G-2.0204	Preparing and examining candidates for office and ordaining or installing them	Has the session prepared and examined those elected by the congregation? Are there criteria to assess their fitness for office? Was a service of ordination/installation held prior to the beginning of their service?
G-2.0206	Elders and deacons serve for specific terms	Are ruling elders and deacons grouped in classes and do terms meet constitutional standards?
G-3.0106 G-3.0107 G-3.0203	Meetings conducted decently and in order	Are dockets prepared and material made available for discussion? Is some form of procedure agreed to and followed? Do meetings include opportunity for spiritual reflection and prayer? Has the session approved a quorum for session meeting?
G-3.0107	Manual of administrative operations	What policies have been developed and approved by the session for the routine administration of the congregation's life?
G-3.0107	Consultative mission strategy	Has the presbytery initiated discussions with the session as to mutually beneficial mission activities?
G-3.0107 G-3.0202	Participation in the work of presbytery	Are representatives of the session in attendance as commissioners at meetings of the presbytery? Are reports of meetings given to the session? Is responsible financial support of the mission of the larger church a part of the session's work? Are any directives from the presbytery properly spread upon the minutes?
G-3.0110	The work of commissions	Did the session appoint any commissions? Were the directives specific and clear? Were all actions reported back to the session?

### Policies and Procedures Guide for the Work of the Presbytery

The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district. The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become signs in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall bear in mind the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves through history (F-1.0302).

Councils within our denomination are mutually interconnected. Each council has an expansive range of unique responsibilities; however, the life and ministry of each council is subject to review by the next higher council (G 3.0109a). The purpose of this review is for mutual awareness of and encouragement in mission. The value of review is in shared knowledge rather than meticulous compliance.

The proposed Form of Government requires that "each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that body" (G-3.0107). The following list does not intend to be exhaustive of all actions that might now be included in a presbytery's manual of administrative operations. It does seek to identify those

instances in the proposed Form of Government where specific policies or rules are required. In every case, the presbytery should ask whether any existing policies of the presbytery meet the expectations of a particular provision.

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Constitutional Provision</b>	<b>Questions or Options Consider</b>
G-3.0104	Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body's implementation of the church's commitment to inclusiveness and representation.	Does the presbytery choose to retain an entity comparable to the current Committee on Representation (COR) to serve this purpose? If a COR is retained, what is the appropriate makeup of such a committee in its context? If this responsibility is lodged with another presbytery entity, how will the presbytery approve its plan for complying with the church's commitment to inclusiveness and representation? How and on what basis will the presbytery review the committee's implementation of its plan? If no such committee or other entity is employed, by what process will the presbytery ensure compliance?
G-3.0105	Moderators of councils higher than the session shall be elected for such terms as the council determines.	Does the presbytery operate on a calendar year? Should the moderator serve for more than one year?
G-3.0105	Councils shall provide by rule who shall preside in the absence of the moderator.	In the absence of the moderator, who most appropriately should preside at a presbytery meeting (e.g. the vice moderator, immediate past moderator, etc.)? Is this something that state law requires be part of the presbytery bylaws?
G-3.0105	The clerk of a presbytery shall be called stated clerk, shall be elected by the council for a definite term as it may determine.	How long should the clerk's term be? What is the learning curve for this officer? How often should it be reviewed?
G-3.0108	The clerk of each council shall make recommendation to that body for the permanent safekeeping of the body's records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or other similarly equipped records storage facility.	Has the clerk made this recommendation? Is it consistent with the intent of ensuring the permanent accessibility and security of the records?
G-3.0109a	Each council shall review annually or biennially, based on the body's meeting frequency, the proceedings and actions of all entities related to the body, all officers able to act on behalf of the body, and lower councils within its jurisdiction.	Has the presbytery reviewed and made appropriate revision to its existing processes and guidelines for the review of session minutes, the actions of officers, and other proceedings to ensure that they are consistent with the revisions in the Form of Government?
G-3.0110	Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary.	What committee or other organizational structure has the presbytery developed to support the implementation of its identified mission? What gifts and skills are needed for those serving within that structure? How has accountability been assured and by what process shall those units report to the body and have their work evaluated?
G-3.0110b	A quorum of any commission shall be established by the designating body but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members (except as limited by D-5.0204).	Has the presbytery established a uniform policy regarding the makeup and quorum of any commission it creates, or will it attend to these specifics on a case-by-case basis? If the latter, does the presbytery have guidelines to advise the stated clerk or the presbytery as it constitutes and charges any commission?
G-3.0111	A council shall make provision in its manual of administrative operations (G-3.0107) for the process of election of executive staff and the hiring of other staff, description of the responsibilities of the position, method of performance review, and the manner of termination of employment.	Has the presbytery approved personnel policies and do those policies include the required items? Is a process in place to guide the calling of executive staff as well as hiring other staff? Are these policies consistent with the secular employment laws of the state as appropriate?
G-3.0112	All councils higher than the session shall have a process for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the council.	Has the presbytery developed such a process and organized itself to implement it? Does this process ensure that the presbytery can make nominations from the floor?

Reference	Constitutional Provision	Questions or Options Consider
		Are there clear expectations stated for those serving in presbytery elected positions and are there procedures in place for evaluating the effectiveness of those serving in presbytery positions? Are terms clearly stated where appropriate?
G-3.0201	Presbyteries shall provide by rule for moderators when the session is without a moderator for reasons of vacancy or inconvenience.	Does the presbytery have such a rule?
G-3.0301	The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many elders each session should commission to represent it at presbytery meetings.	Does the presbytery have a plan? When will the plan be communicated to sessions?
G-3.0303e	Presbytery has the authority to consider and act upon requests from congregations for permission to take the actions regarding real property as described in G-4.0206.	What entity within the presbytery will consider these matters and make recommendations?
G-3.0304	A presbytery may set its own quorum, but it shall not be fewer than three ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are members of the presbytery and three elder commissioners from three different congregations.	What is an appropriate quorum for the presbytery? Should it be higher than the minimum? Has this been adopted by the presbytery?
G-3.0307	It (presbytery) shall be guided in this determination by written criteria developed by the presbytery for validating ministries within its bounds.	Does the presbytery have written criteria for the validation of ministries?
G-3.0307	The presbytery shall examine each minister of the Word and Sacrament or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church.	Does the presbytery have a process for examining prospective members? Does it comply with the constitutional requirements?
G-3.0307	Non-congregationally based ministers of the Word and Sacrament may administer the Sacraments at times and places as established by the presbytery.	How do non-congregationally based ministers of the Word and Sacrament secure permission for administering the Sacraments? Are there predetermined situations where permission is automatic?
G-3.0308	Each presbytery shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to ministers, commissioned pastors, and Certified Christian Educators of the presbytery; to facilitate the relations between the presbytery and its congregations, ministers, commissioned pastors, and Certified Christian Educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery where possible and expedient.	Does the presbytery have mechanisms and processes for this? Are there existing entities to provide such care?  Will the presbytery continue the committee on ministry structure or does some other process seem more appropriate?  What is the best way to settle difficulties? Is there a mechanism in place for this?
G-3.0308	Each presbytery shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to guide, nurture, and oversee the process of preparing to become a minister of the Word and Sacrament.	Are there processes and mechanisms in place for this? Do any new procedures need to be developed?  See separate manual for preparing for ordained ministry.
G-3.0308	To facilitate the presbytery's oversight of inquirers and candidates, reception of members, approval of calls for pastoral services and invitations for temporary pastoral services, oversight of congregations without pastors, dissolution of relationships, dismissal of members, and its close relationship with both member congregations and member ministers, it may delegate its authority to desig-	Are there processes and mechanisms in place for this? Do any new procedures need to be developed?  See separate manuals for preparing for ordained ministry and for relationships between congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

Reference	Constitutional Provision	Questions or Options Consider
	nated entities within the presbytery. Such entities shall be composed of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament in approximately equal numbers, bearing in mind the principles of diversity and participation in F-3.0303. All actions carried out as a result of delegated authority must be reported to the presbytery at its next regular meeting.	

### Policies and Procedures Guide for the Work of the Synod

The synod is the intermediate council “responsible for the life and mission of the church throughout its region and for supporting the ministry and mission of its constituent presbyteries as they seek to support the witness of congregations to the end that the whole church becomes a sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ” (G-3.0401). As it meets, it is composed of commissioners elected by its constituent presbyteries.

As with all councils, the synod is charged to bear in mind the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) as it defines and carries out its mission.

Councils within our denomination are mutually interconnected. Each council has an expansive range of unique responsibilities; however, the life and ministry of each council is subject to review by the next higher council (G 3.0109a). The purpose of this review is for mutual awareness of and encouragement in mission. The value of review is in shared knowledge rather than meticulous compliance.

The proposed Form of Government requires that “each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that body” (G-3.0107). The following list does not intend to be exhaustive of all actions that might now be included in a synod’s manual of administrative operations. It does seek to identify those instances in the proposed Form of Government where specific policies or rules are required. In every case, the synod should ask whether any existing policies of the synod meet the expectations of a particular provision.

Reference	Constitutional Provision	Questions or Options to Consider
G-3.0104	Each council shall develop procedures for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation.	Does the synod choose to retain an entity comparable to the current Committee on Representation (COR) to serve this purpose? If a COR is retained, what is the appropriate makeup of such a committee in its context? If this responsibility is lodged with another synod unit, how will the synod approve its plan for complying with the church’s commitment? How and on what basis will the synod review the committee’s implementation of its plan? If no such committee or other unit is employed, by what process will the synod ensure compliance?
G-3.0105	Councils may provide by rule who shall preside in the absence of the moderator	In the absence of the moderator, who most appropriately should preside at a synod meeting (e.g. the vice moderator, immediate past moderator, etc.)? Is this something that state law requires be part of the synod’s bylaws?
G-3.0108	The clerk of each council shall make recommendation to that body for the permanent safekeeping of the body’s records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or other similarly equipped records storage facility.	Has the stated clerk made this recommendation? Is it consistent with the intent of ensuring the permanent accessibility and security of the records?
G-3.0109a	Each council shall review annually or biennially, based on the body’s meeting frequency, the proceedings and actions of all entities related to the body, all officers able to act on behalf of the body, and lower councils within its jurisdiction.	Has the synod reviewed and made appropriate revision to its existing processes and guidelines for the review of its own committees and entities, the actions of its officers, and other proceedings, as well as presbytery minutes, to ensure that they are consistent with the revisions in the Form of Government?

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Constitutional Provision</b>	<b>Questions or Options to Consider</b>
G-3.0110	Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary	What committee or other organizational structure has the synod developed to support the implementation of its identified mission? What gifts and skills are needed for those serving within that structure? How has accountability been assured and by what process shall those units report to the body and have their work evaluated?
G-3.0110b	A quorum of any commission shall be established by the appointing body but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members...	Has the synod established a uniform policy regarding the makeup and quorum of any commission it creates, or will it attend to these specifics on a case-by-case basis? If the latter, does the synod have guidelines to advise the stated clerk or the synod as it constitutes and charges any commission?
G-3.0111	A council shall make provision in its manual of administrative operations (G-3.0107) for the process of election of executive staff and the hiring of other staff, description of the responsibilities of the position, method of performance review, and the manner of termination of employment	Has the synod approved personnel policies and do those policies include the required items? Is a process in place to guide the calling of executive staff as well as hiring other staff? Are these policies consistent with the secular employment laws of the state as appropriate?
G-3.0112	All councils higher than the session shall have a process for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the body.	Has the synod developed such a process and organized itself to implement it? Does this process ensure that the synod can make nominations from the floor? Are there clear expectations stated for those serving in synod elected positions and are there procedures in place for evaluating the effectiveness of those serving in synod positions? Are terms clearly stated where appropriate?
G-5.0402	The synod or governing body having jurisdiction over each of the uniting bodies shall approve the plan of union.	What expectations does the synod have for what shall be included in a plan of union? Do the provisions of the current G-17.0200 provide guidance in this regard?

### **Policies and Procedures Guide for the Work of the General Assembly**

The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ. As it leads and guides the witness of the whole church, it shall bear in mind the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303).

Councils within our denomination are mutually interconnected. Each council has an expansive range of unique responsibilities; however, the life and ministry of each council is subject to review by the next higher council (G 3.0109a). The purpose of this review is for mutual awareness of and encouragement in mission. The value of review is in shared knowledge rather than meticulous compliance.

The proposed Form of Government requires that “each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that body” (G-3.0107). The following list does not intend to be exhaustive of all actions that might now be included in the Manual of the General Assembly. It does seek to identify those instances in the proposed Form of Government where specific policies or rules are required. In every case, the General Assembly should ask whether any existing policies of the General Assembly meet the expectations of a particular provision.

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Constitutional Provision</b>	<b>Questions or Options to Consider</b>
G-3.0104	Each council shall develop procedures for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation	Does the General Assembly choose to retain an entity comparable to the current Committee on Representation (COR) to serve this purpose? If a COR is retained, what is the appropriate makeup of such a committee in its context? If this re-

Reference	Constitutional Provision	Questions or Options to Consider
		sponsibility is lodged with another unit of the General Assembly, how will the General Assembly approve its plan for complying with the church's commitment to inclusiveness and representation? How and on what basis will the General Assembly review the committee's implementation of its plan? If no such committee or other unit is employed, by what process will the General Assembly ensure compliance?
G-3.0105	Councils may provide by rule who shall preside in the absence of the moderator	In the absence of the moderator, who most appropriately should preside at a General Assembly meeting (e.g. the vice moderator, immediate past moderator, etc.)? Is this something that state law requires be part of the General Assembly's bylaws?
G-3.0108	The clerk of each council shall make recommendation to that body for the permanent safekeeping of the body's records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or other similarly equipped records storage facility.	Has the stated clerk made this recommendation? Is it consistent with the intent of ensuring the permanent accessibility and security of the records?
G-3.0109a	Each council shall review annually or biennially, based on the body's meeting frequency, the proceedings and actions of all entities related to the body, all officers able to act on behalf of the body, and lower councils within its jurisdiction.	Has the General Assembly reviewed and made appropriate revision to its existing processes and guidelines for the review of its own committees and entities, the actions of officers, and other proceedings, as well as synod minutes, to ensure that they are consistent with the revisions in the Form of Government?
G-3.0110	Representative bodies may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary	What committee or other organizational structure has the General Assembly developed to support the implementation of its identified mission? What gifts and skills are needed for those serving within that structure? How has accountability been assured and by what process shall those units report to the body and have their work evaluated?
G-3.0110b	A quorum of any commission shall be established by the appointing body but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members...	Has the General Assembly established a uniform policy regarding the makeup and quorum of any commission it creates, or will it attend to these specifics on a case-by-case basis? If the latter, does the General Assembly have guidelines to advise the stated clerk or the General Assembly as it constitutes and charges any commission?
G-3.0109	A council shall make provision in its manual of administrative operations (G-3.0107) for the process of election of executive staff and the hiring of other staff, description of the responsibilities of the position, method of performance review, and the manner of termination of employment	Has the General Assembly approved personnel policies and do those policies include the required items? Is a process in place to guide the calling of executive staff as well as hiring other staff? Are these policies consistent with the secular employment laws of the state as appropriate?
G-3.0112	All councils higher than the session shall have a process for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the body.	Has the General Assembly developed such a process and organized itself to implement it? Does this process ensure that the General Assembly can make nominations from the floor? Are there clear expectations stated for those serving in General Assembly elected positions and are there procedures in place for evaluating the effectiveness of those serving in General Assembly positions? Are terms clearly stated where appropriate?

Reference	Constitutional Provision	Questions or Options to Consider
G-6.02	The General Assembly shall provide by its own rule for the qualifications of members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.	Has the General Assembly defined clear expectations of and qualifications for service on the Advisory Committee on the Constitution?

### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-01, RECOMMENDATION A

*Advice on Item 06-01, Recommendation A—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The task force’s proposal regarding Foundations and the Form of Government represents a significant shift in the way the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would relate to its Constitution in at least two ways.

First, the task force’s proposal envisions a polity that is missional in nature. Missional polity is grounded in the notion that mission is not merely one of many possessions or attributes of the church, but rather that bearing witness to and participating in God’s work in the world is the reason for the church’s existence. That mission takes place in particular contexts and in the life of congregations. The focus of the polity contained in the proposal is on supporting the work of the congregation. As understood in this polity, the work of the church at all levels is organized around the classical Reformed marks of the church: that the Word of God is proclaimed, the sacraments are rightly administered, and the covenant community is nurtured through ecclesiastical discipline.

Second, the task force’s proposal regarding Foundations and the Form of Government offers a document that is less regulatory in nature than the existing Form of Government. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has often noted a tendency on the part of the church to use its constitution as if it were a manual of operations, adding through the process of amendment a large number of administrative and procedural details. The proposed Form of Government eliminates many of the passages that define in detail the procedures of governing bodies. A positive aspect of this change may be the freedom offered to governing bodies to establish policies and procedures for their work that best suit the needs of their particular contexts.

If the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is ready to make this paradigm shift, the proposed Foundations and Revised Form of Government are coherent from a constitutional perspective to function as a replacement for the existing Form of Government. The advisory committee has, however, noted particular issues that should be resolved before the proposal is sent to the presbyteries for action.

#### I. The Historic Context of the Work of the Form of Government Task Force

Efforts to revise the Form of Government have been before General Assemblies for least fifteen years. Throughout that time, the consistent theme has been the impetus to restore a sense of “constitutionality” to the language of the Form of Government. Proposals for revision have sought, by various means, to maintain clarity about national standards while reducing the amount of process-oriented material that might be handled in different ways by different parts of the church.

*1993*

The Special Committee on the Nature of the Church and the Practice of Governance reported to the 205th General Assembly (1993). It suggested that the content of the Form of Government could be divided into standards and functions that should remain uniform across the church, and practices and processes about which there might reasonably be a greater degree of freedom and diversity. The assembly referred the matter of a systematic review of the Form of Government to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

*1996–97*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommended to the 208th General Assembly (1996) that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution be charged with creating a Form of Government divided into three components: (1) foundational principles, (2) binding policies, and (3) advisory practices, and that the new draft be presented to the 213th General Assembly (2001). In addition, the 209th General Assembly (1997) referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution an overture from the Presbytery of West Virginia to create a Form of Government

- that is true to the historic principles of polity in the PC(USA);
- that will serve as a constitutional reference, “encouraging creativity with broad strokes of wisdom”; and
- that will “empower governing bodies . . . and celebrate the diversity of the church.”



1999

In its progress report to the 212th General Assembly (2000), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution offered drafts of Chapters X and XI of the Form of Government that divided the contents into foundational, policy, and practice categories. It also suggested that a draft of the entire Form of Government, reduced to include only foundational principles, be circulated among the church for study and comment. The assembly chose to refer the report back to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for further refinement and report to the next assembly.

2000

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution report to the 212th General Assembly (2000) included a draft revision of Chapter XIV that reduced its contents to broadly stated principles and standards, while removing much of the process oriented material to advisory handbooks. The assembly approved the document for study and comment.

2001–02

The 213th General Assembly (2001) sent to presbyteries a proposal to revise the contents of Chapter XIV along the lines of the 2000 Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommendation. While the amendment was defeated in presbyteries (29-141-2), there was the sense that the problems were not so much with the overall concept as with particular aspects of the proposal. The following year, the 214th General Assembly (2002) asked the Office of the General Assembly to propose a systematic revision of the Form of Government along the lines of the proposed revisions to Chapter XIV, and to report its work to the 217th General Assembly (2006).

2004

The Office of the General Assembly requested and received permission to conduct an extensive series of consultations with various constituencies in the church regarding both the theory and style of revision of the Form of Government deemed most desirable.

2006

The Office of the General Assembly reported its work to the 217th General Assembly (2006) in two parts:

1. A revision of Chapter XIV, similar in content and approach to the revision proposed in 2001, but with several options for dealing with potentially controversial aspects of change. The amendment was approved and is now Chapter XIV of the *Book of Order*.
2. The creation of a Form of Government Task Force, to be charged with revising the entire Form of Government to create a document that preserves the foundational elements of Presbyterian polity, provides leadership and support for congregations as missional units, and maintains the presbytery as the central governmental unit of the church. The task force was required to release the proposed Form of Government including advisory handbooks by September 1, 2007.

2007

The Form of Government Task Force completed work on its initial draft in September and shared the document broadly within the church. Following a period of comment and critique, the task force submitted its final report to the Stated Clerk's office in December, in anticipation of presentation to the 218th General Assembly (2008). The report recommends:

1. The replacement of current Chapters I–IV with a new document, “The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity,” intended to become the first of four sections of the *Book of Order*.
2. The replacement of current Chapters V–XVIII with proposed Chapters 1–6.
3. That the assembly send to presbyteries additional proposals for amending potentially controversial aspects of the proposed Form of Government, creating options for the church in such areas as permitting associate pastors and interim pastors to succeed to the position of pastor, requiring the inclusion of proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments in all validated ministries, and creating committees on diversity at the levels of presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.

II. Advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution as to  
How the Proposed Foundations Would Modify the Current Provisions of Chapters I–IV

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity retains most of the existing provisions of Chapters I–IV of the current Form of Government, but reorganizes them consistent with the task force’s understanding of a missional polity. The original Historic Principles of Church Order from 1789 are retained in their original phrasing.

III. Referencing Historic Language to Preserve a Foundational Provision

In keeping with the task force’s inclusion of current G-1.0300 as F-3.0101 along with the now-familiar footnote explaining its 1789 origin, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution sees the benefit to the church of a similar continuity for the “radical principles of Presbyterian church government and discipline” in current G-1.0400.

The task force report divides and paraphrases the elements of the original 1797 paragraph. The original emphasizes the continuity of its particular elements: that the many congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) constitute one church, emphatically called “the Church” in the Form of Government (F-3.0201); that this church is to be governed by “presbyters” (F-3.0202); and that these presbyters assemble to govern in “councils,” which are in regular gradation (F-3.0203). The new provisions are consistent with the current Form of Government. While it does not appear to be the intention of the task force, however, some could read this reworking of current G-1.0400 as diminishing the value of that historic provision as it has aided the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in understanding and communicating the articulated integrity of the whole church.

In order to ensure that such a misunderstanding does not occur, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) add a footnote to F-3.02 of the proposed Foundations section quoting the current G-1.0400, presenting to the presbyteries for their approval or disapproval the following language:

“F-3.02 PRINCIPLES OF PRESBYTERIAN GOVERNMENT<sup>1</sup>

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*“<sup>1</sup> This provision is derived from and intended to restate the Historic Principles of Church Government, which were adopted in 1797 by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the Principles of Presbyterian Government. In this quotation, the word ‘radical’ is used in its primary meaning of ‘fundamental and basic,’ and the word ‘appeals’ is used in a general sense rather than with reference to a case involved in judicial process:*

*“The radical principles of Presbyterian church government and discipline are:*

*“That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies, till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church. For these principles and this procedure, the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive Church are considered as authority.”*

IV. Use of the Foundations in Relation to the Other Parts of the *Book of Order*

A. A question raised by the separation of the Foundation section from the remainder of the Form of Government is whether having a stand-alone Foundations section changes the status of these provisions. Within the current organization of the Form of Government, the first four chapters, and in particular the first chapter, have historically provided interpretive guidance in the interpretation of the rest of the Form of Government. Thus, for example, in 2006 the General Assembly approved an authoritative interpretation that began: “G-4.0301f must be interpreted in light of the affirmation in G-1.0400 (“Historic Principles of Church Government”) that ‘a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein ...’” Likewise, in the context of judicial decisions, the foundational sections of the Form of Government have been used as a basis for interpretation of other provisions. For example, in *Londonderry v. Presbytery of Northern New England*, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission relied on the current G-1.0302 to illustrate the position that one portion of the Form of Government could not be used to invalidate other express provisions of the Form of Government. This latter principle, that all provisions of the Form of Government should be read together, is not inconsistent with the use of foundational principles for guidance in interpretation. It does, however, establish the clear boundary between the proper use of foundational principles to provide guidance in the interpretation or particular application of another provision and the improper attempt to nullify an express provision of the Constitution by the argument that it conflicts with another provision.

The replacement of Chapters I–IV with “The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” would not change this framework. The Foundations by being separated from the Form of Government do not gain any additional authority. Rather, the Foundations would be used as Chapters I–IV are now used: to remind the denomination of the core values of its polity and to provide a basis for interpretation of any provision of the *Book of Order* that might, in a given context, be capable of multiple interpretations.

Creation of “The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” does make these core values more clearly applicable to interpretation of the other provisions of Part II of the Constitution, the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline. Again, however, as with the Form of Government, the Foundations provide a tool for interpreting these provisions, not a ground for invalidating any of them.

If the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the proposed language of the Foundations is not clear as to this point, the assembly may wish to add an additional provision explicitly stating this principle. The following language would accomplish that intent:

*“F-3.0305 Foundational Statements*

*“The statements contained in this section, ‘The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity,’ describe the ecclesiological and historical commitments on which the polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) rests. Provisions of any part of this Constitution are to be interpreted in light of the whole Constitution. Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions.”*

B. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution suggests a minor clarification of F-3.01. This provision now reads: “In setting forth the following form of government, worship, and discipline ...” While this sentence may be intended to apply generally to the other three sections of the *Book of Order*, the grammatical structure of the sentence might lead one to think that the phrase “form of” refers to “government, worship, and discipline.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believe that clarity and accuracy would be improved by clarifying that the reference is to the whole *Book of Order*, so that the sentence reads “In setting forth this *Book of Order* ...”

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-01, RECOMMENDATION B**

*Advice on Item 06-01, Recommendation B—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

As noted in the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s comments regarding Recommendation A, the approval of the Foundations and the new Form of Government would represent a significant shift in the way the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would relate to its Constitution in moving to a polity that is missional in nature and more constitutional and less regulatory. For some time, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has noted a tendency on the part of the church to use its constitution as if it were a manual of operations, adding through the process of amendment a large number of administrative and procedural restrictions. A history of efforts to adopt a less regulatory Form of Government is set forth in the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice on Recommendation A. The proposed Form of Government eliminates many of the passages that define in detail the procedures of governing bodies. A positive aspect of this change may be the freedom offered to governing bodies to establish policies and procedures for their work that best suit the needs of their particular contexts. A negative aspect may be that many Presbyterians may be puzzled or troubled by the silence in the Constitution concerning issues addressed in the Form of Government now in effect.

If the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is ready to make these shifts, the proposed Foundations and Revised Form of Government are coherent from a constitutional perspective to function as a replacement for the existing Form of Government. The advisory committee has, however, noted particular issues that should be resolved before the proposal is sent to the presbyteries for action.

I. Overview of the Proposed Form of Government

As noted above, the proposed Form of Government represents a significant shift to a more constitutional and less regulatory Form of Government. As the rationale of the task force indicates:

Chapter 1 of the proposed Form of Government is drawn from the current provisions of G-5.0000 and G-7.0000.

Chapter 2 is drawn from the current provisions of G-6.0000 and G-14.0000. As required by its mandate, the task force has preserved intact current G-6.0106a and b (G-2.0103). It has also preserved current G-6.0108a and b, but has combined them into a single paragraph (the new G-2.0104).

Chapter 3 is drawn from G-9.0000, G-10.0000, G-11.0000, G-12.0000, and G-13.0000.

Chapter 4 combines existing language in the current Form of Government from the current G-7.0401 and 7.0402. Proposed G-4.02 is the text of current G-8.0000, including G-8.0200, as mandated by the charter of the task force. Proposed G-4.03, “Confidence and Privilege,” is a summary statement of the provisions on the same subjects in current G-6.0204a and b, G-6.0304b, and G-6.0402b.

Chapter 5 is a consolidation of G-15.0000, G-16.0000, and G-17.0000.

Finally, Chapter 6 is derived from the current G-18.0000.

Except as set forth in the next section, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that the task force has complied with its charge to draft a missional Form of Government that removes materials that could be described as regulatory or “manual”-type provisions. The task force has also honored its charge to retain the current G-6.0106 and G-8.0200.

## II. Items the Advisory Committee on the Constitution Recommends Be Modified

If the 218th General Assembly (2008) decides to recommend the proposed Form of Government as a replacement for Chapters V–XVIII of the current Form of Government to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that it do so with the following modifications of the text proposed by the task force.

### A. *Chapter One*

#### 1. *On the Use of “Congregation” and “Covenant” in Chapter One and Elsewhere*

The proposed G-1.01 places the congregation at the start of the Form of Government as “the church engaged in mission in its particular context,” and as “the basic form of the church.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has several concerns regarding the understanding of “congregation” and “covenant” as set forth in Chapter One of the proposed Form of Government.

##### a. *The Particular Church Is Left Undefined.*

Chapter One lacks a clear definition of a particular church. This presents important issues of law and polity. In light of legal action against presbyteries for control of property by particular churches and groups purporting to be particular churches, constitutional clarity on what constitutes a particular church—as opposed to a worshiping fellowship, a satellite community of a larger church, or any number of other “congregations” broadly construed—is essential. Indeed, the substitution of the word “congregation” for the more precise “particular church” invites ambiguity and potential misunderstanding. (While restricting this comment to Chapter One, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes with concern the substitution of “congregation” for “church” or “particular church” in F-3.0201 and elsewhere, which reinforces concerns addressed here.) When a “congregation” becomes a “particular church” it is granted both privileges and responsibilities and is set in a particular relationship to the presbytery and the wider church.

Section G-1.02 compounds the potential confusion by failing to specify a common process for chartering congregations as particular churches, such as is found in the current G-7.0200. Thus, one presbytery could deem one kind of worshiping community as a particular church while another, perhaps in the same state, would not. Indeed, there is nothing to prevent a presbytery from inconsistently applying its own criteria to worshiping communities within its bounds.

##### b. *Use of “Covenant” in G-1.0101*

The exact nature of the connectional relationship between particular churches and the presbytery, as well as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is a matter of vital importance in addressing issues of law and polity currently facing our denomination. Various congregations have claimed that the nature of our communion is “covenantal,” which they interpret to grant the particular church equal status with the presbytery (and denomination) as covenant partners. The argument is made that a covenantal relationship permits the congregation as covenant partner to exercise autonomy to withdraw from the covenant, or to declare it broken. Indeed, failure to use language carefully in our Constitution and ecclesiastical jurisprudence has created confusion as to the historic understanding of the particular churches collectively constituting “one church” in organic relationship (G-4.0301a; 1 Cor. 12).

(For example the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in *Minihan v. Presbytery of Scioto Valley, Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 353, wrote: “But, as both parties acknowledged, the theological heart of this case is the covenantal nature of the Church. Indeed, both parties refer to per capita as a high moral obligation and as one of the sinews that binds the covenant community together. This is consistent with the historic nature of Presbyterian order that we have shared power and responsibility (G-4.0302).” Likewise, in *Johnston v. Presbytery of Heartland, Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 466, the commission wrote: “This understanding of our organic unity finds expression throughout our *Book of Order*. Mutuality expresses the unity of the church. In this fashion, we are bound together in covenantal relationships that assume and require the blessings and difficulties of dialogue based on trust and love (G-7.0103).” The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved an authoritative interpretation correcting the potential for misunderstanding of the nature of the church’s unity contained in these decisions. See *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 513–15.)

Indeed, the existing Form of Government consistently utilizes the word “covenant” only in the context of describing the relationship of individual members to one another and the larger church. See G-6.0106b; G-7.0201; G-14.0461; G-14.0463. This is an important distinction in that individual members have the right to separate themselves from the denomination should their consciences not permit them to remain in community (see footnote to G-6.0108), whereas governing bodies do not.

While the Constitution may provide for great latitude in how the church organizes itself for mission, it risks losing both its unity and its order by substituting covenantal language to describe our connectionalism where organic unity is both historically and theologically supported.

c. *Recommended Revisions to G-1.01–.03*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following revisions to G-1.00 of the proposed Form of Government before presenting it to the presbyteries for their approval or disapproval:

(1) That the assembly amend the first paragraph of G-1.01 so that it reads as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

*“1.0101 The Mission of the Congregation*

*“The congregation is the church engaged in mission in its particular context. All the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the church are present to the congregation. The congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. Thus congregations are bound together in communion with one another, [~~covenantal~~] [united] in relationships of accountability and responsibility, and called collectively the church.... [section continues unamended]”*

(2) That the assembly amend G-1.0103 so that it reads as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

*“[A “congregation” as used in this Form of Government refers to a formally established community chartered and recognized by the Presbytery as provided in this Constitution.] Each congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be governed by this Constitution. The members of a congregation put themselves under the leadership of the session and the higher councils (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly). The government and guidance of the congregation are the responsibility of ruling elders, elected from among the members of the congregation, and teaching elders (ministers of the Word and Sacrament) who serve together as the session. The session leads the congregation in fulfilling its responsibilities for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.”*

(3) That G-1.0103 be renumbered as G-1.0102, and the proposed G-1.0102 be renumbered as G-1.0103.

(4) That the 218th General Assembly (2008) amend the proposed Form of Government by reinstating current G-7.0200 for the proposed G-1.02, so that it reads as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

*“G-1.02 THE ORGANIZING OF A CONGREGATION*

*“[A congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can be organized only by the authority of a presbytery and shall function under the provisions of this Constitution.] [A congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can be organized only by the authority of a presbytery and shall function under the provisions of this Constitution.*

“G-1.0201 Constituting Covenant

“In organizing a congregation, presbytery, proceeding directly or through a commission, shall receive applications for membership in the church—whether by profession of faith, reaffirmation, or transfer of membership—from persons wishing to unite in forming a new congregation. These persons shall covenant together as follows:

“We, the undersigned, in response to the grace of God, desire to be constituted and organized as a church to be known as \_\_\_\_\_ . We promise and covenant to live together in unity and to work together in ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ, bound to him and to one another as a part of the body of Christ in this place according to the principles of faith, mission, and order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“(Signatures)

“G-1.0202 Presbytery Relationship

“G-1.0202a. They shall be declared a constituted congregation of the presbytery and shall proceed to the election of elders and deacons, making provision in cooperation with the presbytery for their preparation, examination, ordination, and installation.

“G-1.0202b. Presbytery shall continue to work closely with the congregation in securing pastoral leadership, in plans for the service and witness of the congregation, in coordinating its work with other churches, in counseling concerning bylaws for the congregation conforming to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and in giving other forms of support and encouragement that will strengthen the mission of the congregation in the larger life of the denomination.]”

2. *G-1.04 and the Category of “Inactive” Members*

The Revised Form of Government at G-1.04 does not include among the categories of membership a category of inactive members as is currently found at G-5.0203. The elimination of this category because of a focus on the meaning of membership may be shortsighted and a loss to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

It is a fact of life that there are individuals who have taken the promises of membership, and about whom the congregation has made promises of acceptance and support, who at some point find themselves not pursuing actively their ministry as members. Having a category of inactive members may administratively help a session to maintain its awareness of people for whom there is more work to be done. Eliminating the category of inactive members may help the session to maintain the fiction that people who are out of sight do not need to be kept in the session’s awareness, but the session’s ignorance of their existence does not cause these persons to become active. However, it is possible that such awareness on the part of the session can be maintained by keeping its own record of previously active members without having a category of “inactive members” mandated by the Form of Government.

If the assembly believes the inclusion of the category of inactive members is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following provision as G-1.0404 of the proposed Form of Government, and renumber the current provision G-1.0404 as G-1.0405, before presenting it to the presbyteries for their approval or disapproval: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“1.0404

“An inactive member of a particular church is one who does not participate in the church’s work and worship. An inactive member is entitled to all the rights and privileges of an active member except the right to speak in the meetings of the congregation and to vote and hold office.]

“~~1.0404~~ [1.0405] *Other Participants* [Text of this section remains unchanged.]

3. *G-1.0502c and Congregational Meetings*

As drafted, G-1.0502 provides:

Meetings of the congregation shall be called

- a. ...
- b. ...
- c. by the session when requested in writing by one fourth of the members on the roll of the congregation.

This sentence leaves open the possibility that baptized members and affiliate members could comprise all or part of the “one fourth” required to initiate the calling of a congregational meeting by the session. Greater clarity would be achieved by inserting the word “active” before members. It would then read: “c. by the session when requested in writing by one fourth of the *active* members on the roll of the congregation.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following revisions to G-1.0502c of the proposed Form of Government before presenting it to the presbyteries for their approval or disapproval: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

*1.0502 Calling a Congregational Meeting*

*“Meetings of the congregation shall be called*

*“a. by the session,*

*“b. by the presbytery, or*

*“c. by the session when requested in writing by one fourth of the [active] members on the roll of the congregation.”*

*B. Chapter Two*

*1. G-2.0302a(6) and Validated Ministries*

In G-2.0302a(6), the proposed Form of Government requires that a validated ministry shall “include proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution views this proposed requirement as inconsistent with the original charge to the task force to provide for a more missional denomination, in that G-2.0302a(6) would not give the presbyteries maximum flexibility and discretion for mission in their bounds.

The intention of G-2.0302a(6) presumably is to relate all authorized ministry closely to a congregation by requiring that every active minister’s call or ministerial employment include leadership in ordered corporate worship. The report’s rationale states that the central work of ministers as teaching elders is performed “in classes, preaching, leading worship, administering the sacraments, pastoral care, and virtually all aspects of congregational life” (p. 22), suggesting that this “central work” is normative and as indicated in G-2.0302a(6) would properly exclude most non-parish service as ordered ministry. This reading is supported by the limits implied by G-3.0301a (the framework of presbytery’s power and responsibility to “provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard,” “provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered” and “nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline”), although G-3.0307 states that those designated as “teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains and in other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery ... may administer the Sacraments at times and places as established by the presbytery” may be read as less restrictive.

Section G-2.0302a(6) seems inconsistent also with the description of the teaching elder in G-2.0301, in which a broader calling and a more differentiated overall ministry by the teaching eldership are affirmed than G-2.0302a(6) permits. (“As the Lord has set aside through calling certain members to be teaching elders to perform a particular ministry of the Word and Sacrament and has committed to them a variety of work, the church through the presbytery calls them to that service and responsibility. Teaching elders, also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament, shall be committed in all their work to equipping the people of God for their ministry and witness. ... The presbytery shall determine whether a particular work is a call to validated ministry requiring ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament.”)

It is not obvious that in its restriction on validated ministry G-2.0302a(6) expresses the mission of the church described in the Confession of 1967 (9.31), in particular the commitment to disperse into the world to serve God (9.35–.38). “A Brief Statement of Faith,” too, may be read as encouraging the church to undertake validated ministries in addition to the “central work” done by teaching elders in the life of the congregation (e.g., 10.4, lines 65–76).

The requirement that validated ministry must include preaching and administration of the sacraments requires a shift in the church’s understanding of how presbyteries are to order their ministries in mission. In keeping with the church’s continuing responsibilities for careful discernment and approval of its missional commitments, consideration of a restriction on ministry such as that in G-2.0302a(6) would be best approached as a matter separate from the approval or disapproval of the whole proposed Form of Government. The church’s decision on the missional and constitutional change represented by this single provision should be as clear and specific as possible, an outcome best served by separate consideration as a positive amendment to the Form of Government.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that G-2.0302a(6) should be stricken, therefore the 218th General Assembly (2008) should approve Item 06-01, Recommendation C.3., which reads as follows:

“3. Shall G-2.0302a be amended by striking (6):

“(6) ~~include proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments;~~”

2. *G-2.0407d and Ordination Examinations*

Section G-2.0407d of the proposed Form of Government eliminates the specification of areas to be covered by the examinations required of candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates. The current provision in G-14.0431, which was amended by vote of the presbyteries in 2007, represents a significant reduction in specificity from the predecessor section on examinations, but identifies five areas of standard examination: Bible Content, Open Book Bible Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Church Polity. The new G-2.0407d in the proposed Form of Government states only,

- d. presentation of satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination prepared and authorized by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates. [G-2.0407d]

The history of standard ordination examinations began with a report to the United Presbyterian Church General Assembly in 1965, followed by a report to the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1976. The authorizing action in the UPCUSA (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1965, Part I, pp. 104–18) was based on the following understanding:

- (1) The ministry to which men [*sic*—throughout] are ordained is “intended to be within and to the ministry of the catholic or universal Church” (Form of Government, Chapter XII, Section 16, (1)), and not merely to a given presbytery.
- (2) Yet the power to examine and ordain ministers has traditionally in our communion been vested solely in the presbytery and in no other judicatory. (See Form of Government, Chapter XII, Section 7.)
- (3) The regulations respecting such examination and ordination, however, have always been formulated by the General Assembly through the due process of constitutional amendment with the requisite concurrence of a majority of the presbyteries. (See Form of Government, Chapter XXXIV, Section 3.)

The amendment adopted incorporated language proposing a uniform requirement of five trials, among them examinations in the four areas of Polity and Program of the UPCUSA; Theological Capability; Worship; and Open Book Bible Exegesis.

In 1977, the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in the United States adopted “G-14.0431 [formerly G-14.0310d.], Structure for Developing Standard Ordination Examinations” (*Minutes*, PCUS, Part I, 1976, p. 170), which included provision for standard examinations in four specific areas of content: Theology, Bible, Sacraments, and the Book of Church Order. At the time of reunion, the differences in the two processes were harmonized, and the subsequent provisions have been amended at various times.

There are two aspects of this history that bear on the present proposal:

- The requirements of the standard ordination examinations were intended to assist presbyteries in conducting their own examination of candidates, and therefore do not constitute “standards of ordination” as do the provisions in the current G-6.0000, for example. This determination is buttressed by the provision in the Constitution for processes to waive some or all of the examinations for exceptional candidates.
- Nevertheless, the areas of examination have historically been established and regulated by constitutional amendment through action of the General Assembly with the concurring vote of the presbyteries.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution, therefore, finds the omission in the proposed Form of Government of the specified areas of examination to be, while constitutional in the broad sense, a significant departure from both the historic practice of the church and the rationales underlying that practice. We further find that the relegation of the determination of areas of examination to the PCCEC to be sufficiently removed from both the direct voice of the presbyteries and the regulatory oversight of the General Assembly as to undermine the historic framework of accountability for standardized examinations.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution therefore advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to either

- a. amend G-2.0407d to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]



“d. *presentation of satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers in the [following] areas covered by [any] standard ordination examination[s] prepared [~~and authorized~~] by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates[-] [:]*

“(1) Bible Content.

“(2) Open Book Bible Exegesis.

“(3) Theological Competence.

“(4) Worship and Sacraments.

“(5) Church Polity.]

or

b. amend G-2.0407d to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“d. *presentation of satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination prepared and authorized by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates. [The areas of examination shall be authorized by the General Assembly and incorporated into the manual of the General Assembly.]*”

Contingent upon the approval by the presbyteries of the preceding amendment (B.2.b.), that the assembly incorporate the following language into the manual of the General Assembly in reference to G-2.0407d:

“The standard ordination examinations prepared by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates shall include:

“(1) Bible Content.

“(2) Open Book Bible Exegesis.

“(3) Theological Competence.

“(4) Worship and Sacraments.

“(5) Church Polity.”

### C. *Chapter Three and the Funding of the Denomination*

The final paragraph of Section 3.0107 addresses the funding of the governing bodies of the church. The proposed language seeks to move the church away from the use of the term “per capita,” and toward treatment of the funds received by councils of the church that does not distinguish between those funds used to carry out the constitutional responsibilities of the church and its mission. While the task force takes the view that all activity of the church is “missional,” the issue of funding of the church has a long and at times contentious history in which certain principles have been applied:

1. Mission funding, at least in the historic UPCUSA, was kept separate from per capita funding for carrying out the constitutional functions of the church. While at times similar language regarding the obligations of the officers of the church to support financially the mission of the whole church has been adopted by General Assemblies—see *Minutes*, 1934, Part I, p. 110 (“A church member or individual church that will not give to promote the officially authorized missionary program of the Presbyterian Church is in exactly the same position with reference to the Constitution of the Church as a church member or individual church that would refuse to take part in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper or any of the other prescribed ordinances of the denomination . . .”)—as a whole the church has taken the view that sessions have much broader discretion in allocating benevolences received to the mission funding of the church.

2. The underlying history of per capita apportionment that led to the inclusion of the current G-9.0404d reflects the long practice of apportioning governing body expenses to lower governing bodies. It was, and is, based on the decision of the governing body regarding expenses proposed in a budget. As such there was, and is, opportunity for debate and all of the attendant procedures of debate and amendment prior to the approval of the budget and the affixing of the apportionment amount.

3. While the decisions of the GAPJC (*Minihan v. Presbytery of Scioto Valley*, *Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 350; *Johnston v. Presbytery of Heartland*, *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 462) suggest that a presbytery may not take any action to compel the payment of per capita, the decisions states in clear and strong terms that officers of the church individually have a high moral obligation to support the payment of per capita by session to higher governing bodies.

4. The meaning of the current provision of the Form of Government at G-9.0404d clearly identifies the underlying polity of per capita apportionment. That is, the underlying polity of a representative governing body binding the governing body through its decision-making process (see G-4.0301). Clearly, commissioners participating in the decision-making are binding

the governing body from which they are commissioned. The commissioners at the General Assembly and the synod are from presbyteries; in the presbytery, the commissioners are from constituent churches.

5. The authoritative interpretation approved in 1999 (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 107) regarding the obligation of presbyteries to pay per capita to higher governing bodies is strongly dictated by the language of G-9.0404d. No other principled interpretation of G-9.0404d as it pertains to the obligation of presbyteries to pay per capita to higher governing bodies is possible.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has in the past advised the General Assembly that greater clarity as to a session's obligation to remit per capita to higher governing bodies (or councils in the current language) would be consistent with the existing language of G-9.0404d and with the fundamental relationship between those governing bodies. The revisions in this section, however, do not add clarity to the situation, but rather opt for new language that may be interpreted in a variety of ways. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution does not believe that the interests of the church are served by substituting potentially ambiguous language for language that has at least benefited from a number of years of debate and interpretation.

If the 218th General Assembly (2008) agrees with these concerns, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly modify the last paragraph of 3.0107 to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

*“The funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to the new reality of God in Jesus Christ. Each council shall prepare an annual budget, which shall include a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular congregations within its bounds. [~~Councils higher than the session may request funds for their mission and for support of the meetings and ongoing functions through which the interdependence of the church is lived out.~~] Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own [per capita] funds and for raising and timely transmission of [requested] [per capita] funds to their respective synods and the General Assembly. Presbyteries may [apportion requested funds] [direct per capita apportionments] to sessions within their bounds.”*

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-01, RECOMMENDATION C.3.

*Advice on Item 06-01, Recommendation C.3.—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

In its advice regarding the proposed G-2.0302a, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised removing the requirement of “proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments” in the proposed Form of Government. Therefore, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises approving Recommendation C.3.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

While not advocating for the approval of Item 06-01 Report of the Task Force on the Form of Government, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that serious consideration be given by the 218th General Assembly (2008) to the following two factors and possibilities:

1. Should the 218th General Assembly (2008) choose to approve receiving the report of the FOG Task Force and to provide for a two-year, church-wide study, with report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), ACREC advises that the comment from the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR), together with related material in Item 06-16 (On Revising the FOG Report's G-3.0104 Regarding Committees to Advocate for Diversity—from the Presbytery of Philadelphia) be appended to and cited for serious consideration as part of the two-year, church-wide study; ...or, in the alternative,

2. Should the 218th General Assembly (2008) choose to approve the report and recommendations of the FOG Task Force and send those items to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote, ACREC advises that the GACOR comment on Item 06-01, together with related material in Item 06-16 (On Revising the FOG G-3.01404 Regarding Committees to

Advocate for Diversity—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia) be given prayerful and careful consideration, in both the appropriate committees and plenary sessions of General Assembly, in order to include these foundational amendments to the recommendations of the FOG Task Force Report.

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### COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 06-01

*Comment on Item 06-01—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) commends the Form of Government Task Force for its careful work on its proposed new Form of Government (FOG), noting that the task force has fully addressed all the criteria assigned it by the commissioners to the 217th General Assembly (2006).<sup>1</sup> The COGA urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to send the proposal to the presbyteries for their careful consideration and approval.

1. In reviewing the FOG proposal, the COGA urges the commissioners to support the suggestions made by several of the committees to which we are related.

a. The alternative language proposed by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding new proposed G-3.0107 (requested funds) to restore the language of “per capita” funds, to ensure future financial viability of the church (see ACC advice on Item 06-01).

b. The General Assembly Committee on Representation has suggested a minor change in the language of F-3.0104 to explicitly require a structure called the “Committee on Representation” (see GACOR comment).

c. The Presbyterian Historical Society has urged the retention of most of current G-9.0406 in place of proposed new G-3.0108 to ensure the retention of historical records of the church.

d. The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission has proposed that in section G-3.0501, where the process for authoritatively interpreting the Constitution is described, that after the phrase, “in accordance with the provisions of G-6.02,” the following words be added, “or through a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in a remedial or disciplinary case. (The most recent interpretation of the *Book of Order* shall be binding.)” This would make clear that authoritative interpretations are made one of two ways: by action of the General Assembly after the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has been considered or by a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly.

2. A number of overtures (Item 06-02, et al) request that the General Assembly ask the church to study the FOG proposal and delay action on it until the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The COGA notes that the commissioners of the 217th General Assembly (2006) believed that there was “urgency in moving from the current regulatory Form of Government” to a different kind of Constitution. The commissioners of the 217th General Assembly (2006) shared the presbyteries’ belief that the church would need time to carefully study such a new style and approach and directed that a draft of the full document be “released by September 1, 2007.” The COGA notes that the task force posted a draft of the full FOG in September.

The COGA reminds the commissioners to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that this is the fifth proposal to revise our Form of Government since 1993.<sup>2</sup> If the commissioners of the 218th General Assembly (2008) determine that the study and consideration of the proposal that would naturally occur in the presbyteries, as they considered it for approval, would be inadequate, but instead believe still further consideration and study by the wider church is necessary, the COGA proposes that the commissioners of the 218th General Assembly (2008) authorize a more extensive examination of this proposed Form of Government than has been made in any of those five previous proposals, one that gives every interested Presbyterian an opportunity to consider and review it.

However, if the commissioners to the 218th General Assembly (2008) believe such a study is necessary and wise, the COGA proposes that it be authorized to:

- Develop a study process that would engage every presbytery, assisting the presbyteries to engage their members in an examination of this proposed Form of Government.
- Make use as needed of task force members, the Office of the General Assembly, and other interested parties in designing and carrying out this study.

- Collect all suggestions gathered in those studies and consultations and forward them on to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for considerations for modifying the current proposal.
- The COGA further advises that the Office of the General Assembly be directed to bring such amended Form of Government proposal to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

#### Endnotes

1. (1) The new Form of Government shall preserve our foundational polity (perhaps most concisely laid out in the first four chapters of the current Form of Government).
  - (2) The focus of the Form of Government shall be on providing leadership for local congregations as missional communities.
  - (3) The presbytery shall continue as the central governmental unit, as it has been throughout most of our history. The Form of Government shall provide sufficient authority and flexibility to allow the presbytery to assist congregations in addressing the changing cultural, economic, and societal challenges in our new millennial world. The FOG Task Force shall take notice of and address the institutional and structural impediments that currently cripple so very many of our presbyteries.
  - (4) The new Form of Government shall provide flexibility at all levels, granting authority while permitting governing bodies to develop the structures to carry out their respective missions.
  - (5) The FOG Task Force shall be guided by the principles proposed by Recommendations 1–4 from the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, using those principles as a guide for its own processes and deliberations. They shall incorporate this new Presbyterian ethos into the Form of Government so that it truly functions as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s guidebook for mission. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 366)
2. The Historic Context of the Work of the Form of Government Task Force

Efforts to revise the Form of Government have been before General Assemblies for least fifteen years. Throughout that time, the consistent theme has been the impetus to restore a sense of “constitutionality” to the language of the Form of Government. Proposals for revision have sought, by various means, to maintain clarity about national standards while reducing the amount of process-oriented material that might be handled in different ways by different parts of the church.

#### *1993*

The Special Committee on the Nature of the Church and the Practice of Governance reported to the 205th General Assembly (1993). It suggested that the content of the Form of Government could be divided into standards and functions that should remain uniform across the church, and practices and processes about which there might reasonably be a greater degree of freedom and diversity. The assembly referred the matter of a systematic review of the Form of Government to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

#### *1996–97*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommended to the 208th General Assembly (1996) that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution be charged with creating a Form of Government divided into three components: (1) foundational principles, (2) binding policies, and (3) advisory practices, and that the new draft be presented to the 213th General Assembly (2001). In addition, the 209th General Assembly (1997) referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution an overture from the Presbytery of West Virginia to create a Form of Government

- that is true to the historic principles of polity in the PC(USA);
- that will serve as a constitutional reference, “encouraging creativity with broad strokes of wisdom”; and
- that will “empower governing bodies . . . and celebrate the diversity of the church.”

#### *1999*

In its progress report to the 212th General Assembly (2000), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution offered drafts of Chapters X and XI of the Form of Government that divided the contents into foundational, policy, and practice categories. It also suggested that a draft of the entire Form of Government, reduced to include only foundational principles, be circulated among the church for study and comment. The assembly chose to refer the report back to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for further refinement and report to the next assembly.

#### *2000*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution report to the 212th General Assembly (2000) included a draft revision of Chapter XIV that reduced its contents to broadly stated principles and standards, while removing much of the process oriented material to advisory handbooks. The assembly approved the document for study and comment.

#### *2001–02*

The 213th General Assembly (2001) sent to presbyteries a proposal to revise the contents of Chapter XIV along the lines of the 2000 Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommendation. While the amendment was defeated in presbyteries (29-141-2), there was the sense that the problems were not so much with the overall concept as with particular aspects of the proposal. The following year,

the 214th General Assembly (2002) asked the Office of the General Assembly to propose a systematic revision of the Form of Government along the lines of the proposed revisions to Chapter XIV, and to report its work to the 217th General Assembly (2006).

2004

The Office of the General Assembly requested and received permission to conduct an extensive series of consultations with various constituencies in the church regarding both the theory and style of revision of the Form of Government deemed most desirable.

2006

The Office of the General Assembly reported its work to the 217th General Assembly (2006) in two parts:

1. A revision of Chapter XIV, similar in content and approach to the revision proposed in 2001, but with several options for dealing with potentially controversial aspects of change. The amendment was approved and is now Chapter XIV of the *Book of Order*.

2. The creation of a Form of Government Task Force, to be charged with revising the entire Form of Government to create a document that preserves the foundational elements of Presbyterian polity, provides leadership and support for congregations as missional units, and maintains the presbytery as the central governmental unit of the church. The task force was required to release the proposed Form of Government including advisory handbooks by September 1, 2007.

2007

The Form of Government Task Force completed work on its initial draft in September and shared the document broadly within the church. Following a period of comment and critique, the task force submitted its final report to the Stated Clerk's office in December, in anticipation of presentation to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

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### GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 06-01

*Comment on Item 06-01—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The Form of Government Task Force Report proposes to amend the *Book of Order* by deleting Chapters I–IV of the current *Book of Order* and inserting a new section entitled “Foundations of Presbyterian Polity.”

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) advises that the language of the second paragraph of G-3.0104 of the proposed amendment use the substitute language from Recommendation C.4. in the Additional Recommendations section of the Report of the FOG Task Force, with one additional amendment, and, as so amended, be approved in the event that the changes proposed by the FOG Task Force to Chapters I–IV of the *Book of Order* are approved: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“4. Shall the second paragraph of G-3.0104 be amended by inserting new text as follows:

““Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation. *Councils above the session* [~~may establish committees~~] [shall establish committees on representation] *to advocate for diversity in leadership.*”

#### *Rationale*

At the time of Reunion, the concern was raised that minority populations so long denied a voice at the leadership table would have their voices silenced, not intentionally, but due to the dilution of their visibility in the geographical governing bodies that would be formed. To address this concern, the creative solution of the committee on representation (COR) emerged and was incorporated in the Articles of Agreement (Article 8), which led to the creation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Article 8 was included, not only out of reasons and concerns for fairness, but specifically to induce the former non-geographic presbyteries and synods of both of the former streams to vote for and approve the Articles of Agreement and the reunion. Many of the leaders of those former racial ethnic presbyteries were greatly concerned that those leaders would lose their voices and influence if their churches were realigned into strictly geographic presbyteries. The provisions of Article 8 were included to reassure them that racial ethnic persons would continue to be involved in the leadership of the various governing bodies after the racial ethnic presbyteries disappeared. It thus appears that the racial ethnic presbyteries of the former churches were enticed to accept and approve in 1983 the reunion in reliance on the implicit assurance that the provisions of Article 8 would always remain in effect to attempt to ensure inclusiveness in the decision-making of the church. Now, as we seek to restructure our Form of Government, the GACOR submits that we have a promise to keep and, therefore, that CORs should be retained.

Another consideration is that the Articles of Agreement and the Constitution of the PC(USA) are separate, but related, documents. There are provisions in the Articles of Agreement which note that the “two parties to the original agreement will

no longer be in existence as separate churches and hence the agreement cannot thereafter be altered” (Preamble, Paragraph 2). Out of the process of agreement, a constitution of the denomination was established (The Book of Confessions, combined with the Book of Order), which “is subject to amendment in accordance with its provisions” (Preamble, Paragraph 3). The Constitution may be a more complete and detailed statement of procedure or polity (such as the Book of Order) and may be (and has been) amended. However, there is no proviso for amending the Articles of Agreement. In this regard, it is to be noted that while many of the articles of the Articles of Agreement provide by their terms that they are temporary or transitional provisions, Article 8 contains no such provision. This is a clear indication that the drafters of the Articles of Agreement did not intend for Article 8 to disappear or wither away.

At Christ’s table, they shall come from east and west and north and south, be neither male nor female, slave nor free, Gentile nor Jew. Diversity speaks to so much more than what our racial ethnic heritage happens to be. If we were to remove the structure of the COR, there will no longer be in place a mechanism for measuring our accountability for respecting and responding to the diversity within our communities. One aspect to be considered is this: if the work of representation is not being accomplished while there is a structural, legal, and moral requirement, why do we assume that removing the necessity of that structure will be the impetus for that work to begin or the encouragement for it to continue? To ensure that there remains a strong voice for representation and diversity, *not just those which are obvious*, such as race or gender, but all of the areas of diversity our denomination is called to faithfully bring to the table, it is crucial that there be in place a mechanism for ensuring that they be granted that voice at all governing body levels above the session.

Humanity still has a long way to go in reaching the goal of representation. Yet it is important to maintain within our Form of Government this creative innovation of our heritage. There is great value in a ministry of presence. By retaining the COR, we assert that we continue to believe that inclusiveness in our leadership should be one of those high ideals we seek to attain.

The role of the COR is to serve by raising awareness of the places where we have fallen short of the goal. We continue to exclude when larger church representation holds the purse strings of smaller congregations or when committees comprised of retired members determine the funding of activities for youth and young adults without their representation on the committees. We continue to exclude others when our systems discourage elders from placing their names in nomination to moderate committees at General Assembly. We continue to exclude others when meetings are held in places that are difficult for the mobility impaired to negotiate. It should not simply be the responsibility of those directly affected to raise these concerns. The PC(USA) has not only a promise to keep, but also a challenge to accept, to continue the work begun at the time of reunion, and to seek to live out the Kingdom of God in this place and time to the best of our ability.

The GACOR would advise the commissioners to the 218th General Assembly (2008) to include this amendment to the recommendation of the FOG Task Force.

The GACOR advises that, in the event that the changes proposed by the FOG Task Force to Chapters I–IV of the *Book of Order* are approved, Section F-3.0303 of the “Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” of the *Book of Order* be amended by inserting between the second and third sentences of F-3.0303 the language found in the last sentence of current G-4.0403, to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]:

“*3.0303 Diversity and Inclusiveness*

*“As the unity of the One God is expressed in the diverse activity of the Trinity, so also the unity of the Church is expressed in the rich diversity of its membership. The Church is called to give full expression in its membership to the diversity of the human family, and shall be responsive to that diversity in its worship, government, and emerging life. [Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church.] It shall not deny participation or representation to persons or groups within its membership for any reasons other than those stated in this Constitution.”*

*Rationale*

Adding this sentence would make it clear that we as a church are committed to nondiscrimination and affirmatively seek to include those groups that have often been excluded from full participation in the church and its leadership.

## Item 06-02

[The assembly answered Item 06-02 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See p. 21.]

*On Entrusting the Proposed FOG Revision to the Church for at Least Two Years—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.*

The Presbytery of Mississippi overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Receive the report and recommendations of the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force, and
2. Entrust the proposed FOG revision to the church for at least a two-year period of study, discernment, and consideration of the advisability of further action.

### *Rationale*

The Form of Government Task Force was established by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to prepare a revised Form of Government (FOG) for the church's consideration. The task force was directed to issue its report to the church no later than September 1, 2007, to allow sessions, presbyteries, and synods ample time to study the proposed FOG and, if necessary, suggest amendments to it. This simply has not provided enough time for governing bodies to comprehend fully, let alone critique effectively, this lengthy and important document before the deadline for introducing business related to constitutional changes.

For example, the Mississippi Presbytery Council met on September 27, and appointed a committee of four to study the proposed Foundations and FOG. The committee was instructed to make a recommendation to the presbytery, which met on October 25. During their necessarily swift study of the proposed Foundations and FOG, different members of the committee came to widely disparate conclusions, ranging from a desire to vote down the whole project, to a desire to significantly rework the documents. More time to study both documents would probably have yielded greater agreement, but more time was not available if the presbytery was to be able to take action in October.

There is simply no need to rush the acceptance of what even the members of the task force recognize to be a radical change in our church's governance. A period of study and discernment of at least two years in length will cost us nothing, and will undoubtedly result in a stronger Form of Government that will serve the church well for years to come.

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**Concurrence to Item 06-02 from the Presbyteries of Boston and Pittsburgh.**

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**Concurrence to Item 06-02 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara (with Additional Rationale).**

### *Rationale*

The Form of Government Task Force preempts the question many are thinking in its FOG PowerPoint presentation ([www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment/fall-polity-fog.ppt](http://www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment/fall-polity-fog.ppt) — Oct 25, 2007): "Given the current tensions in the PC(USA), is this the right time to be making large-scale changes in the way we govern the church? Some have suggested that there is too little trust in the church to permit changing the *Book of Order* at this time." Their answer is less than satisfying: "We build trust only by trusting each other ... as we form new patterns of relationship." Circular "reasoning" and nebulous wording such as this are part of what promote and sustain a season of mistrust, as what is often written nowadays is less transparent and straightforward than the well-articulated language of the past. If comprehensive changes to our polity are to be accomplished, then patience, trust, and unhurried deliberation are crucial qualities we need to cultivate for the process and outcome to be successful. We therefore recommend the church postpone the approval of the FOG in favor of a two-year period of careful study.

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**Concurrence to Item 06-02 from the Presbytery of Philadelphia (with additional rationale).**

### *Rationale*

The rewrite of the Form of Government is an impressive and complicated piece of work. The extensive changes to our polity proposed by the Form of Government Task Force require a period of study and discernment to consider whether and

how such extensive changes will benefit our life together and whether further changes might improve the document. Since the proposal already involves significant changes at every level of our government, including but not limited to terminology, processes, how rules are written and adopted, and how standards are applied, study by every level of the church is needed. The study necessarily includes not only the changes for a single level of government but also the implications of changes for every other level. Prior to asking the governing bodies to vote on this document, the well being of the whole church requires a period of study. It is the practice of Presbyterians not to rush into changes of such magnitude without careful examination of the pros and cons as well as to look for the unintended consequences of the proposed changes. We do not believe that the period of time allowed for the study of the new Form of Government is sufficient.

In a time when trust is a serious issue in the church, an extended time of ensuring that each governing body has opportunity to read the proposed document carefully and reflect on the implications of the changes is an opportunity for building trust.

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**Concurrence to Item 06-02 from the Presbytery of San Fernando (with Additional Rationale).**

***Rationale***

The Form of Government Task Force was established by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to prepare a revised Form of Government (FOG) for possible adoption by the church. The task force was directed to have the report sufficiently completed by September 1, 2007, so that sessions, presbyteries, and synods might review, comment, and possibly recommend amendments.

Even though the task force worked hard to keep the church abreast of its progress by way of the Web site of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and various church publications, the Presbytery of San Fernando believes that there has not been sufficient time for needed study. We had a two-hour meeting of presbytery in an effort to understand the task force report. The only consensus reached was that much more time is needed and so this overture was approved.

Members of the task force recognize that this proposal is for radical changes in the governance of the church. Two years of study will cost us nothing and could well result in a stronger Form of Government to serve the church in years to come.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-02**

*Advice on Item 06-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee of the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding Item 06-02 with the following comment:

The 218th General Assembly (2008) is presented with a large volume of business surrounding the report and recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution offers the following general comments as a way of helping commissioners structure their thinking about this important matter. The overview presented here is not meant to be exhaustive; commissioners may devise other solutions that meet the needs of the assembly. In addition, this overview is not intended to offer specific advice about particular overtures, but only to categorize the various overtures before the assembly. For the ACC's specific advice on any overture, please consult the comments on that overture.

*Option 1: Approve the Recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force and instruct the Stated Clerk to send them to the presbyteries for their positive or negative vote.*

This option would involve no amendments or changes by the assembly to the recommendations. Under this option, the report and recommendations would be approved and communicated to the presbyteries.

*Option 2: Disapprove the Recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force.*

Under this option, the assembly would defeat the recommendations, terminating the matter.

*Option 3: Approve the Recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force with amendment, and instruct the Stated Clerk to send them to the presbyteries for their positive or negative vote.*

This option contemplates that the assembly would amend one or more provisions of the recommendations that fall into several groups:



Items recommending specific rewording of the report:

- Item 06-15 from Philadelphia Presbytery recommends amendment to the language of proposed G-2.0303b and to the accompanying additional Recommendation #1 concerning the possibility that an interim pastor might succeed as the next installed pastor with supermajority approval of presbytery.
- Item 06-16 from Philadelphia Presbytery recommends retaining all references to the committee on representation, specifically including, but not limited to any sections in the proposed Form of Government that correspond to the current sections G-9.0105, G-9.0106, G-9.0801, G-11.0302, G-12.0301, and G-13.0108.
- Item 0-13 from Foothills Presbytery recommends that multiple amendments be made to the language of both the proposed Foundations for Presbyterian Polity and the proposed Form of Government to reflect various theological concerns.
- The ACC's own advice offers several proposals for amendments to language in the proposed Foundations and Form of Government.

Overtures concerning the procedure by which the recommendations are approved:

- Items 06-11 and 06-12 from Northumberland and Huntingdon Presbyteries recommend that the proposed Foundations and Form of Government be sent to the presbyteries for vote, the former following the 218th General Assembly (2008) and the latter after the 219th General Assembly (2010), but that a two-thirds majority be required for approval of either. The ACC advises the assembly that these overtures pose constitutional problems; commissioners should consult the ACC's advice on these overtures.

Overtures and proposals involving provisional approval:

- Item 06-14 from Detroit Presbytery recommends that current G-18.0300 be amended to allow a small group of presbyteries to test the usefulness of the proposed Foundations and Form of Government, before sending them to the whole denomination for approval. The ACC, in its response to Item 06-14, suggests a process by which the church might vote to approve the proposed Foundations and Form of Government, but with the provision that the approval would be reviewed after a defined period of time, and upon review either made permanent or reversed.

If the assembly determines that none of the above options are acceptable, or if it is not prepared to move forward with any of them, it may consider the following option:

*Option 4: Refer the Report and Recommendations for further study.*

A number of overtures have suggested that the report and recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force be referred for additional study.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that it should consider the purpose of such a study. If the purpose of the referral is to provide opportunity for longer and more careful study of the proposed polity, then the ACC advises the assembly that some means and process will be necessary to accomplish the study, so that the church may be better prepared to vote on the revisions than it is at present. If the purpose of the referral is to delay action because of opposition to the proposed revision, the ACC reminds the assembly that the most effective way to oppose a proposed action is to speak and vote against it, rather than to postpone action with no plan for bringing more light to the discussion.

Overtures proposing referral for further study fall into two groups:

Overtures recommending referral to the 219th General Assembly (2010) but without provision for a mechanism for study:

- Items 06-02 (Mississippi Presbytery), 06-03 (Sacramento Presbytery), 06-04 (Donegal Presbytery), 06-05 (Southern New England Presbytery), 06-08 (Plains and Peaks Presbytery), and 06-09 (Foothills Presbytery) all recommend referral to the 219th General Assembly (2010), but they make no provision by which a church-wide study of the proposed revisions would take place or data from such a study gathered.

Overtures recommending referral to the 219th General Assembly (2010), but specifying the involvement of the Form of Government Task Force in accomplishing a study:

- Item 06-06 from Middle Tennessee Presbytery recommends that the task force “solicit feedback” on the proposed revisions.
- Item 06-07 from East Tennessee Presbytery recommends that the task force be assigned to “develop a plan for the development, review, and approval” of its recommendations.

Recommendation from COGA for a study plan:

If the General Assembly believes that further study of the proposed revisions to the Form of Government is warranted, it may wish to consider the study plan offered by the Committee on the General Assembly by which sessions and presbyteries may study the proposed revision.

*Effect of Amendments to the Current Form of Government on the Revised Form of Government*

The Stated Clerk has indicated to presbyteries that they might “propose the placement and language for both the current Form of Government and the revised Form of Government.” He further indicated that presbyteries might prefer to offer one substantive overture to the current Form of Government, even though such proposals might have an impact on the language of the revised Form of Government. In the latter case, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution will suggest placement and, if necessary, specific language to accomplish the intent of the overture in the revision.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-02 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

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**ACREC AND ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-02 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to receive the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force’s report and recommendations and to entrust to the church the proposed FOG revision for at least a two-year period of study, discernment, and consideration of the advisability of further action.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advise that this item be approved.

*Rationale*

The advocacy committees urge the assembly to approve a two-year period of study of the report of the Form of Government Task Force. We believe in a powerful, discerning, Holy Spirit whose work helps us be attuned to God’s work in our midst. With more time, the acumen of many eyes, and the deliberation of many minds, a more perfect document may be presented to a future assembly. Catching problems and omissions will make this work stronger, build appreciation, and allow time for the whole church to move to an appropriate document.

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church has changed through history reflecting our Reformed understanding of how we are the church with one another. The Presbyterian process is labor intensive, but it is a valuable expenditure of time and energy. The Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church report (2006) provided wise guidance for future action. Deliberate and careful concern has been exercised in our *Book of Order* to caution against our sinful and unconscious biases throughout history. The church has amended the *Book of Order* to protect the rights of marginalized communities and to amplify squelched or silenced voices. Simplifying the document without due regard to these important safeguards for justice is troubling. We recommend that the period of study include consideration of the following questions.

1. Is the church’s commitment to justice visible in the proposed Form of Government?
2. Does the document reflect the church’s theology in its wording and structure?

3. Is the language clear and consistent with our values?
4. How will the appendices of the current *Book of Order* inform the new Form of Government?
5. How is accountability exercised in the proposed Form of Government?

The study process would be strengthened if the document were translated into the languages of PC(USA) members (at minimum Korean and Spanish). If the shared vision is for a more multicultural church, then all of our members, especially our marginalized language groups, should fully participate in the study process. As the church deliberates, it will continue to perfect the document, so that it will do justice for the whole church and continue the faithful Presbyterian witness to Jesus the Christ.

## Item 06-03

[The assembly answered Item 06-03 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See p. 21.]

*On Entrusting the Proposed FOG Revision to the Church for at Least Two Years, and Dismissing the Task Force with Gratitude—From the Presbytery of Sacramento.*

The Presbytery of Sacramento overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to receive the report and recommendations of the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force; dismiss the task force with gratitude; entrust the work of the task force for at least a two-year period of prayer, study, discernment from Holy Spirit, and consideration of further action in order not to rush a decision about a complete rewrite of eighteen chapters of our *Book of Order*.

### *Rationale*

We do indeed acknowledge with gratitude the extraordinary time, dedication, and commitment of the FOG Task Force in their rewrite of the PC(USA) Form of Government in the current *Book of Order*. However, we are deeply concerned about the timeline for consideration of all these many and vast changes. The task force was directed to issue its report to the church no later than September 1, 2007. The report was not posted on the PC(USA) Web site until September 19, 2007; furthermore, the task force has been given permission by the Stated Clerk to change its proposed draft up until February 22, 2008, the deadline for submitting to the General Assembly overtures that amend the *Book of Order*.

Just as the task force has needed additional time, so do the churches need even far greater time to attempt to begin an understanding of what has transpired in this rewrite. We have been told that the new FOG version reduces confusion found in the first four chapters of the current FOG, yet we find the new FOG lacking much of the clarifying detail of the current FOG. We note radical changes, such as removal of most policies and procedures, removal of the category of inactive member, allowing an interim pastor to be called as the next installed minister of a congregation, and abolishing the requirement for the existence of certain committees—such as the committee on representation, the committee on ministry, and the committee on preparation for ministry.

In the Foundations section (which is not to be amended for six years), we note that the simplicity and clarity of G-3.0300a (“The Church is called to tell the good news of salvation by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ as the only Savior and Lord....”) is gone, replaced by many words; and a failing to acknowledge Jesus as the only Savior and Lord.

The extensive content changes (from the subtle to the radical) proposed by this entire rewrite cause us to seek an extended period of at least two years for prayer, thorough study, discernment, and wisdom from Holy Spirit. We believe this is our responsibility to our congregations for a change to the *Book of Order* of such a great magnitude.

### **Concurrence to Item 06-03 from the Presbytery of St. Andrew (with Additional Rationale).**

The 217th General Assembly (2006) established the Form of Government Task Force and directed it to prepare a revised Form of Government (FOG) for the church’s consideration and to issue its report to the church no later than September 1, 2007, to allow sessions, presbyteries, and synods ample time to study the proposed FOG and, if necessary, suggest amendments to it, so that the new FOG might be considered at the 218th General Assembly (2008). The FOG Task Force did not complete its work until September 19, 2007, when it posted the first draft of the recommended changes to the PC(USA) Website.

The extensive changes to our polity proposed by the FOG Task Force require a period of study and discernment to consider whether and how such extensive changes will benefit our life together and whether further changes might improve the docu-

ment. Since the proposal involves significant changes at every level of our government, including but not limited to terminology, processes, how rules are written and adopted, and how standards are applied, study by every level of the church is needed.

The deadline for proposed amendments to the proposed new FOG by way of presbytery approved overtures is February 22, 2008. This simply has not provided enough time for governing bodies to comprehend fully, let alone critique effectively this lengthy and important document before the deadline for introducing business related to constitutional changes.

It is the practice of Presbyterians not to rush into changes of such magnitude without careful examination of the pros and cons as well as to look for the unintended consequences of the proposed changes. In a time when trust is a serious issue in the church, an extended time of ensuring that each governing body has opportunity to read the proposed document carefully and reflect on the implications of the changes is an opportunity for building trust.

There is nothing to be gained by rushing the approval of what even the members of the FOG Task Force recognize to be a radical change in our church's governance. A period of study and discernment of at least two years in length will only serve to ensure that the proposed changes to the Form of Government will be in the best interest of the church.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-03

*Advice on Item 06-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-03 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-03 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to entrust the proposed Form of Government revision to the church for at least two years, and dismissing the task force with gratitude.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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## Item 06-04

**[The assembly answered Item 06-04 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See p. 21.]**

*On Commending the FOG Task Force and Submitting the Work of the Task Force to the Church for Study—From the Presbytery of Donegal.*

The Presbytery of Donegal overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to commend the work of the Form of Government Task Force and that the work of the task force be submitted to the church for study that may bring this or any other revision of the Form of Government to the 219th General Assembly (2010) for consideration.

### *Rationale*

The rewrite of the Form of Government is an impressive and complicated work. The extensive changes to polity proposed by the Form of Government Task Force require a reasonable period of study by the whole church. There is no compelling need to rush the process and no further expense to be incurred by the General Assembly. The proposal involves significant changes at every level of our government that include new terminology and new processes to adopt rules and standards. Therefore, prior to asking governing bodies to vote on this document, the well-being of the whole church requires a reasonable time for study. A reasonable time for consideration also provides an opportunity to build trust.

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-04**

*Advice on Item 06-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-04**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-04 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-04**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-04 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to commend the FOG Task Force and to submit the work of the task force to the church for study.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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## **Item 06-05**

**[The assembly answered Item 06-05 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See p. 21.]**

*On Postponing Final Consideration of a Substitute FOG Until Such Time as a Revision May Be Submitted by a Presbytery to a Subsequent Assembly—From the Presbytery of Southern New England.*

The Presbytery of Southern New England overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to receive the report and recommendations of the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force; dismiss the task force with thanks; entrust the work of the task force, made available as a web posting, to the church for at least a two-year period of study, discernment, and consideration of further action; and postpone final consideration of a substitute Form of Government until such time as this or any other revision of the Form of Government may be submitted by a presbytery as an overture to a subsequent General Assembly.

### ***Rationale***

The rewrite of the Form of Government is an impressive and complicated piece of work and our sessions and presbytery have not had the adequate time of reflection and study together to digest and understand the significance of this new Form of Government.

Since the proposal already involves significant changes at every level of our government, including but not limited to terminology, processes, how rules are written and adopted, and how standards are applied, study by every level of the church is needed. The study necessarily includes not only the changes for a single level of government but also the implications of changes for every other level. Prior to asking the governing bodies to vote on this document, the well-being of the whole church requires a period of study.

While we are excited about the possibility of creative solutions and clearer guidance in our life together as a presbytery and denomination, it would be irresponsible for us as individuals and governing bodies to approve a new Form of Government without time to listen to God. We have learned that discernment and listening to God's will cannot be rushed. As faithful stewards of the past and future of this denomination, we desire more time for discernment and study that will enable us to have a more adequate space to consider how such extensive changes will benefit our life together and whether further changes might improve the document.

In a time when trust is a serious issue in the church, an extended time of ensuring that each governing body has opportunity to read the proposed document carefully and reflect on the implications of the changes is an opportunity for building trust.

The task force has provided documents and resources to aid in such study. Governing bodies will have other resources available to them so that no further expense need be incurred by the General Assembly in order to call for this period of study.

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**Concurrence to Item 06-05 from the Presbytery of Newark (with Additional Rationale).**

***Rationale***

The rewrite of the Form of Government is an impressive and complicated piece of work.

The extensive changes to our polity proposed by the Form of Government Task Force require a period of study and discernment to consider whether and how such extensive changes will benefit our life together and whether further changes might improve the document. Since the proposal already involves significant changes at every level of our government, including but not limited to terminology, processes, how rules are written and adopted, and how standards are applied, study by every level of the church is needed. The study necessarily includes not only the changes for a single level of government but also the implications of changes for every other level.

There are many issues in the document that need clarification and explanation. For example, the term “Word of God” is ambiguous. Does the term refer to Christ alone (as in the Confession of 1967) or does it refer to Scripture? Does it include preaching? How does Word of God relate to Scripture (cf. nFOG F-1.0302a; G-2.0201; G-3.0201a). The phrase, “listen for God’s Word in Scripture” suggests a separation between Word and Scripture not found in our Confessions. Why has the responsibility of elders to “cultivate their ability to teach the Bible ...” (*Book of Order*, G-6.0304) been removed? On other issues, what is the meaning of the statement, “Presbyteries may apportion requested funds to sessions within their bounds?” Is “apportion” the same as “request?” The fact that under FOG presbyteries could remove a pastor under certain conditions without ever calling a congregational meeting seems to violate an essential right of congregations (G-2.0701; cf. *Book of Order*, G-14.0610).

Given these concerns, the wellbeing of the whole church requires a period of study prior to asking the governing bodies to vote on this document. It is the practice of Presbyterians not to rush into changes of such magnitude without careful examination of the pros and cons as well as to look for the unintended consequences of the proposed changes.

In a time when trust is a serious issue in the church, an extended time of ensuring that each governing body has opportunity to read the proposed document carefully and reflect on the implications of the changes is an opportunity for building trust.

The task force has provided documents and resources to aid in such study. Governing bodies will have other resources available to them so that no further expense need be incurred by the General Assembly in order to call for this period of study.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-05**

*Advice on Item 06-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-05 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-05 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to postpone final consideration of a substitute FOG until such time as a revision may be submitted by a presbytery to a subsequent assembly.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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## **Item 06-06**

**[The assembly answered Item 06-06 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Instructing the FOG Task Force to Solicit Feedback and Bring a Revised Version of the Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.*

The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to

1. Receive the report and recommendations of the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force with thanks, and commend the work of the task force to the church for a two-year period of study and discernment.
2. Instruct the FOG Task Force to solicit feedback from across the church and bring a revised version of the present report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

### ***Rationale***

The rewrite of the Form of Government is an impressive and complicated piece of work.

The extensive changes to our polity proposed by the Form of Government Task Force require a period of study and discernment to consider whether and how such extensive changes will benefit our life together and whether further changes might improve the document. Since the proposal already involves significant changes at every level of our government, including but not limited to terminology, processes, how rules are written and adopted and how standards are applied, study by every level of the church is needed. The study necessarily include, not only the changes for a single level of government, but also the implications of changes for every other level.

Prior to asking the governing bodies to vote on this document, the well-being of the whole church requires a period of study. It is the practice of Presbyterians not to rush into changes of such magnitude without careful examination of the pros and cons as well as to look for the unintended consequences of the proposed changes.

In a time when trust is a serious issue in the church, an extended time of ensuring that each governing body has opportunity to read the proposed document carefully and reflect on the implications of the changes is an opportunity for building trust.

The task force has provided documents and resources to aid in such study. Governing bodies will have other resources available to them, so that no further expense need be incurred by the General Assembly in order to call for this period of study.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-06**

*Advice on Item 06-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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## ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-06, (also answering Items 06-02–06-04; 06-05–06-10, and 06-13)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-06 be approved as amended, and that this action answer Items 06-02—05, 06-07—06-10, and 06-13 as well. The amendment, which is to Recommendation 2, is as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown in brackets with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“2. Instruct the [~~FOG Task Force~~] [Office of the General Assembly] to solicit feedback from across the church and bring a revised version of the present report[, as warranted,] to the 219th General Assembly (2010).”

*Rationale*

The revision of the Form of Government was indeed a massive task and much of it reads well. In light of the number of overtures asking for postponement of action on the FOG proposal until the 219th General Assembly (2010) in order that the church may more fully consider its implications, however, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the Office of the General Assembly (including guidance from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution) be asked to coordinate a process of churchwide discernment concerning the FOG proposal and of proposed amendments to it, if changes seem warranted, and present a revised text to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The ACSWP affirms the importance of both the Fundamental Principles and remainder of the *Book of Order*, as proposed, for our understanding of our church’s posture and role in the world, and hence for the ecclesiological basis for our social witness. For this reason, should there be any formal review or coordinating committee formed to assist a churchwide discernment process, ACSWP would encourage the inclusion of persons with strong grounding in ethics and ecclesiology, and would be glad to consult with or be represented on such a body.

With reference to Item 06-13 in particular, the following issues, among others, present themselves:

1. The significance of a move to place more and more specifically ecclesiological language of theological import in the FOG. At what point are we dealing with confessional issues without going through the constitutional procedure for amending *The Book of Confessions*? One might contrast ecclesiology as confession with ecclesiology as governance, realizing that governance can be a form of confession.

2. The distinction between “participatory” and “instrumentalist” ecclesiology could lead to a profound discussion of our church’s relation to God’s worldly purposes. But we think that such a discussion would reveal that the distinction, as stated, is too sharp, too much of a dichotomy. More of a dialectic than an outright distinction is involved.

3. The new FOG seeks not to be “regulatory” but it could be argued that our society is currently seeing the limits and failures of a “de-regulatory” period. The idea of a “Third Use of the Law” is implicitly regulatory and does not necessarily contradict a “missional” emphasis. The issue, as the General Assembly Committee on Representation notes, may be one of how much “structure,” or mandatory organization, is needed to accomplish internal procedural justice or to allow or encourage particular activities of mission.

4. We believe that the concept of the *missio Dei*, God’s mission to the human race, belongs in the FOG as well as in *The Book of Confessions*, and that the implications of this idea, so prominent in contemporary missiological discussion, need to be drawn out. Specifically, the implication may be inferred that the Christian church is far from being the only place where God is working in the world, and that “religion” as such may not be the only field of God’s working. The *missio Dei* theology leads toward the view of Jurgen Moltmann in *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* that the Church is indispensable, but yet provisional, where God’s mission is concerned. The ACSWP regards this realization as very important for understanding the nature of God’s presence in today’s world, and therefore for formulating the theological underpinning of the Church’s social witness.

5. While appreciating the work of the Presbytery of Foothills, we are not persuaded that these proposed amendments to the FOG draft in Item 06-13 adequately express the theological principles behind the overture. Once these “participatory” principles are clarified and their dialectical relation to “instrumentalist” language is better discerned, the language of the amendments, as well as the significance of material proposed to be excised, will need to be reconsidered. In some cases wording that has stood the test of time is proposed to be replaced with formulas that do not measure up for theological content or quality of expression.



**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-06 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to instruct the FOG Task Force to solicit feedback and bring a revised version of the report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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**Item 06-07**

**[The assembly answered Item 06-07 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Instructing the FOG Task Force to Develop a Plan for the Development and Approval of Its Work No Later Than January 1, 2009—From the Presbytery of East Tennessee.*

The Presbytery of East Tennessee overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to

- defer action on the report of the Form of Government Task Force recommendations until the 219th General Assembly (2010);
- instruct the task force to develop a plan for the development, review, and approval of its work and that this plan be provided to the congregations, presbyteries, and synods no later than January 1, 2009; and
- present all strike-and-insert amendments to the existing Form of Government as one unit for affirmative or negative vote.

***Rationale***

The whole church has not had sufficient time to discuss and fully digest the proposed rewrite of the Form of Government.

The work of the task force is not a revision of the current *Book of Order* as included in its charge (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 366), but is a substitute for the current Form of Government.

The substitution of the new Foundational Principles section goes beyond the task force charge to “preserve our foundational polity (perhaps most concisely laid out in the first four chapters of the current Form of Government)” (*Ibid.*, p. 366).

The new Foundational Principles not being subject to amendment for a period of six years [Form of Government Task Force report, page 95] hampers the ability to amend the rest of the document with any real continuity.

Taking up the recommendations in two parts only has merit if both recommendations are passed. Chapters V–XVIII have grown from the foundation of Chapters I–IV. The new Chapters 1–6 flow from the new Foundational Principles. The parts are not interchangeable and will lead the church into confusion about which is the controlling authority.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-07**

*Advice on Item 06-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-07**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-07 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-07**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-07 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to instruct the FOG Task Force to develop a plan for the development and approval of its work no later than January 1, 2009.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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**Item 06-08**

**[The assembly answered Item 06-08 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Referring the Report of the Form of Government Task Force to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.*

The Presbytery of Plains and Peaks respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to refer the report of the Form of Government Task Force to the 219th General Assembly (2010) for its consideration and action.

***Rationale***

Prudence demands that the church not act precipitously on the sweeping and fundamental changes proposed by the Form of Government Task Force. Adequate time must be allowed for the church carefully and thoroughly to consider both the substance of the task force’s proposals and their potential impact upon its future life and ministry.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is currently in crisis. Congregations are withdrawing; distrust abounds; financial support is declining. Additionally, some of our members have begun to fear that the new Form of Government may remove carefully crafted and delicately balanced constitutional processes and standards from our common life. In light of our ordination vows to pursue the “peace, unity, and purity of the church” (Book of Order, W-4.4003g), and recognizing that church polity “is not designed to work without trust and love” (Book of Order, G-7.0103), the General Assembly would be wise to refrain from taking any action that will unnecessarily aggravate the current climate of mistrust and suspicion.

Referral of this matter to the 219th General Assembly (2010) will give the church time both to consider the substance and impact of the proposed changes, and to work at building the bridges of “trust and love” that would be necessary to implement them effectively.

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**Concurrence to Item 06-08 from the Presbytery of Yellowstone.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-08**

*Advice on Item 06-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-08—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-08 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-08 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to refer the Form of Government Task Force’s report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

**Item 06-09**

**[The assembly answered Item 06-09 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Receiving the Report of the FOG Task Force, Providing a Two-Year Study with Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010); and Commending the Task Force for Its Work—From the Presbytery of Foothills*

The Presbytery of Foothills respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Receive the Form of Government Task Force report and recommendations, sending it to sessions and presbyteries for a two-year period of study and response, with General Assembly action at the 219th General Assembly (2010).
2. Express to the Form of Government Task Force
  - a. our commendation for the work they have undertaken;
  - b. agreement that the life and witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) needs to be guided more by a true constitution than a manual of operations;
  - c. the conviction that a polity to guide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the 21st century needs the kind of balance between mandated standards and functions and flexible application to particular situations offered in the report.

*Rationale*

It is our conviction that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) needs additional time to study, digest, and comment further on the work of the task force for these reasons:

First, we believe that it is vital that the church’s polity and mission stand on solid Reformed theology. We find a lack of clarity in a key theological distinction in the recommended Revised Form of Government. That important distinction is between the mission of the church as “participatory” in the mission Christ does, and the mission of the church as “instrumental” for the mission of Christ. Are we the church of Jesus Christ “participating” in the work Jesus Christ is doing in the world? Or do we presume ourselves in the church to be “instruments” of Christ’s work, so that our existence and work determine where Christ is active in the world? Is our ecclesiology “Where Christ is, there is the church;” or is it “Where the church is, there is Christ?” That distinction is key in Reformed theology, with “participatory” theology being present in our confessions. We believe that distinction is not carefully made in the recommended Revised Form of Government. Since the Revised Form of Government will shape the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the next generation and more, we believe its theological foundations need study and further clarity.

Second, the kind of missional polity offered by the task force would strongly commend such a process of study and shared reflection in the church. The management approach offered in the Form of Government revision places primary emphasis on the councils nearest to the membership of the church. This contrasts with the top-down approach embodied in the present Form of Government. In order to build trust in the revised approach, we strongly recommend further time for study and revision.

Third, we are convinced that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) needs the kind of more flexible polity envisioned in the report of the task force and we desire to see such a polity adopted and implemented. However, we are convinced that a vote at the 218th General Assembly (2008), before a sufficiently large number of sessions, congregations, and presbyteries have studied the document with care and have begun to internalize a new form of our foundational polity, will likely result in its defeat and will make future revisions of our Form of Government considerably more difficult.

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-09**

*Advice on Item 06-09—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-09—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-09 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-09 addresses receiving the Form of Government Task Force’s report, providing a two-year study with a report to the 219th General Assembly (2010) and commending the task force for its work.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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## **Item 06-10**

**[The assembly answered Item 06-10 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Instructing Officers and Governing Bodies to Study the FOG Report, Sending Findings to the Stated Clerk by January 1, 2010—From the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.*

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to

1. Receive the report and recommendations of the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force;
2. Request all officers and governing bodies of the PC(USA) to enter a period of study and discernment of this report and recommendations over the next eighteen months, sending their findings to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly before 1 January 2010; and
3. Refer further consideration of this report and recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

***Rationale***

The window of time provided by the FOG Task Force for study and possible amendment of the proposed revision is clearly not adequate.

This overture will provide sufficient time for all officers and governing bodies to give serious consideration to this important matter, and allow their findings to be shared.

For meaningful discernment, such an important matter should not be rushed.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-10**

*Advice on Item 06-10—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-10 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-10 urges instructing officers and governing bodies to study the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force report, sending those findings to the Stated Clerk by January 1, 2010.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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**Item 06-11**

**[The assembly answered Item 06-11 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Amending the Procedure by Which the Recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force Report Be Adopted—From the Presbytery of Northumberland.*

The Presbytery of Northumberland overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to amend the Report of the Form of Government Task Force to include the following:

1. That the first section of the report dealing with the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes with a two-thirds supermajority to pass.
2. That the second section of the report dealing with The Form of Government be sent to the presbyteries to be studied over the next two years and then be submitted to the 219th General Assembly (2010) for consideration with the understanding that if it is passed it will be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes with a two-thirds supermajority to pass.
3. That the Form of Government Task Force be authorized to continue to meet until the 219th General Assembly (2010) to receive, review, and incorporate, as it finds useful, the comments and suggestions of individuals and governing bodies in the Form of Government document to be submitted for the consideration of the 219th General Assembly (2010).

***Rationale***

The 217th General Assembly (2006) gave a formidable task to nine individuals to revise the *Book of Order* as we look at new ways in which we are to govern ourselves as a “missional” church. It is common knowledge that to make significant changes in the life of an institution, its members must develop an overwhelming consensus to value and adopt those changes. The changes recommended by the task force on revising the Form of Government are significant and in order for the church at large to adopt them and embrace them, this presbytery overtures the members of the 218th General Assembly (2008) to send the first section of this report (The Foundation of Presbyterian Polity) to the presbyteries before the presbyteries cast their vote on the changes in the Form of Government.

We need to look at and adopt the revisions that are in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity first because these changes deal with our theology and ecclesiology as Presbyterians. These foundational principals will become the driving force in all of the

other changes recommended by the task force concerning our new Form of Government. Therefore it would be prudent and wise to take the next two years to pray, think, and discuss. And only then vote on these ramifications before we proceed to a vote on the changes recommended by the Form of Government Task Force.

The second section is the New Form of Government. These changes are significant in that they are asking us to move from a regulatory polity to a missional polity in how we choose to govern ourselves. Therefore, we encourage the commissioners to send these to the presbyteries so that the presbyteries can discuss and dialogue these revisions, and then send it to the 219th General Assembly (2010) for their approval before it is sent to the presbyteries.

These proposed changes are so global, it may be that the church has wisdom to impart that could helpfully be included in the final product to the benefit of the whole. Therefore the task force should be enabled to continue to meet to receive and review such suggestions and to incorporate them in their proposal.

We further recommend that, if the General Assembly commissioners vote to send it to the presbyteries, these revisions would need a two-thirds supermajority to pass. These changes are so momentous that if we want to ensure the consensus of the entire body, then the General Assembly should require that these recommendations take a two-thirds supermajority of the presbyteries .

Date approved by action of the Presbytery of Northumberland: January 19, 2008.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-11

*Advice on Item 06-11—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to answer Item 06-11 with its response to Item 06-02 from the Presbytery of Mississippi.

#### *Rationale*

This is one of several amendments that would delay the approval of the recommendations of the Form of Government Task force in whole or in part. It can be answered by the same answer that is given to the other proposals in this category, the first of which to be filed being Item 06-02 from the Presbytery of Mississippi.

The overture asks for separate handling of the two main parts of the report of the Form of Government Task Force. The task force has made separate recommendations for the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the Form of Government, intentionally enabling the assembly to act separately on the two parts. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the overture's request that the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be submitted apart from the revised Form of Government to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes does not raise an issue of constitutional amendment or interpretation.

This item has three points, which can be considered individually.

Point 1 of Item 06-11 requests "That the first section of the report dealing with the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative and negative votes with a 2/3 supermajority to pass."

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the attempt to impose a supermajority requirement for approval raises an issue of constitutional interpretation.

Section G-18.0301 describes the only way in which the *Book of Order* can be amended. Presbyteries are to vote to approve or disapprove a proposed amendment. A majority shall govern (G-1.0400).

Specifically, G-18.0301d requires:

d. When the Stated Clerk has received written advice that a proposed amendment to the *Book of Order* has received the affirmative votes of a majority of all the presbyteries, said amendment shall become effective as of one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendment.

Accordingly, the 218th General Assembly (2008) lacks the authority to deviate from the constitutional process by requiring a 2/3 supermajority of the presbyteries to approve in order to approve any amendment.

This is not the first time that the General Assembly has been asked to consider a 2/3 vote of the presbyteries on proposed amendments. As the ACC advised the 214th General Assembly (2002):

Requests to increase the majority by which the *Book of Order* may be amended have been proposed several times in recent years. In each instance, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised against approval and the General Assembly rejected the proposal on the basis of the foundational principle, that "... a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern ..." (*Book of Order*, G-1.0400). [ACC Advice on *Overture 02-24*]

Point 2 of Item 06-11 requests "That the second section of the report dealing with The Form of Government be sent to the presbyteries to be studied over the next two years and then be submitted to the 219th General Assembly (2010) for consideration with the understanding that if it is passed it will be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative and negative votes with a 2/3 supermajority to pass."

The attempt to require a supermajority vote of the presbyteries in the second point is unconstitutional for the same reasons offered under point 1.

Furthermore, the 218th General Assembly (2008) cannot bind the 219th General Assembly (2010) to act in any particular manner on business that may come before it. This includes attempts to require the 219th General Assembly (2010) to act contrary to the Constitution.

Point 3 of Item 06-11 requests "That the Form of Government Task Force be authorized to continue to meet until the 219th General Assembly (2010) to receive, review, and incorporate, as it finds useful, the comments and suggestions of individuals and governing bodies in The Form of Government document to be submitted for the consideration of the 219th General Assembly (2010)"

The ACC advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Point 3 does not raise any issues of constitutional interpretation. The questions of whether the Form of Government Task Force has accomplished its task, or should be asked to continue to serve the church by doing additional work is a question which the 218th General Assembly (2008) can determine without constitutional implications. If suggestions are incorporated in the Form of Government document, the new recommendations must be submitted at least 120 days in advance of the 219th General Assembly (2008), which must receive the advice of the ACC thereon.

If the assembly agrees with the intention of Item 06-11, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that it should amend the overture by deleting the references to a required 2/3 supermajority.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-11 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to amend the procedures by which the recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force report be approved.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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## Item 06-12

**[The assembly answered Item 06-12 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Amending the Procedure by Which the Recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force Report Be Adopted—From the Presbytery of Huntingdon.*

The Presbytery of Huntingdon overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following if the recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force are approved by the commissioners:

1. That the recommendations be divided into two parts, consisting of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the Form of Government.
2. That the first section dealing with the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes with a 2/3 supermajority vote to pass.

3. That the second section dealing with the Form of Government be sent to the presbyteries to be studied over the next two years and then be submitted to the 219th General Assembly (2010) for consideration with the understanding that, if it is passed, it will be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes with a 2/3 supermajority vote to pass.

4. That the Form of Government Task Force be authorized to continue to meet until the 219th General Assembly (2010) to receive, review, and incorporate, as it finds useful, the comments and suggestions of individuals and governing bodies in The Form of Government document to be submitted for the consideration of the 219th General Assembly (2010).

5. If the 218th General Assembly (2008) votes to send the entire task force revision to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes, it shall take a 2/3 supermajority vote of the presbyteries to pass.

### *Rationale*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) gave a formidable task to nine individuals to revise the *Book of Order* as we look at new ways in which we are to govern ourselves as a missional church. It is common knowledge that to make significant changes in the life of an institution, its members must develop an overwhelming consensus of its members to value and adopt those changes.

The changes recommended by the task force on revising the Form of Government are significant. In order for the church at large to embrace and adopt them, this presbytery overtures the commissioners of the 218th General Assembly (2008) to divide the report into two sections.

The first section is the Foundation of Presbyterian Polity. Before the presbyteries cast their vote on the changes in the Form of Government, we need to look at and adopt the revisions that are in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity. These changes are significant because they deal with our theology and ecclesiology as Presbyterians. These foundational principles will become the driving force in all of the other changes recommended by the task force concerning our new Form of Government.

Therefore, it would be prudent and wise that we take the next two years to pray, think, discuss, and only then vote on the changes recommended by the Form of Government Task Force.

The second section is the recommendations on the new Form of Government. These changes are significant in that they are asking us to move from a regulatory polity to a missional polity. Therefore, we encourage the commissioners to separate this section of the recommendations from the Foundations section, allow the presbyteries to discuss and dialogue these recommendations, and then send it to the 219th General Assembly (2010). Because these proposed changes are so global, it may be that the church has wisdom to impart that could helpfully be included in the final product to the benefit of the whole. Therefore the task force should be enabled to continue to meet to receive and review such suggestions and to incorporate them in their proposal.

We are further recommending that if the 219th General Assembly (2010) chooses to send it to the presbyteries, the proposed amendment would need a 2/3 supermajority to pass. These changes to our Constitution are significant. It is important that we uphold the spirit of our present constitutional standards, which mandates a 2/3 vote for any changes to *The Book of Confessions*. These changes are so momentous that if we want to ensure the consensus of the entire body, then the General Assembly should require that these recommendations require a 2/3 supermajority of the presbyteries.

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### **Concurrence to Item 06-12 from the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.**

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-12**

*Advice on Item 06-12—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 06-12, with its response to Item 06-02 from the Presbytery of Mississippi.

### *Rationale*

This overture is one of several asking for the approval of the recommendations in the FOG report to be delayed in whole or in part. As such it can be answered by the same answer that is given to the other proposals in this category, the first of which to be filed being Item 06-02 from the Presbytery of Mississippi. This overture has five points that can be considered individually.



Point 1 of Item 06-12 requests “That the recommendations be divided into two parts, consisting of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the Form of Government.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Point 1 of Item 06-12 raises no issues of constitutional interpretation or amendment. The recommendations as presented by the Form of Government Task Force are already separated into two parts, a separation that allows for separate handling as the overture requests. Accordingly, Point 1 is moot.

Point 2 of Item 06-12 requests “That the first section dealing with the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative and negative votes with a 2/3 supermajority vote to pass.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the attempt to impose a supermajority requirement for approval raises an issue of constitutional interpretation.

Section G-18.0301 describes the only way in which the *Book of Order* can be amended. Presbyteries are to vote to approve or disapprove a proposed amendment. A majority shall govern (G-1.0400).

Specifically, G-18.0301d requires:

d. When the Stated Clerk has received written advice that a proposed amendment to the *Book of Order* has received the affirmative votes of a majority of all the presbyteries, said amendment shall become effective as of one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendment.

Accordingly, the 218th General Assembly (2008) lacks the authority to deviate from the constitutional process by requiring a 2/3 supermajority of the presbyteries to approve in order to approve any amendment.

This is not the first time that the General Assembly has been asked to consider a 2/3 vote of the presbyteries on proposed amendments. As the ACC advised the 214th General Assembly (2002):

Requests to increase the majority by which the *Book of Order* may be amended have been proposed several times in recent years. In each instance, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised against approval and the General Assembly rejected the proposal on the basis of the foundational principle, that “... a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern ...” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0400). [ACC Advice on *Overture 02-24*]

Point 3 of Item 06-12 requests “That the second section dealing with The Form of Government be sent to the presbyteries to be studied over the next two years and then be submitted to the 219th General Assembly (2010) for consideration with the understanding that, if it is passed, it will be sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative and negative votes with a 2/3 supermajority vote to pass.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly to disapprove Point 3 of Item 06-12.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Point 3 raises an issue of constitutional interpretation by its attempt to require a supermajority vote of the presbyteries. The attempt to require a supermajority vote of the presbyteries is unconstitutional for the same reasons offered under Point 2.

Point 4 of the overture requests “That the Form of Government Task Force be authorized to continue to meet until the 219th General Assembly to receive, review, and incorporate, as it finds useful, the comments and suggestions of individuals and governing bodies in The Form of Government document to be submitted for the consideration of the 219th General Assembly (2010)”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Point 4 of this overture raises no issues of constitutional interpretation or amendment. The questions of whether the Form of Government Task Force has accomplished its task, or should be asked to continue to serve the church by doing additional work are questions that the 218th General Assembly (2008) can determine without constitutional implications. If suggestions are incorporated into the Form of Government document, the new recommendations must be submitted at least 120 days in advance of the 219th General Assembly (2010), which must receive the advice of the ACC thereon.

If the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the intent of Point 4 of Item 06-12 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

Point 5 of the overture requests that “If the 218th General Assembly (2008) votes to send the entire task force revision to the presbyteries for their affirmative and negative votes, it shall take a 2/3 supermajority vote of the Presbyteries to pass.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Point 5 raises an issue of constitutional interpretation by its attempt to require a supermajority vote in the presbyteries. The attempt to require a supermajority vote of the presbyteries is unconstitutional for the same reasons offered under Point 2.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that if it approves of the general intent of Item 06-12, it should strike Point 5 and the other references to a supermajority vote of the presbyteries.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-12 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to amend the procedures by which the recommendations in the Form of Government Task Force report be approved.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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## Item 06-13

**[The assembly answered Item 06-02 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]**

*On Amending the Revised Form of Government Proposed by the FOG Task Force—From the Presbytery of Foothills.*

The Presbytery of Foothills respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Ensure that any revised Form of Government (and Foundations) approved by the General Assembly shall give pre-eminence to the Reformation marks of the true Church, with due consideration of their inner dynamics.
2. Ensure that any revised Form of Government (and Foundations) approved by the General Assembly shall give preference to the church participating in the mission of the triune God in contrast to the church as the delegated/ instrumental bearer (or provisional demonstration) of God’s mission to the world.
3. Amend the proposed Revised Form of Government as follows: [An asterisk (\*) means that a paragraph or section of the proposed Form of Government is not changed by this overture. Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

#### “THE FOUNDATIONS OF PRESBYTERIAN POLITY

##### “CHAPTER ONE

##### “THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

###### “F-1.01 God’s Mission

“The sovereign mission of the ~~one~~ triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—gives substance and form to the ~~church’s activity in the world~~ Church. *The triune God is the living God, who, the Scriptures tell, creates, sustains, rules, redeems, reconciles, and recreates all things in time, to God’s glory. In Christ (Emmanuel, God with us) the Church participates in God’s life and mission, confident of the purposes God will fulfill and assured of God’s blessing upon its efforts. The Church knows God’s sovereign work in creation and redemption through God’s Word in Scripture, the witness of the confessions, and the presence of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. As the Church responds to God’s gracious call, it participates in the divine mission—proclaiming the time of the Lord’s favor, bringing good news to all who are impoverished, and announcing release to those who are imprisoned, sight to those who are blinded, and freedom to those who are oppressed. In its faithful mission, the Church is assured of God’s blessing and filled with hope in the fulfillment of God’s purposes.* Along with Christians everywhere, Presbyterians have no higher goal in life or in death than to live in covenant fellowship with the triune God, to embrace and serve God’s mission, *indeed* to glorify and enjoy God now and forever.

“F-1.02 Jesus Christ is Head of the Church [\*This section remains unchanged.]

“F-1.03 ~~The Calling of the Church~~ *The Marks of the True Church*

“1.0301

“*The marks of the true Church come to us from different periods in the life of the Church, but each remains important:*

“1.0301 ~~The Church is the Body of Christ~~

~~“The Church is the body of Christ, both in its corporate life and in the lives of its individual members.~~

~~“The Church of Jesus Christ is the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all of humanity. The Church is called to be a sign in and for the world of the new reality that God has made available to people in Jesus Christ. The new reality revealed in Jesus Christ is the new humanity, a new creation, a new beginning for human life in the world:~~

~~“Sin is forgiven.~~

~~“Reconciliation is accomplished.~~

~~“The dividing walls of hostility are torn down.~~

~~“The Church is called to give shape and substance to this truth. The Church is further called to undertake this mission even at the risk of losing its life, trusting in God alone as the author and giver of life, sharing the gospel, and doing those deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in Christ.~~

“1.0302 *From the Period of Pietism* [This was formerly F-1.0304. The Great Ends of the Church.]

“*[from The Confession of 1967 and A Brief Statement of Faith]*

“*Only a Church engaged in mission is a true Church of Jesus Christ.*

“*Accordingly, the six Great Ends of the Church are*

- “• *the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;*
- “• *the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;*
- “• *the maintenance of divine worship;*
- “• *the preservation of the truth;*
- “• *the promotion of social righteousness; and*
- “• *the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.*<sup>11</sup>

“1.0303 ~~The Notes of the Reformed Church From the Protestant Reformation~~

“*(from the six Reformation confessions/catechisms + The Barmen Declaration)*

“*Where Christ is, there is the true Church. In the power of the Spirit, Christ stands at the center of the Church’s life, the event of her worship,*

- “• *wherever the Word of Scripture is faithfully preached,*
- “• *wherever the Sacraments are administered according to the Scriptures,*
- “• *wherever Church discipline is exercised, carrying out in the Church itself, its members, its common life, and ministry beyond itself all that is involved in being faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.*

~~“To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God’s reconciling community. This community, the Church catholic, is entrusted with God’s message of reconciliation and shares God’s labor of healing the enmities which separate us from God and from each other. Christ has called the Church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup> Reformed Christians have understood that the Church is faithful to this mission when it truly proclaims and hears the Word of God, rightly administers the sacraments of Christ Jesus, and nurtures the covenant community through ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered.<sup>13</sup>~~

<sup>11</sup> This statement of the great ends of the Church, slightly edited here, came from the United Presbyterian Church of North America, which united with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1958. The Statement was then made a part of the Constitution of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, as the united body was called. This now classic statement was adopted by the United Presbyterian Church of North America in 1910, following various actions between 1904 and 1910 looking forward to the revision of the church’s Constitution.

<sup>12</sup> See The Confession of 1967, II.1 (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.31)

<sup>13</sup> See The Scots Confession, Ch. XVIII (*The Book of Confessions*, 3.18)

“1.0304 *From the Early Christians* [This was formerly F-1.0302. *The Marks of the Church*<sup>4</sup>]  
 “(from *The Nicene Creed* and *The Apostles Creed*)

*The true Church of Jesus Christ is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.*

“With Christians of the Church catholic, we affirm that the Church is “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.”

“a. The Apostolicity of the Church

“Apostolocity is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ, whose *human life manifests is an act of the triune God. In Christ God acts to seek and find the lost, lift up the least among us, break down the dividing walls of hostility, defeat the powers of sin, evil, and death, establish a just community of mutual self-giving love, and bring in the kingdom of eternal life forever in a joyful celebration and communion with God. To be called into God’s Church is to be sent out to share in this, God’s triune life and mission.* ~~The Church receives the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ through the testimony of those whom Christ sent, and then is itself sent into the world by Jesus Christ to bear that testimony to others. The mission of the Church is to proclaim in Word and Sacrament that the new age has dawned, and that God who creates life also frees those in bondage, forgives sin, reconciles brokenness, makes all things new, and is still at work in the world.~~

“~~The Church is called to be faithful to the Good News it has received and accountable to the standards of the confessions. The Church is called to present the claims of Jesus Christ, leading persons to repentance, acceptance of Christ alone as Savior and Lord, and new life as his disciples.~~

“~~The Church is called to be Christ’s faithful evangelist:~~

“~~going into the world, making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all he has commanded;~~

“~~demonstrating by the love of its members for one another and by the quality of its common life the new reality in Christ; sharing in worship, fellowship, and nurture, practicing a deepened life of prayer and service under the guidance of the Holy Spirit;~~

“~~participating in God’s activity in the world through healing, reconciling, and binding up wounds; ministering to the needs of the poor, sick, and lonely; engaging in the struggle to free people from sin and oppression; giving itself in the service of those who suffer; and bearing witness to the establishment of Christ’s just, peaceable, and loving rule in the world.~~

“b. The Catholicity of the Church

“~~Catholicity is God’s gift of universality to the Church in Jesus Christ, whose life makes known the reconciling love of the triune God. Christ is Lord of all creation and Head of the Church who is Lord of all creation, Head over the entire Christian community wherever it is found, and the source of all truth. The Church catholic embraces people of all times and places, all races and nations, all genders and ages, and all stations in life. As the body of Christ, the Church catholic is a sign of God’s reconciling love, embracing all times and places, all races and nations, all genders and ages, all persons regardless of station in life. The Church catholic is marked by The truth of the Gospel, faithful to the Scriptures handed down generation-to-generation from the time of Christ until now, marks the fullness of faith, the wholeness of hope, and the completeness of love, lived in communion with all who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Particular congregations and councils of the Church participate in that catholicity when they gather for worship to hear the Word proclaimed and receive the Sacraments, and again when they scatter to live as disciples of Christ and to pursue God’s mission.~~

“~~A congregation consists of persons in a particular place and time who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, gather to worship God, listen for God’s Word in Scripture, celebrate the sacraments, commit themselves to God’s mission in the world, and order their common life in fidelity to the gospel, together with the children of the congregation. Congregations are called to participate in the catholicity of the Church, so that all are embraced within the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.~~

“c. The Holiness of the Church

“Holiness is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ, whose suffering and forgiving love is an act of the triune God *taking away the sins of the world. In the light of God’s love, all things are unmasked for what they really are, in bold relief, for all to see. Yet God’s perfect love casts out fear. The Spirit turns sinners to the light to share in Christ’s sufferings, to repent of particular sins particularly, to be reborn clothed in Christ’s resurrection, and to live in the full light of God’s love. By his love, Christ takes away the sin of the world.* The holiness of the church comes from Christ, who calls it to bear witness to his

<sup>4</sup>See “The Nicene Creed,” *The Book of Confessions*, 1.3.

suffering love, and not from the purity of its doctrine or the righteousness of its actions. *So in the Christian life wherever—as God’s gracious gift—there is any joy in Christ, any gratitude, any humility, any love for God or for others, any hope for the future in God, anything excellent or noble or good in the sight of God, any communion with the Spirit, there is a participation in God’s own on-going, active life and mission.*

~~“In grateful response to Christ’s redemptive work, the Church, its members, and those in its ordered ministries, are called to lead lives worthy of the gospel we proclaim. We rely upon the work of God’s Spirit through Scripture and the means of grace to form every believer and every community for this holy living. At the same time, we acknowledge the persistence of sin in our corporate and individual lives, even as we are forgiven by Christ and called. Such participation calls us again and yet again to strive for the purity, righteousness, and truth revealed to us in Jesus Christ and promised to all people in the new reality of God to all creation in Jesus Christ.~~

#### “d. The Unity of the Church

“Unity is God’s *irrevocable* gift to the Church in Jesus Christ, who manifests the unity of the triune God. ~~The Church is one because it belongs to one Lord, Jesus Christ. The Church is a fellowship of believers that seeks to include all people and is never content to enjoy the benefits of Christian community for itself alone.~~ There is one Church, for there is one Spirit, one hope, ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God ... and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all (Eph. 4:5–6).

~~“The unity of the Church is both God’s gift and our calling.] To be united with Christ is to be united joined with all those who are in Christ. To be thus joined with one another is to become priests together for one another, praying for the world and for one another and sharing the various gifts God has given to each Christian for the benefit of the whole community. Division into different denominations does not destroy unity in Christ, but it obscures it for both the Church and the world. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity and is willing to seek and to deepen communion with all other churches within the one, catholic Church. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) diligently seeks the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace within its own life. It looks for ways to celebrate its unity in Christ with Christians everywhere, and to cooperate with them in every way possible, locally, nationally, and globally. It works to eliminate the barriers to full communion with fellow Christians.~~

#### “1.0305 Commitment to the Marks of the Church

*“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) takes all these marks of the true Church seriously as the basis of its Form of Government, and—with every effort wrought in God (John 3:21)—seeks to implement them with ruggedness, vigor, and imagination in its worship, mission, and governance.*

*“The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) bears witness to its abiding faith in the triune God, its vigorous efforts to seek and serve God’s will in all of life, and its commitment to follow Jesus Christ into the future God has in store for all humanity.*

### “CHAPTER 2

#### “THE CHURCH AND ITS CONFESSIONS

##### “F-2.01 The Origin of Confessional Statements for a Confessional Church.

*“The creeds and confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are both rooted in history and universal in truth. They arose at particular moments in the history of God’s people, usually when defining the heart of the Gospel or when the Gospel itself was in dispute (status confessionis). With careful attention to Scripture, discernment, thought, and prayer, faithful Christians used a confessional statement to face the challenge of each historical moment in terms of the central truth of the Gospel. Then they called on the great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1)—all Christians, everywhere, for all time—to join in professing that truth for that moment in the words of that confession. At the present time God also calls the whole Christian community to profess the Gospel with ruggedness, imagination, diligence, and faithfulness, both sharing in the confessions of other historical moments and adopting new confessional statements as befits the times.*

##### “~~F-2.01~~ F-2.02 The Purpose of Confessional Statements

~~“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ in with the creeds and confessions in *The Book of Confessions*. In these statements the church declares to its members and to the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do. These statements identify the church as a community of people known by its convictions as well as by its actions. They guide the church in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures; they summarize the essence of Reformed Christian tradition; they direct the church in maintaining sound doctrines; they equip the church for its work of proclamation. The creeds and confessions of this church arose in response to particular circumstances~~

~~within the history of God's people. They are the result of prayer, thought, and experience within a living tradition. They serve to strengthen personal commitment and the life and witness of the community of believers.~~

- “• *The confessions assist the church in the worship of God;*
- “• *They join Christians together in a unity and community centered in the truth of the Gospel instead of themselves;*
- “• *They call the Christian community back to the central affirmations of the Gospel at times of major confusion, change, or temptation;*
- “• *They provide occasions for the church to seek understanding, clarify its doctrine, and publicly confess its faith in Jesus Christ when the Gospel itself is at risk;*
- “• *they equip the church for its work of proclamation; and*
- “• *they guide the church in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures.*

~~F-2.02~~ F-2.03 The Confessions as Subordinate Standards

“These confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him. While confessional standards are subordinate to the Scriptures, they are, nonetheless, standards. They are not lightly drawn up or subscribed to, nor may they be ignored or dismissed. The church is prepared to ~~instruct~~, counsel with, or even to discipline one ordained who seriously rejects the faith expressed in the confessions. Moreover, a more exacting amendment process is required to change the confessions of the church than is required to change the Constitution in matters of government, worship, or discipline. Yet the church, in obedience to Jesus Christ, is open to the reform of its standards of doctrine as well as of governance. The church affirms *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei*, that is, ‘The church reformed, always to be reformed according to the Word of God,’ ~~in the power and the call~~ of the Spirit.

~~F-2.05~~ F-2.04 The Confessions as Statements of ~~the Faith of~~ the Reformed Tradition

“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to ~~this tradition~~ *the Gospel* is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who *in Christ (in christo)* creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to ~~this central~~ *the* affirmation of God’s sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:

- “(1) The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;
- “(2) Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;
- “(3) A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God’s creation;
- “(4) The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.

~~F-2.04~~ F-2.05 The Confessions as Statements of ~~the Faith of~~ the Protestant Reformation

“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ~~identifies with~~ *upholds* the *primary* affirmations of the Protestant Reformation. ~~The Reformers focus on~~ *of these affirmations is the rediscovery of God’s grace in Jesus Christ as Lord of life, Savior of sinners, and Head of the Church. By God’s grace, Christ is revealed in the Scriptures, foundational for the Christian community, and effective for faith. Central to the Gospel, the Reformation* The Protestant watchwords—*Christ alone, grace alone, faith Scripture alone, faith alone, Church alone*—~~embody principles of understanding that continue to guide and motivate~~ *inspire and lead* the people of God in ~~the life of faith~~ *their walk with God.*

~~F-2.03~~ F-2.06 The Confessions as Statements of ~~the Faith of~~ the Church *Catholic*

“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) witnesses to the faith of the Church catholic, *including the ecumenical creeds (Nicene and Apostles’)*. Central to *the Gospel is the repeated affirmation of the triune God together with the incarnation of the eternal Word of God as the human Jesus Christ. The confessions express the faith of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church in the recognition of canonical Scriptures and the formulation and adoption of the ecumenical creeds, notably, the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds with their definitions of the mystery of the triune God and of the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in Jesus Christ.*

“CHAPTER THREE  
“PRINCIPLES OF ORDER AND GOVERNMENT

“F-3.01–.02 [\*These sections remain unchanged.]

“F-3.03 ~~Openness to the Guidance of the Holy Spirit~~ *Continuity and Change*

“3.0301 ~~Heritage and Renewal~~ *Humility Before the Lord of the Church*

~~“The presbyterian form of government in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)~~ *Presbyterian government as described in this Constitution is grounded in Scripture, and built around the marks of the true Church, and proven effective over many centuries, with many peoples, many lands, and many cultures. Nonetheless, the presbyterian form of government is always subject to the Lord of the Church, who calls it forth in different forms at different times and in different places. Jesus Christ draws worshipping communities and individual believers into the sovereign activity of the triune God in 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. In following Christ, the Church seeks ‘not [to] be conformed to this world, but [to] be transformed by the renewing of [our] minds, so that [we] may* *In Christ, the Church has its entire existence, and Christ calls forth the Church with particular forms at different times and places. In every age the Church is not to be conformed to this world, but, united with Christ by the Spirit, the Church is to discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect<sup>2</sup> in God’s sight (Rom. 12:2).*

“3.0302 ~~Ecclesiology~~ *Looking to the Future*

~~“The presbyterian government, in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is grounded in Scripture but is not regarded as essential for the existence of the Christian Church nor required of all Christians.~~ *As God’s grace is new every morning, so do Presbyterians look to the future in Christ Jesus as well as the past, anticipating what God has in store for all creation. Jesus Christ stands before the Church, beckoning it from the future to come, follow him. God the Spirit energizes the people of God in faith to seek the face of Christ at all times, situations, events, experiences, and stages of life. Wherever Christ leads, the Church will follow with unwavering devotion, joyful enthusiasm, grateful appreciation, lively imagination, rugged persistence, and nimble flexibility.*

“3.0303 *Unity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness*

~~“As the unity of the One God is expressed in the diverse activity of the Trinity, so also~~ *The irrevocable unity of believers in Christ also makes them sisters and brothers, by whose different gifts God intends to expand the fellowship, build up the Church, strengthen the bonds of mutual support, and enhance its witness and service to God. In Christ the unity of the Church is expressed in the rich diversity of its membership. The Church is called to give full expression in its membership to the diversity of the human family, and In its worship, government, and life the Church shall be responsive to that diversity in its worship, government, and emerging life all members.* It shall not deny participation or representation to persons or groups within its membership for any reasons other than those stated in this Constitution.

“3.0304 ~~Openness~~ *Unity with All Humanity*

*“In Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all creation, the Church is also united with all humanity. In Christ, the triune God tends the least among us, suffers the curse on 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. What God has done for believers in Christ, God intends for the universe: ‘God so loved the world ...’ (John 3:16). ‘Anyone ... in Christ ... is a new creation’ (2 Cor. 5:17). The mission of God (missio Dei) pertains not only to the Church but also to humans everywhere and to all creation. The mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) is to participate fully in the mission of God.*

“~~The church is called:~~

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

“~~to a new openness to its own membership, by affirming itself as a community of diversity, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and conditions, and by providing for inclusiveness as a visible sign of the new humanity;~~

~~“to a new openness to 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;~~

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

“F-3.04 The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Defined [\*This section remains unchanged.]

“THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

“CHAPTER ONE

“CONGREGATIONS AND THEIR MEMBERSHIP

“G-1.01 THE CONGREGATION

“1.0101 The Mission of the Congregation

~~“The congregation is the church engaged in *the mission in its particular context of God (missio Dei, F-1.01) within its own community. The triune God has given all the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the church are present to the congregation for a congregation to be the church.* The congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. Thus congregations are bound together in communion with one another, covenanted in relationships of accountability and responsibility, and called collectively the church.~~

~~“Through the congregation God’s people carry out their ministries of proclamation, sharing the Sacraments, and living in covenant life with God and each other. Congregations are called collectively the Church when, united in Christ, they commune with one another, join in covenant relationships of mutual support, accountability, and responsibility, and contribute their individual strengths for the benefit of the whole, to the greater glory of God. In the congregation, God’s people both gather and scatter in the service of God. They gather to worship God, centered in the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments. As faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, they scatter to minister to all people, bearing witness to the love, truth, peace, and justice of God at every moment, and anticipating the future God has in store for all creation. Gathered or scattered, God’s people support, nurture, and encourage one another in their worship, witness, and service. In the life of the congregation, God initiates and shapes the faith of individual believers, are equipped for their ministry of witness to and therein they discern the love and grace, and purposes of God in and for the world for a sinful humanity including their own. With confidence in Christ who goes before them every step of the way, the congregation participates fully in the mission of God. The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship, to offer care and nurture to God’s children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that is coming into the world.~~

“1.0102 The Fellowship of the Congregation

“The polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presupposes the fellowship of women and men with their children in covenanted relationship with one another and with God through Jesus Christ. The organization rests upon the genuine fellowship and is not designed to work without trust and love.

“1.0103 Governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [\*This section is remains unchanged.]

“G-1.02 THE ORGANIZING OF A CONGREGATION

“A congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can be organized *and dissolved* only by the authority of a presbytery and shall function under the provisions of this Constitution.

“G-1.03 THE MEMBERSHIP OF A CONGREGATION

“1.0301 The Meaning of Membership and Baptism

~~“In Jesus Christ God calls women and men to faith in Jesus Christ and to membership in the church, the body of Christ. The incarnation of triune God *incarnate* in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives to the church not only its mission but also its understanding of membership. One becomes a member of the church through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and acceptance of Christ’s Lordship in all of life. Believing that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord over all of life makes one a member of the church. Baptism and a public profession of faith in Jesus as Lord are the visible signs of God’s call and~~



claim on a human life and of entrance into the membership of the church. The baptism of children witnesses to the truth that God's love claims people before they are able to ~~respond in faith~~ believe. The baptism of those who enter the covenant of membership upon their own profession of faith witnesses to the truth that God's gift of grace calls ~~for fulfillment in a response~~ forth a whole life of faithfulness. (W-2.3008b, c)

“1.0302 Welcome and Openness

“A congregation shall welcome all persons who ~~respond in trust and obedience to~~ trust God's grace in Jesus Christ and desire to become part of the ~~membership~~ fellowship and ministry of his Church. No persons shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith. ~~Each member must seek the grace of openness in extending~~ *The Gospel itself leads members to extend* the fellowship of Christ to all persons. Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of Christ himself and causes a scandal to the Gospel.

“1.0303 Entry into Membership [This section remains unchanged.]

“1.0304 The Ministry of Members

“a. ~~Accepting the privilege and responsibility of membership in the church is a commitment to Jesus Christ that binds the individual believer to fulfillment of the obligations of membership.~~ *Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is a joy and a privilege.* A faithful member accepts Christ's call to bear witness to God's love and grace and to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ's Church. Such involvement includes:

- “• proclaiming the good news; *in word and in deed;*
- “• taking part in the common life and worship of a congregation;;
- “• *lifting up one another with prayer, mutual concern, and active support;*
- “• ~~praying and~~ studying Scripture and the *issues of* Christian faith; *and life;*
- “• *seeking to discern and commune with the activity of the triune God at every point in life;*
- “• supporting the ~~work~~ ministry of the church through the ~~giving~~ God-given gifts of money, time, and talents;;
- “• ~~demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church;~~
- “• ~~responding to God's activity in the world through service to others;~~
- “• living responsibly in the *God-given* personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life;;
- “• working ~~in the world~~ for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment; *wherever Christ leads us; and*
- “• ~~participating~~ *sharing* in the governing responsibilities of the church.

“b. Members shall regularly review and evaluate the integrity with which they are involved in the ministry of the church and consider ways in which their ~~participation~~ *engagement* in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful.

“G-1.04–.05 [\*These sections remain unchanged.]

“CHAPTER TWO

“ORDERED MINISTRY, COMMISSIONING, AND CERTIFICATION

[\*This entire chapter remains unchanged.]

“CHAPTER THREE

“COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

“G-3.01 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

G-3.0101–.0106 [These sections remain unchanged.]

“G-3.0107 Administration of Mission

“Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements *the decisions reached within its sphere of responsibilities.* All ~~such~~ administration ~~should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to the new reality of God in Jesus Christ~~ *is to honor Jesus Christ and serve*

*the mission of the triune God.* Administration of mission should be performed by the council nearest the congregation that can most effectively and efficiently accomplish it.

“[\*Paragraphs 2–5 remain unchanged.] .....

“The funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding ~~should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to the new reality of God in Jesus Christ~~ *is to honor Jesus Christ and serve the mission of the triune God.* Each council shall prepare an annual budget. Councils higher than the session may request funds for their mission and for support of the meetings and ongoing functions through which the interdependence of the church is lived out. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for raising and timely transmission of requested funds to their respective synods and the General Assembly. Presbyteries may apportion requested funds to sessions within their bounds.

“G-3.0108–.0113 [\*These sections remain unchanged.]

“G-3.02 THE SESSION

“3.0201 Composition and Responsibilities

“The session is the council for the congregation. It shall be composed of those persons elected by the congregation to active service as elders, together with all installed pastors and associate pastors. All members of the session are entitled to vote. The pastor shall be the moderator of the session, and the session shall not meet without the pastor or designated moderator. Presbyteries shall provide by rule for moderators when the session is without a moderator for reasons of vacancy or inconvenience.

“The session shall have responsibility for governing the congregation ~~and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes the sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to people in Jesus Christ. as it discerns and bears witness to the sovereign activity of the triune God, provides for the worship of God, and leads the way to full participation in the mission of God (missio Dei). In all its actions, the session shall keep before it the marks of the true church, namely, the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0301), the marks by which Presbyterian and Reformed churches have identified themselves through history (F-1.0302), and the church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic (F-1.0303). As it leads and guides the witness of the congregation, the session shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303).~~

“~~In light of this charge, the session has responsibility and power to:~~ *Accordingly, the responsibilities and powers of the session are:*

“a. ~~provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard.~~ This responsibility shall include providing a place where the congregation may regularly gather for worship, education, and spiritual nurture; providing for regular preaching of the Word by a minister of the Word and Sacrament or other person prepared and approved for the work; planning and leading regular efforts to reach into the community and the world with the message of salvation and the invitation to enter into committed discipleship; planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community, and initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God. ~~providing for the worship of God, to include:~~

- “• *providing specific times when and places where the congregation may regularly gather for worship;*
- “• *providing for regular preaching of the Word by a minister of the Word and Sacrament or other person prepared and approved for the work;*
- “• *authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at least quarterly in accordance with the principles of the Directory for Worship;*
- “• *authorizing the administration of Baptism as appropriate, in accordance with the principles of the Directory for Worship;*

“~~b. provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered.~~ This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at least quarterly and the administration of Baptism as appropriate, in accordance with the princi-

ples of the Directory for Worship; and exercising pastoral care among the congregation in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the congregation may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.

~~“c. nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline. This responsibility shall include receiving and dismissing members; providing programs of nurture, education, and fellowship; training, examining, ordaining, installing those elected by the congregation as elders and deacons; encouraging the graces of generosity and faithful stewardship of personal and financial resources; managing the physical property of the congregation for the furtherance of its mission; directing the ministry of deacons, trustees, and all organizations of the congregation; employing the administrative staff of the congregation; leading the congregation in participating in the mission of the whole church; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.~~

“b. fostering and encouraging discipleship to Jesus Christ as Lord over all of life, to include:

- “• establishing and implementing a clear vision of mission and ministry for the congregation in its particular setting;
- “• seeking those things necessary for the peace, purity, unity, and progress of the church under the will of Christ.
- “• planning and leading regular efforts to reach the community with the message of salvation and the invitation for people to follow Jesus Christ as committed disciples;
- “• planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community;
- “• initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God;
- “• exercising pastoral care among the congregation in support of the Gospel and the nurture of those who are lonely, confused, broken, destitute, despairing, sick, dying, and grieving;
- “• planning, staffing, and finding suitable times, places, and programs for education, fellowship, and spiritual nurture that shape faith and life in Jesus Christ;
- “• receiving and dismissing members;
- “• training, examining, ordaining, and installing those elected by the congregation as ruling elders and deacons;
- “• encouraging generosity and faithful stewardship in the use of time, talents, and financial resources;
- “• managing the physical property of the congregation for the sake of its mission;
- “• directing the ministry of deacons, trustees, and all organizations of the congregation;
- “• employing and overseeing the administrative staff of the congregation;
- “• framing symbols of faith and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and
- “• resolving judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.

“G-3.0202–.0205 [\*These sections remain unchanged.]

“G-3.03 THE PRESBYTERY

“3.0301 Composition and Responsibilities

“The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within that district. When a presbytery meets, each member congregation shall be represented by at least one elder. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and elders should be present in numbers as equal as possible. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many elders each session should commission to represent it at presbytery meetings. This plan shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-3.0303 and G-3.0104. Elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service.

“The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

~~“The presbytery is Responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the presbytery is to assist and support the witness of congregations in discerning and bearing witness to the sovereign activity of the triune God, in the world, so that all congregations become signs in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ providing for the worship of God, and leading the way to full participation in the mission of God (missio Dei). In all its actions the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the true church, namely, the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0301), the marks by which Presbyterian and Reformed churches have identified themselves through~~

history (F-1.0302), and the church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic (F-1.0303). As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F 1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves through history (F 1.0302).

“In light of this charge, the presbytery has responsibility and power to

- “~~a. provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard.~~ This responsibility shall include organizing, receiving, and merging congregations in consultation with their members; overseeing congregations without pastors; establishing pastoral relationships and dissolving them; guiding the preparation of those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament, or for other professional service in the church; establishing and maintaining those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its district; providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in the areas of mission action, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration to the end that the church’s witness to the love and grace of God may be heard in the world.
- “~~b. provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered.~~ This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at its meetings at least annually and for fellowship groups, new church developments, and other non congregational entities meeting within its bounds; authorizing and training specific ruling elders to administer or preside at the Lord’s Supper when it deems it necessary to meet the needs for the administration of the Sacrament; and exercising pastoral care for the congregations and members of presbytery, visiting sessions and ministers of the Word and Sacrament on a regular basis in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the presbytery may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.
- “~~c. nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline.~~ This responsibility shall include ordaining, receiving, dismissing, installing, removing, and disciplining minister members; commissioning elders as commissioned pastors; promoting the peace and harmony of congregations and inquiring into the sources of congregational discord; supporting congregations in developing the graces of generosity, stewardship, and service; assisting congregations in developing mission and participating in the mission of the whole church; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.

“Accordingly, the responsibilities and powers of the presbytery are:

“a. providing for the worship of God, to include:

- “• making arrangements for the worship of God regularly at its meetings, the proclamation of the Word ordinarily incorporating (at least annually) the administration of the sacraments;
- “• organizing, receiving, merging, as well as dividing, dismissing, and dissolving congregations in consultation with their members;
- “• overseeing congregations without pastors;
- “• establishing pastoral relationships and dissolving them;
- “• guiding the preparation of those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament, or for other professional service in the church;
- “• ordaining, receiving, dismissing, installing, removing, and disciplining minister members;
- “• commissioning and supervising the ministry of lay pastors;
- “• authorizing and training specific ruling elders to administer or preside at the Lord’s Supper when deemed necessary for particular congregations;
- “• authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper for fellowship groups, new church developments, and other non-congregational entities meeting within its bounds; and

“b. fostering and encouraging discipleship to Jesus Christ as Lord over all of life, to include:

- “• establishing and implementing a clear vision of mission and ministry for the presbytery and its congregations within the particular setting of its district;
- “• seeking those things necessary for the peace, purity, unity, and progress of the church under the will of Christ.
- “• establishing and maintaining those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its district;
- “• providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in the areas of mission planning and implementation, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration;

- “• *exercising pastoral care for the congregations and members of presbytery, visiting sessions and ministers of the Word and Sacrament on a regular basis;*
- “• *promoting the peace and harmony of congregations and inquiring into the sources of congregational discord;*
- “• *assisting congregations to develop their generosity, stewardship of resources, and mission service;*
- “• *framing symbols of faith and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the presbytery and community;*
- “• *resolving judicial matters initiated or brought before it in accordance with the Rules of Discipline; and*
- “• *setting up the structures (committees, commissions, and the like) needed to implement its mission, and employing and overseeing the administrative staff of the presbytery.*

“G-3.0302–.0308 [\*These sections remain unchanged.]

“G-3.04 THE SYNOD

“3.0401 Composition and Responsibilities

“The synod is the intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its region. It shall consist of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographic region.

“When a synod meets, it shall be composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. Each presbytery shall elect at least one elder and one minister of the Word and Sacrament to serve as commissioners to synod. The presbyteries of a synod shall, by a vote of the majority of the presbyteries, determine a plan for the election of commissioners to the synod, as well as the method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-3.0303 and G-3.0104. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be divided equally between elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Each person elected moderator shall be enrolled as a member of the synod until a successor is elected and installed. *Each synod shall provide by its own rule for those persons to be enrolled as corresponding members.*

“~~Synod is Responsible for the life, ministry, and mission of the church throughout its region and for supporting the ministry and mission of its constituent presbyteries as they seek to support the witness of congregations to the end that whole church becomes a sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ, the synod is to assist and support the witness of its constituent presbyteries in discerning and bearing witness to the sovereign activity of the triune God, providing for the worship of God, and leading the way to full participation in the mission of God (missio Dei). In all its actions the synod shall keep before it the marks of the true church, namely, the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0301), the marks by which Presbyterian and Reformed churches have identified themselves through history (F-1.0302), and the church as one, holy, catholic, and, apostolic (F-1.0303). As it leads and guides the witness of the whole church, it shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303).~~

“~~In light of this charge, the synod has responsibility and power to~~

- “~~a. provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard. This responsibility may include developing, in conjunction with its presbyteries, a broad strategy for the mission of the church (The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, Chapter One: The Mission of the Church) within its bounds and in accord with the larger strategy of the General Assembly; assisting its member presbyteries when requested in matters related to the calling, ordaining, and placement of ministers of the Word and Sacrament; establishing and maintaining, in conjunction with its presbyteries, those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its region; facilitating joint action in mission with other denominations and agencies in its region; facilitating communication among its presbyteries and between its presbyteries and the General Assembly; providing services for presbyteries within its area that can be performed more effectively from a broad regional base.~~
- “~~b. provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered. This responsibility may include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at its meetings and at other events and gatherings under its jurisdiction; and exercising pastoral care among its constituent presbyteries in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the synod may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.~~
- “~~c. nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline. This responsibility shall include providing such services of education and nurture as its constituent presbyteries may require; reviewing the work of its presbyteries; warning or bearing witness against error in doctrine or immorality in practice within its bounds; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.~~

*“Accordingly, the responsibilities and powers of the synod are:*

*“a. providing for the worship of God, to include:*

- “• making arrangements for the worship of God regularly at its meetings, namely, the proclamation of the Word ordinarily together with the administration of the sacraments;*
- “• assisting its member presbyteries when requested in matters related to the calling, ordaining, and placement of ministers of the Word and Sacrament.*

*“b. fostering and encouraging discipleship to Jesus Christ as Lord over all of life, to include:*

- “• developing, in conjunction with its presbyteries, a broad strategy for the mission of the church (The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, Chapter One: The Mission of the Church) within its bounds and in accord with the larger strategy of the General Assembly;*
- “• seeking those things necessary for the peace, purity, unity, and progress of the church under the will of Christ;*
- “• establishing and maintaining, in conjunction with its presbyteries, those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its region;*
- “• facilitating joint action in mission with other denominations and agencies in its region;*
- “• facilitating communication among its presbyteries and between its presbyteries and the General Assembly;*
- “• providing services for presbyteries within its area that can be performed more effectively from a broad regional base;*
- “• providing such services of education and nurture as its constituent presbyteries may require;*
- “• reviewing the work of its presbyteries;*
- “• framing symbols of faith and bearing witness against error in doctrine or immorality in practice within its bounds;*
- “• resolving judicial matters initiated or brought before it in accordance with the Rules of Discipline; and*
- “• setting up the interactive structures (committees, agencies, and the like) needed to implement its mission, and employing and overseeing the administrative staff of the synod.*

“G-3.0402–.0407 [\*These sections remain unchanged.]

“G-3.05 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

“3.0501 Composition and Responsibilities

“The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It shall consist of equal numbers of ruling and teaching elders elected by the presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds (F-3.0303 and G-3.0104), to serve as commissioners according to the following proportions:

“8,000 members or less: 1 elder and 1 minister of the Word and Sacrament

“8,001–16,000: 2 elders and 2 ministers of the Word and Sacrament

“16,001–24,000: 3 elders and 3 ministers of the Word and Sacrament

“24,001–32,000: 4 elders and 4 ministers of the Word and Sacrament

“32,001–40,000: 5 elders and 5 ministers of the Word and Sacrament

“40,001–48,000: 6 elders and 6 ministers of the Word and Sacrament

“48,001 or more 7 elders and 7 ministers of the Word and Sacrament

“Each person elected Moderator shall be enrolled as a member of the General Assembly until a successor is elected and installed.

“The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, ~~to the end that the whole church becomes a sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to all in Jesus Christ.~~ *The General Assembly shall lead the entire Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in discerning and bearing witness to the sovereign activity of the triune God, providing for the worship of God, and leading the way to full participation in the mission of God (missio Dei). In all its actions, the General Assembly shall keep before it the marks of the true church,*

namely, the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0301), the marks by which Presbyterian and Reformed churches have identified themselves through history (F-1.0302), and the church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic (F-1.0303). ~~As it leads and guides the witness of the whole church, it shall bear in mind the six great ends of the Church (F-1.0304) and the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0305).~~

“In light of this charge, the General Assembly has responsibility and power to

- ~~“a. provide that the Word is truly proclaimed and heard. This responsibility shall include establishing a comprehensive mission strategy and priorities for the church; establishing and maintaining ecumenical relationships and correspondence with other ecclesiastical bodies; uniting with or receiving under its jurisdiction other ecclesiastical bodies consistent with the faith and order of this church, subject to the provision of G-5.02 and G-5.03; and commissioning, sending, and support of such mission personnel as will spread the good news of the grace of Jesus Christ to the world and foster the growth and development of God’s people.~~
- ~~“b. provide that the Sacraments are rightly administered. This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at meetings of the General Assembly; authorizing the participation in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in ecumenical gatherings attended by authorized representatives of the General Assembly; and exercising pastoral care throughout the whole church in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the church may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.~~
- ~~“c. nurture the covenant community through the upright ministry of ecclesiastical discipline. This responsibility shall include providing those services, resources, and programs performed most effectively at a national level; adopting a budget for the work of the General Assembly and its entities; communicating with the whole church on matters of common concern; warning and bearing witness against errors in doctrine or immorality in the church and in the world; serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline; deciding controversies brought before it and advising and instructing in cases submitted to it, in conformity with this Constitution; authoritatively interpreting the most recent edition of the *Book of Order* in a manner binding on the whole church, in accordance with the provisions of G-6.02; and establishing and maintaining an office of the Stated Clerk.~~

“Accordingly, the responsibilities and powers of the General Assembly are:

- “a. providing for the worship of God, to include:
  - “ making arrangements for the worship of God at its meetings, namely, the proclamation of the Word ordinarily together with the administration of the sacraments;
  - “ commissioning, sending, and supporting mission personnel to spread the good news of the grace of Jesus Christ throughout; and
- b. fostering and encouraging discipleship to Jesus Christ as Lord over all of life, to include:
  - “ establishing a comprehensive mission strategy and priorities for the church;
  - “ seeking those things necessary for the peace, purity, unity, and progress of the church under the will of Christ;
  - “ establishing and maintaining ecumenical relationships and correspondence with other ecclesiastical bodies;
  - “ uniting with or receiving under its jurisdiction other ecclesiastical bodies consistent with the faith and order of this church, subject to the provision of G-5.02 and G-5.03;
  - “ authorizing representatives of the General Assembly to celebrate the Lord’s Supper at ecumenical gatherings;
  - “ providing those services, resources, and programs performed most effectively at a national level, for the growth and development of God’s people;
  - “ adopting a budget for the work of the General Assembly and its entities;
  - “ communicating with the whole church on matters of common concern;
  - “ framing symbols of faith and bearing witness against errors in doctrine or immorality in the church and in the national and global communities;
  - “ resolving judicial matters initiated or brought before it in accordance with the Rules of Discipline;
  - “ deciding controversies brought before it and advising and instructing in cases submitted to it, in conformity with this Constitution;

- “• *authoritatively interpreting the most recent edition of the Book of Order in a manner binding on the whole church, in accordance with the provisions of G-6.02;*
- “• *establishing and maintaining an office of the Stated Clerk;*
- “• *setting up the interactive structures (committees, boards, agencies, and the like) needed to implement its mission, and employing and overseeing the administrative staff of the General Assembly; and*
- “• *overseeing the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*”

G-3.0502-.0504 [\*These sections remain unchanged.]

[\*Chapters Four, Five, and Six remain unchanged.]”

### ***Rationale***

#### WHERE CHRIST IS, THERE IS THE CHURCH

The General Assembly Form of Government Task Force has done a highly commendable work in preparing its report and recommendations to the 218th General Assembly (2008). The work of the task force is a critically important step for the PC(USA) to take at this time.

The origins of Presbyterian polity and form of government lie in the Reformation marks of the true Church as spelled out in the majority of the confessions found in the *The Book of Confessions* (7 documents out of 11). In those documents, the marks of the true Church are participatory—where Christ is, there is the Church (*ubi christus, ibi ecclesia*). The marks are not instrumentalist—where the church is, there is Christ (*ubi ecclesia, ibi christus*).

This overture addresses this watershed issue of theology in the Presbyterian Form of Government, and seeks to bring the Revised Form of Government proposed by the General Assembly’s Form of Government Task Force more closely in line with the core theology of the PC(USA) confessions, while serving all sides of the church and the objectives of the proposed revision. A general rationale for this overture is followed by rationales for specific amendments to the text of the Foundations and the Revised Form of Government.

#### *General Rationale*

##### 1. *Church as Participation in the Mission of God*

Mission is the focus of the overture as it is in the draft revision of the Form of Government (DRFOG). Participation in the mission of God is the watershed issue in revising the PC(USA) Form of Government. The issue presents itself in terms of the contrasting statements. “Where Christ is, there is the Church” and “Where the Church is, there is Christ.”

“*Where Christ is, there is the Church*” puts Christ first, defining the Church by its participation in Christ. Participation in Christ (Emmanuel, God with us) focuses attention on Who God is (Triune), where God is (presence, location), what God is doing (creating/re-creating, reconciling, redeeming, loving), and what structures of community fit the profile of a people in covenant relationship with the triune God. The structures have to be specific, but, because they are centered in God and not in themselves, they point to the Church as a dynamic moment whose very being emerges in the activity of worship, where Christ stands forth in his own self-definition and in Spirit engages the worshiping community directly. Such a moment cannot be domesticated, channeled, or rendered automatic.

“*Where the Church is, there is Christ*” starts with the Church and defines Christ by his connection with the Church which embodies him. The language of embodiment leads to a very close identity—potentially an over-identification—of God/Christ with the people and structures of the Church, as in “the Church is the people,” or “the Church is where the true believers (or leaders) are.” The organization, beliefs, behavior, and practices of the people thus come to demonstrate the reality of God and a new humanity both now and in the future. Such a view of the Church favors a congregational or Episcopal more than a Presbyterian form of church government.

*This overture recommends that the PC(USA) Form of Government envision the Church as the gift of participation in the life and mission of the triune God.* Central to this stance are the marks for the true Church, as stated in *The Book of Confessions* of the PC(USA).

##### 2. *The Marks of the True Church*

The Form of Government needs to coordinate three different sets of marks for the true Church. They come from three different time periods, and all are represented in the *The Book of Confessions* of the PC(USA).



The historical basis of Presbyterian government is the Reformation era, 1500–1650, which identifies the marks of the true Church in this way:

a. The Church is the place where the Word is purely preached, the Sacraments are rightly administered, and ecclesiastical discipline is exercised (The Scots Confession, The Second Helvetic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, The Westminster Confession of Faith, The Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms, plus The Theological Declaration of Barmen, which builds on the Reformation marks of the Church).

All three Reformation marks set forth Jesus Christ at the center of the Church's life, her worship. The Word preached and the Sacraments administered redefine the lives of the worshipers in terms of the presence and activity of Christ (Emmanuel, God with us). With the hearing of faith, a gift of the Spirit, Christians will follow wherever Christ leads. There, at the center of the worshiping community, Christ himself stands, gathers people together, governs them directly, scatters them in their daily lives, and goes before them at every step of the way. Gathered or scattered, the Church participates in the presence and activity of Jesus Christ. "Where Christ is, there is the Church (*ubi christus, ibi ecclesia*)" ably describes the dynamics of this foundation for polity. Every Presbyterian *Book of Order* to date begins with a strong affirmation of Jesus Christ as the only Lord, Savior, and Head of the Church. Presbyterian polity from the Reformation until now is built around this core.

Mission is the primary mark of the true Church for the Modernist/Pietist era, from 1650 to 1950/the present.<sup>1</sup>

b. The true Church exists when it is engaged in mission (The Confession of 1967 and A Brief Statement of Faith).

Mission here includes both evangelism/foreign missions and social action/peace with justice. Most Presbyterians regard evangelism and social action as companions, never one without the other. For The Confession of 1967, both aspects of mission fall under the heading of reconciliation, reflecting "God's reconciling work in Jesus Christ" (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.06). In the Reformed tradition as a whole, mission fits well as the Church's participation in what God is doing.

In the larger milieu of Modernism/Pietism today, however, mission is most often understood under the rubric, "where the Church is, there is Christ," as mentioned above. The understanding is often so close to us that we cannot see its negative side. For many contemporary Christians, the Church is the instrument of God's work in, to, and for the world. Because the instrument embodies God (God/Christ in us, or the Spirit dwelling in us), God works through Christians individually and collectively who then do God's work on God's behalf. Accordingly, the Church is measured by how well it serves as a useful means for delivering the Gospel and transforming the World as it transforms the lives of people. Attention falls heavily on human capacities, devices, accomplishments, results, and accountability for these assigned tasks. We are, as the saying goes, "the hands and feet of God," with the strong inference that, "if we don't do God's work (or mission), it won't get done."

The early Church, 100–600, also discerned several marks of the true Church, and these, too, are represented in the *The Book of Confessions* of the PC(USA).

c. The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic (The Apostles' Creed and The Nicene Creed).

The most important of these marks historically is "apostolic." Since Cyprian (200–258), Bishop of Carthage, what the Early Church meant by apostolic is that the Christian Church is authentic only if the current bishops or leaders of the Church are direct descendents from the disciple-apostle Peter (the doctrine of apostolic succession). That is, embodied in the leaders of the Church, Christ acts definitively through them as authentic instruments of God. They are the bearers of the true Church. Taken together, these marks of the true Church led both the Eastern and Western branches of the Christian Church to adopt more-or-less centralized, Episcopal forms of government. Left un-interpreted, these marks are plainly at odds with the Presbyterian Form of Government, but close to the broader Modernist/Pietist accent on the instrument.

This overture recommends that the PC(USA) Form of Government retain not only the focus on mission from the Modernist/Pietist era, but also the distinctively participatory dynamics of the Reformation marks of the true Church, and interpret the Early Church marks accordingly. The changes proposed by this overture attempt to carry out this recommendation.

### 3. *Participatory and Instrumentalist Approaches to Mission Considered*

The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20) brings out the contrast between the instrumentalist and participatory approaches. For the participatory approach, verse 18b refers to Christ's exercise of his own divine authority and power throughout the universe, "in heaven and on earth." The conclusion, "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (20b), reinforces the point that Christ is the primary actor at all times. Presumably Christ keeps his own commandment. So, the actual commission (19–20a) instructs not only what the Church is to do but also what Christ himself is doing. For the Church and individual Christians to engage in mission is thus to commune with Jesus Christ, sharing in God's mission of making disci-

ples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the triune God, and keeping the commandments that circumscribe the place where the living God abides. The aim of the Christian life, accordingly, is not to make humans good and righteous out of themselves, but to put them in fellowship with God, who is good and righteous altogether. The aim of mission is not to do God's work in place of God, but to share in that work and commune with God in the process, "glorifying and enjoying God forever."

For the instrumentalist approach, verse 18b says the authority and power of Jesus Christ have been delegated to the instrument. The Great Commission (19–20a), then, is Christ's directive to his followers in a sequence of "command and obey." Instrumentalists thus set themselves to do what is required, carry the Gospel to the nations, transform people into faithful disciples, baptize them on behalf of God, and teach them to do what the commandments require. The aim of the Christian life, accordingly, is to make humans good and righteous out of themselves, so that they can stand on their own two feet before a righteous God in the end. Christ accompanies and blesses these efforts (20b).

Can we combine the instrumentalist and participatory approaches to mission? The instrument can surely participate in what God is doing, and the participant can surely be an instrument of God if God wills it. But we probably cannot make ourselves instruments of God on our own, intentionally. As sinners, even forgiven sinners, we don't need God at all if we can make ourselves pure channels of goodness, grace, love, mercy, truth, or whatever. To be instruments of God's mission is God's singular gift to us, not our gift to ourselves. The fundamental gift is participation in what God is doing. That's why the Reformed tradition historically leans toward participation as the more appropriate approach to mission. Participation lets God be God and humans be human, without confusing the two. But participation still makes the Gospel indispensable and God always near us, while keeping God's mission and glory front and center.

The instrumentalist approach to mission in the Modernist/Pietist era raises some serious questions that Presbyterians in the Reformed tradition cannot avoid. To name a few:

a. The task of transforming the world and everyone/thing in it, sets the Church to ruling the world on behalf of God. (Is the Church really about ruling the World?) Such a reach for power threatens to subvert the Gospel and the Church from within.

b. Making the instrument an embodiment of God encourages a self-righteousness that overreaches itself (Doesn't God in me make me loving and good out of myself? Can I sin if God is embodied in me?) and sets up comparisons and finger-pointing that disrupt authentic Christian community (Who has more of God embodied within, who less? Who is better, who worse? Who is "better" qualified to rule?)

c. Doing God's work on behalf of God invites over-identifying God with the instrument (Where does God leave off and the instrument begin, and vice versa?), perhaps even an idolatry of the instrument (Isn't whatever I do really God doing it, if God is in me working through me?).

d. The instrumentalist approach to mission reduces everything Christian to a useful means of something else, for example: Jesus Christ the useful means of revelation and/or way of salvation, Scripture the useful means of revelation, our faith in Christ the useful means to our personal salvation, salvation the useful means to immortality, love and goodness the useful means to demonstrate our transformation by God, the Gospel the useful means for meeting human needs, worship the useful means for evangelism or motivating and indoctrinating God's people, Church the useful means for doing God's work in/to the World, etc. (Isn't God—and life with God—an end in itself and not a useful means to something else?).

e. The instrumentalist approach to mission is highly directive, not to say authoritarian. Having been delegated God's authority and power, the instrument assumes full responsibility for doing it, carrying out God's commands, bearing the Gospel wherever it needs to go, and enforcing God's will at every turn (Isn't that the obedient response God requires a faithful instrument to perform? But, then, can we avoid turning the Christian life into "works righteousness"?).

By contrast, the participatory approach to mission revolves around discerning God's mission activity at the present moment, articulating God's Word boldly, and living into God's activity faithfully. Front and center for the Church is the energetic vision of Christ present at the center of the Church's life, her worship, actively governing the mission of the Christian community, both gathered and scattered, and all of it in the context of the faith—the work of the Spirit—that unites us with Christ. For this reason, much of the Presbyterian Form of Government is going to deal with worship, membership and the ordering of the community, the cultivation and nurturing of a faith community, and the preparation, processing, and handling of ministers of Word and Sacrament for the conduct of worship.

A participatory approach to mission, however, has to avoid tunnel vision that does not see beyond itself. The Church has to look for the triune God alive and at work throughout the universe. To follow Christ, the Church has to discern Christ both at the center of the Church and at the center of the world. One thing is sure: the faith that unites us with Christ will drive us to ask what God is doing at every moment, situation, stage, and experience of life (*fides quarens intellectum*). The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at its best is not only a community where faith is awakened (by the Holy Spirit!) but also a community of engagement and discourse, where people of faith together seek, explore, discern (also by the Spirit!), and pursue, the presence

and activity of Christ all around us. With such a radical focus on Christ beyond itself as well as within, Church takes on the character of an event instead of an institution. It's worth asking what additional polity structures might help secure an outward focus for the Church's mission.

These considerations reinforce the overture's recommendation that the PC(USA) Form of Government envision the Church as a participation in the mission of the triune God, combining the best insights of the Reformed tradition with the Modernist/Pietist accent on mission.

#### 4. *The Risks of an Instrumentalist Form of Government at This Time*

The PC(USA) risks a great deal if it adopts an instrumentalist form of government at this time.

First, taking the instrumentalist option, the PC(USA) will turn away from most, if not all, of the confessions in its own *Book of Confessions*. The confessions talk mainly about the sovereign activity of the triune God, in Christ, creating, sustaining, redeeming, providing for, reconciling all creation, both in time and at the end of time. The confessions also talk about the Christian faith and life mainly as a participation in what God is doing. Turning away from our confessions sets up a crisis of identity and vision going forward, already evident in some quarters of the Church.

Second, taking the instrumentalist option, the PC(USA) will embrace the approach of the recent past, the era of Modernism/Pietism (1650–1950/present). By all accounts (both Church and non-church) we are entering a new era (Post-Modern?), and the old era is coming to an end as we change to the new one. If the PCUSA defines itself in instrumental terms going forward, it will face the future with God by locking itself into its own immediate past, fixed on its own instrumentality.

Therefore, the overture recommends amending the draft revision of the Form of Government (DRFOG) so as to blend the Modernist/Pietist commitment to mission with the Reformation accent on participation in Christ. The result, visible in the changes proposed, is both deeply mission-minded and distinctively Reformed. Above all, the combination positions the PC(USA) to enter the future looking forward instead of backward, with its eyes on Christ and God's mission in our time.

#### 5. *The Changes to the DRFOG Proposed by the Overture*

The DRFOG does give prominence to all three sets of marks for the true Church, in both the Foundations and the Form of Government. However, as is, the DRFOG repeatedly misses the participatory dynamics of the Reformation marks (see F-1.0303) and renders them as mere useful instruments of mission (see G-3.0201a–c, G-3.0301a–c, G-3.0401a–c, G-3.0501a–c). Further, the DRFOG repeatedly uses obviously instrumentalist language (e.g., “the Church is the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all humanity”: see F-3.0301, F-1.0302a–c, F-3.0304, G-3.0201, G-3.0301, G-3.0401, and G-3.0501). These sections most often borrow their language from the current *Book of Order*, Chapter 3, The Mission of the Church. This chapter on mission was inserted into the *Book of Order* at the reunion of 1983 and has no precedent in the *The Book of Order* of the UPCUSA, *The Book of Church Order* of the PCUS, or any other literature concerning Presbyterian church government.

#### 6. *Rationale for Proposed Changes to the Foundations*

##### a. *Foundations, Chapter 1, The Mission of the Church*

##### (1) *F-1.01, God's Mission*

- The word “one” is deleted (stricken) because “triune God” already includes oneness.
- The phrase “in the world” is deleted (stricken) because it isn't needed: Jesus Christ is Lord over all creation, which is bigger than “the world.” The language of Church and World belongs to the Modernist/Pietist concern for who's saved (the Church) and who isn't saved (the world) and the Church's mission to the world accordingly. This change will be proposed wherever Church-world language is found in the DRFOG.

- The italicized portion attempts to spell out the title, “God's Mission,” and the lead sentence, that God's mission gives substance and form to the Church, by developing what God's mission or activity is. The deleted (stricken) portion, on the other hand, speaks more about the Church's self-perceptions and response to God's call than about what God does to shape the Church. This is one of the differences between a participatory and an instrumentalist approach to the Church.

##### (2) *F-1.03, The Marks of the True Church [~~The Calling of the Church~~]*

- The title is changed to reflect what the section actually talks about, namely, the marks of the true Church (DRFOG F-1.0302–.0304).

- Much of the section (DRFOG F-1.0301, *The Church Is the Body of Christ*, and F-1.0302a, *The Apostolicity of the Church*) is verbatim from the current *Book of Order*, Chapter 3, *The Mission of the Church*. As is, the section builds on an embodiment notion of the Church and the Church's role as God's instrument for reaching and transforming the world. For that reason, the overture offers large substitutions to highlight what God is doing and our participation therein.

- The overture F-1.0301 simply makes transparent the obvious, that the different marks belong to different confessions and different time frames. The titles of overture F-1.0302–.0304 carry out that transparency. The overture deliberately considers the marks of the true Church in reverse historical order, beginning with the one that emphasizes mission (the Six Great Ends)—the intended accent of the DRFOG—then the Reformation marks restated to make them participatory, then the Early Church marks reinterpreted as participation in what God is doing.

- It should be said that much of DRFOG F-1.303 (*The Notes of the Reformed Church*) is a close quote from *The Confession of 1967* (*The Book of Confession*, 9.31), which gives the Reformation marks of the true Church an instrumentalist spin. The Confession of 1967 vacillates on the issue before us (sometimes “Christ in us,” sometimes “us in Christ”) but overall presents itself in a Trinitarian framework as participation in what God is doing.

- At several points, the DRFOG presents the language of call-response, notably in F-1.3002c (*The Holiness of the Church*) and in G-1.0301–.0303. The call is from God. But if the response is presented as the human side of a transaction with God, it most often results in some form of works righteousness, i.e., the response is what we have to do in order to be good enough before God. The DRFOG tries to avoid that outcome under “holiness” by giving credit to the Spirit and the means of grace at work upon us. The bottom line—very close to the instrumentalist position of the Spirit within us working through us—is that we are “to strive for the purity, righteousness, and truth” God expects of us. The overture changes avoid the dilemma altogether by putting holiness—including repentance—as a participation in Christ's righteousness, a function of God's mercy and love drawing us into Christ.

- The overture adds a section, F-1.0305 (*Commitment to the Marks of the Church*), which seems appropriate, both to acknowledge their value for shaping the PC(USA) Form of Government and to blend the three sets.

b. *Foundations, Chapter 2, The Church and Its Confessions*

- Chapter 2 of the DRFOG is essentially the same as Chapter 2 of the current *Book of Order* (*BO*). As stated, this chapter has three major deficiencies, which the overture proposal attempts to remedy:

—The chapter needs a transparent section on the historical origin, enduring truth value, and on-going role of the confessions for a confessional church (PC(USA)) laboring in a basically non-confessional church culture today, namely, the late Modernist-Pietist era of the Church.

—The chapter subordinates the truth value of the Reformation and Reformed confessions to the ecumenical creeds so completely, that it turns the majority of PC(USA) confessions—everything other than *The Nicene Creed* and *The Apostles' Creed*—into more-or-less sectarian documents.

—The current way of utilizing the confessions, to reduce them to a list of essential doctrines, apply them to contemporary Church realities, and insist on agreement more-or-less, has become highly problematic. The list of essential doctrines looks and sounds like a separate confession among the confessions. The essential doctrines will always be applied selectively, based on what is relevant to the contemporary Church. The insistence on agreement imposes a non-confessional standard of uniformity that belies the personal joy of confessing the core truth of the Gospel along with the unity such acts if confession bring. Agreement sets up a comparison of more-or-less that divides instead of unifying. What is needed is a way to elevate the meaning of a shared confession and make the historical dimensions of each confession work for instead of against the Church.

- How do the confessions of the PC(USA) help us participate in the mission of the triune God? The overture proposal takes seriously what God has already done in leading our forebears to confess the core truth of the Gospel when the Gospel was at risk in particular times and places of history. Participating in God's mission thus entails our sharing the truth of the Gospel together with the Christians who were beset, in their own historical context. The aim here is more than mere agreement moving toward a cookie-cutter uniformity, or a cut-and-paste list of essential doctrines that trigger endless disagreements and wooden applications. The aim is an authentic unity and a fellowship in the Gospel that arises when we make a common confession of its truth with other people at another time and place. This approach to the confessions stills relies upon the specific formulations of each confession, which makes them a vital part of a constitution. The approach also takes seriously how the confessions shape us personally within the Reformed tradition. They are part of a living enterprise of engaging (confessing) the Gospel at its core, hence an on-going participation in the mission of the triune God. Therefore, the antidote proposed by the overture is

—add a new section (F-2-01) at the beginning on the origin of confessional statements;

—modify and reverse the order of the last three sections without either becoming sectarian or diminishing our ecumenical commitments; and

—make some other refinements as seem appropriate.

- The focus on confessing the Gospel in historical context changes the purpose of confessional statements somewhat (Overture F-2.02, DRFOG F-2.01). Even taken all together, the confessions do not in fact comprise a comprehensive study of systematic theology. They relate to the specific points of the Gospel that were at risk in particular historical moments. The choice of confessions to include gives the church its identity and shapes its character over time. That gives the confessions a stronger, functional role in the life of the church than to “summarize the essence of Reformed Christian tradition.” The confessions can and should assist in worshipping God, join Christians together in a unity of the Gospel centered in Jesus Christ, help the Church clarify its doctrine when needed (“guiding the church to sound doctrines”), and help interpret Scripture.

- The overture does not propose major changes to the section on confessions as subordinate standards (Overture F-2.03, DRFOG F-2.02).

- For the next three sections, the Overture F-2.04-.06 (DRFOG F-2.03-.05) uses a common pattern of statement, focused on the central affirmations of the Gospel. At least in the Reformed tradition, a confession is concerned about the universal truth of the Gospel centered in Jesus Christ, not sectarian nuances. To render the confessions otherwise misrepresents them. Furthermore, the truth claims of the Reformed tradition do not contradict those of the Protestant Reformation or of the Church Catholic. Why make it seem as though they do? To make these matters clearer, the overture deals with the Reformed tradition first (F-2.04), the Protestant Reformation second (F-2.05), then the Early Church (F-2.06). The content of the Reformed tradition remains close to the DRFOG statement (and the current *BO*). The content of primary affirmation for the Reformation and the Early Church confessions has been restated for greater accuracy.

- Specifically (Overture F-2.05, DRFOG F-2.04), the Reformation recovered the biblical accent on Jesus Christ as the basis for our salvation and the true head of the Church. The distinctive Protestant doctrine of justification by grace through faith is part of the reform of the Church at this time. The Reformation marks of the true Church were shared by the Anglicans (*Thirty-Nine Articles*), the Lutherans (*Augsburg Confession*), and the Reformed (Calvin, *et al*). For the heart of the Reformation there is no salvation apart from the Christian community, the Church. So the watchwords need to be five, not three, adding Christ alone and Church alone.

- Similarly (Overture F-2.06, DRFOG F-2.03), with the Early Church confessions, what makes them “ecumenical” is the Trinitarian affirmation of the incarnation of God as the human Jesus Christ, which defines Christianity both then and now. While they are biblical, The Nicene Creed and The Apostles’ Creed do not assert the authority of the Scriptures. And Protestants have to reinterpret the marks of the true Church (one, holy, catholic, apostolic) to avoid the Episcopal forms of Church they produced historically (see Overture F-1.0304a–d, DRFOG F-1.0302a–d, and overture rationale). The overture proposal attempts to clarify these matters.

### c. *Foundations, Chapter 3, Principles of Order and Government*

- The overture proposes to change only Section 3.03 (Openness to the Guidance of the Holy Spirit). The Historic Principles of Church Order (3.01), Principles of Presbyterian Government (3.02), and The Constitution of the PC(USA) (3.04) remain as the DRFOG (and the current *Book of Order*) have them. The DRFOG 3.03, however, leans heavily on the instrumentalist Chapter 3 of the current *Book of Order (BO)*: DRFOG 3.0304 is a direct quote from *BO* G-3.0401. Furthermore, the titles of this section of the DRFOG (3.03) don’t always match the contents of the subsections: DRFOG 3.0301 is not really about “heritage and renewal.” The DRFOG 3.0302 is not really about “ecumenicity.” The DRFOG 3.0303 omits unity when it speaks of “diversity and inclusiveness.” And DRFOG 3.0304 is not really about “openness” so much as inclusiveness (again) and a laundry list of factors (God, the world, being better Christians, the denomination’s own institutional limits, the ecumenical Church) to which the PC(USA) needs to pay attention. Openness, however, is more than a calling or human opportunity; it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. So, the overture proposes major changes to this chapter, beginning with the title, “Continuity and Change.” The changes aim to be specific about where to look for innovation and newness amid habit and where to look for continuity and abiding identity amid change.

- The overture re-titles F-3.0301 as “Humility Before the Lord of the Church” and actually incorporates what the DRFOG F-3.0302 intends, namely, that the Presbyterian Form of Government is not essential to the existence of the Christian Church. It’s not enough for the Presbyterian Form of Government to be faithful to the Bible and proven viable over time. The forms of the Church are submissive ultimately to the Lord of the Church. The humble task of the Church in any age is to discern the will of God as the basis of its participation in God’s mission. Neither the task nor the participation is automatic.

They are themselves the gifts of God, who unites us with Christ and grants us to walk in the Spirit. Emphasizing “transformation by the renewal of our minds” (DRFOG) puts the burden of both the transforming and the discerning on us as instruments.

- The overture re-titles F-3.0302 as “Looking to the Future,” emphasizing the freedom involved when Christians see Christ going before them into the future or even coming from the future to meet them. Looking to the future is a key ingredient of openness to change. With Christ in front of us, we can look forward to the future with enthusiasm, expectation, imagination, etc., certainly without fear.

- The overture modifies the title of F-3.0303 to include unity as well as diversity and inclusiveness. “Inclusiveness” is a flag word for many Christians today, because the Church has at times excluded those who live at the margins of society—the poor, the weak, the sick, the disabled, the uneducated, the homeless, different racial and ethnic groups, etc. Including such Christians in the Church is part and parcel of the Church’s mission (Matt. 25:31–46). However, can a truly diverse community be driven to include those different from themselves without being clear about what they all have in common? What unites Christians is that they belong to Jesus Christ, regardless of any other points of diversity. Our unity in Jesus Christ gives fundamental religious grounds for bridging whatever diversity exists within the Church and making it productive for the mission of God. The overture proposal expands the value of diversity and fully retains the DRFOG concern for inclusiveness. At the same time the overture highlights the vital role of our unity together in Christ.

- The Overture F-3.0304 (“Unity with All Humanity”) replaces the DRFOG section entitled “Openness,” one of the most instrument-laden sections in the DRFOG (taken directly from current *BO* G-3.0401). Focusing on the Church’s unity with all humanity in Christ, the replacement section broadens the Church’s horizon to embrace humans everywhere, the environment, the universe, indeed the whole creation. God’s mission surely has the same, expansive scope. That’s not universalism, but a biblical openness to God, other people, and creation.

## 7. *Rationale for Proposed Changes to the Form of Government*

### a. *Form of Government, Chapter 1, Congregations*

- The overture proposes some verbal changes to DRFOG G-1.0101 (The Mission of the Congregation) and DRFOG G-1.0102 (The Fellowship of the Congregation). The changes make explicit the connection of congregations with the mission of God and their participation together in Christ. Taken out are words and phrases that emphasize the language of instrumentality (through, equipped for, Church and world, call and response).

- The overture proposes a change to DRFOG G-1.02 (The Organizing of a Congregation) to include dissolving as well as organizing by the presbytery.

- The overture proposes changes to DRFOG G-1.03 (The Membership of a Congregation), three of the four sections, along the lines indicated above. But, further, the overture of these sections places a heavy emphasis on demand obedience, obligation, responsibility, accountability, and “must” responses. The Christian faith and life are gifts of joyful participation in the life and mission of the triune God. Gift language calls for a more gracious tone and more explicit connections with God in one’s Church membership. The verbal changes also match this shift to participation.

- The overture proposes further changes to DRFOG G-1.0304 (The Ministry of Ministry of Members), notably, the list of expectations for faithful members. These changes fill out the items in the list and add several items pertaining to mutual prayer, concern, and support among members; engagement with the issues of faith and life; discerning and communing with the triune God at every point in life. Dropped are the instrumentalist duties of “demonstrating a new quality of life” and “responding to God’s activity in the world.”

### b. *Form of Government, Chapter 3, Councils of the Church*

- The overture proposes to change DRFOG G-3.0107 (Administration in Mission), to remove and replace, as needed, the instrumentalist phrase, “should enable the Church to give effective witness in the world to the new reality of God in Jesus Christ.”

- The overture proposes similar changes to DRFOG G-3.02, 3.03, 3.04, and 3.05:

—The overture removes the instrumentalist language and equivalents in each of these sections: “guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation [session, presbytery, synod, General Assembly] is and becomes the sign in and for the world of the new reality God has made available to people in Jesus Christ.”

—The overture recasts the duties/powers of session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly. In the DRFOG they are distributed according to the Reformation marks of the true Church—proclamation of the Word, administration of the Sacraments, exercise of ecclesiastical discipline. The basic idea is sound and makes these marks operational in a highly visible way. But the distribution of various powers/duties of the higher councils to these marks, especially the Sacraments, seems artificial and wooden at times. So, the overture suggests two divisions, worship (including both proclamation and sacraments) and discipleship (the follow-through of hearing/seeing/ discerning Christ at the center of worship).

—The foregoing leads to additional and alternative items for the duties and powers of the several councils. For example, the higher councils also need to make provisions for worship at their meetings; they need to establish and oversee committee and administrative structures; they need to develop mission statements of their own; and other refinements to the duties and powers.

#### Endnote

1. Modernism/Pietism refers to a historical period that dates from 1650, widely regarded as the end of the Reformation era, to 1950, extending perhaps to the present. For many people today, the current era is an era of transition or dramatic change called “Post-Modernism.” The era of Modernism thus includes the Enlightenment of the 18th Century with its deliberate emphasis on human reason and capabilities, and, since then, the dramatic developments in science and technology, political and economic institutions, and historical thinking. The term “Pietism” refers more specifically to the focus of the Christian Church during “Modernism.” The issues of Pietism still dominate the Church today. “Pietism” focuses on the inner self and experiences of the self in relationships with God, other people, and nature. Its main concerns are for salvation or reconciliation, namely, who is (saved), who is not, and by what means humans can become so, hence the accent on the Church’s mission to the World.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-13

*Advice on Item 06-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to disapprove Item 06-13.

#### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution wishes to express appreciation to the Presbytery of Foothills for its exhaustive and painstaking analysis of the proposed Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government. It commends this sort of study to all presbyteries in the belief that a more careful understanding of our polity will lead to wiser and better decisions on the part of the whole church. The ACC advises the assembly to disapprove the overture, however, for two reasons.

1. *The overture departs from the charge given to the task force to preserve the foundations of our polity.*

The original charge to the Form of Government Task Force issued by the 217th General Assembly (2006) states, as its first point, “The new Form of Government shall preserve our foundational polity (perhaps most concisely laid out in the first four chapters of the current Form of Government)” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 366). While there is no constitutional bar to overtures that may seek to change substantively the principles put forth in these chapters, to do so as part of an amendment to a report that itself is bound by such a charge moves the debate outside of the parameters set forth by the originating action of the assembly, and should properly be submitted as a separate overture. The ACC finds the seismic shift in our foundational affirmations proposed by the overture to be unwarranted and unwise at this time.

The ACC also believes that changes to the foundations of our polity of the scope and magnitude proposed by the overture ought to be studied and considered by the whole church over a longer period of time. It was the intent of the originating action of the assembly that any revised Form of Government would be consistent with our current foundations so as not to erode the trust of the church in the work of the assembly. Should the assembly find sufficient warrant to consider the changes envisioned, the ACC advises the committee to refer the overture for further study. This may require amendment to section G-6.0501 of the proposed revised Form of Government so as to consider the overture in a timely manner.

The ACC bases its determination that the overture fails to preserve the foundations of our polity on the finding that the overture seeks to replace or substantively alter several foundations of our polity.

- Section G-2.0000, “The Church and Its Confessions” (F-2.0000) has additions and alterations that change the purpose of our confessions.
- Section G-3.0200, “The Church as the Body of Christ” (F-1.0301) has been omitted.
- Section G-3.0300, “The Church’s Calling” (F-1.0302) has been omitted.

- G-3.0400, “Called to Openness” (F-3.0304) has been omitted.
- G-4.0203, “Visible Oneness” (F-1.0302d) has been omitted.
- G-5.0102f–g portions of “The Meaning of Membership” have been omitted.

The rationale of the overture acknowledges that the purpose of these and other changes is to alter the foundational principles of our polity. The overture makes no mention of the material found in Chapters 4–6 of the proposed revised Form of Government; this advice assumes that these have been retained without amendment by the overture.

2. *The overture proposes a Form of Government that departs from the theological foundations of our polity.*

The omissions and alterations listed above, and others like them, have the effect of substantively changing the theological foundations of our polity. At the core of Item 06-13 is a distinction between two types of ecclesiology, or ways of understanding what the church is called to be and to do. The overture labels these ways of understanding the church “*instrumentalist*” and “*participatory*.”

According to the *instrumentalist* understanding of the church, those who are saved by God’s grace in Christ are called into a unique community that exhibits, in a limited and imperfect way, the kind of life God intends for the future of all creation, and is an instrument of God for sharing that life with the world. By contrast, according to the *participatory* understanding, the church is the community of those who, called by God’s grace, participate in the mission of God in the world. Unlike the instrumentalist understanding, in which what the church *does* emerges from what it *is*, in the participatory understanding, what the church *is* emerges from what it *does*. Put another way, from an instrumental perspective, “Where the Church is, there is Christ,” but from a participatory perspective, “Where Christ is, there is the Church.” The overture proposes that an instrumentalist understanding of the church is ultimately less faithful to our Reformed beliefs because it elevates the church inappropriately and does not take the sinfulness of the church with sufficient seriousness.

The *Book of Order*—particularly the foundational chapters—gives voice to *both* instrumentalist *and* participatory dimensions of the church’s identity and mission. These two are not mutually exclusive; rather, they complement and correct each other in both our polity and our confessions. This is affirmed in the Reformed conviction that the mission of the church is our grateful response to God’s prior act of grace. As the Confession of 1967 puts it, “To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as [God’s] reconciling community” (9.31, cf. 2 Cor. 5:17–20).

*The Book of Confessions* repeatedly affirms that the mission of God in Jesus Christ creates a new social reality, a new community of those whose lives are transformed by the grace of God and who now seek to lead lives which reflect that transformation. The confessions regularly connect God’s creation of the church and the call to the church to bear witness to God’s transforming grace (e.g., *The Book of Confessions* 5.125, 6.142, 8.17, 9.20). Our most recent confession expresses it clearly:

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,  
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,  
and binds us together with all believers  
in the one body of Christ, the Church.

The same Spirit  
who inspired the prophets and apostles  
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,  
engages us through the Word proclaimed,  
claims us in the waters of baptism,  
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,  
and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.

In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. [*The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 54–71, 10.4]

The “missional ecclesiology” presented in the proposed revised “Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” preserves this clear and consistent connection in our confessions between instrumentalist and participatory understandings of the church. For example:

- It begins with the declaration that “the sovereign mission of the one triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—gives substance and form to the Church’s activity in the world,” and adds, “As the Church responds to God’s gracious call, it participates in the divine mission...” (F-1.0101).



- It affirms that Jesus Christ, as Lord and as Head of the Church, *both* calls the Church into being, *and* gives it all that is necessary for its mission to the world. Christ gives to the Church *both* its faith *and* its life, its unity *and* its mission, its order *and* its discipline (F-1.0201ff.).

- It describes the church as “the Body of Christ,” and as such, the church is called *both* to exhibit the new reality revealed in Jesus Christ in which “sin is forgiven ... reconciliation is accomplished ... [and] the dividing walls of hostility are torn down” *and* to undertake its mission as Christ did, “even at the risk of losing its life, trusting in God alone as the author and giver of life, sharing the gospel, and doing those deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in Christ” (F-1.0301).

This last connection between God’s creation of the Church and God’s call to new life expressed in F-1.0301 has, notably, been omitted from the overture, along with the whole of the present G-3.0200.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the approach to Presbyterian government and polity taken by the task force proposal is both consistent with this confessional tradition of the church and reflects the foundational principles of our polity. The present overture, by advancing a participatory ecclesiology to the exclusion of those foundational elements that reflect an instrumentalist ecclesiology, departs from that tradition and those principles.

The rationale for the overture readily acknowledges that the overture intentionally omits instrumentalist elements from the Form of Government. It claims, however, that such a shift is more faithful to the confessional heritage of the church. The ACC notes, however, that the balance between instrumentalist and participatory views of the church in *The Book of Confessions* informs the language of the current chapter two of the Form of Government. This chapter is preserved nearly verbatim in the proposed revised Form of Government, but would be radically changed by the overture.

### 3. *Other concerns*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution is also concerned by the tendency, present in the overture, to redefine the presence of the “true church” in a congregation in terms of the church’s faithfulness to the mission of the church apart from its organic connection to the larger church. In G-1.0101, for example, the overture changes the objective description found in the task force proposal that the congregation *is* “the church,” into a conditional, prescriptive statement of how a congregation *could be* “the church.” We believe this could embolden factions in congregations to assert, based on our own Form of Government, that they should be recognized as the “true church” on their claim that they more faithfully participate in God’s mission.

We are grateful to the Presbytery of Foothills for holding up for the church the importance of a participatory ecclesiology. However, that is only one part of our Presbyterian and Reformed understanding of what it means to be a missional church. Because the overture departs both from the charge to preserve the foundational principles of our polity and from important elements of our theology of the church as found in those principles, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly disapprove the overture.

*The implications of this overture for the proposed revised Form of Government are contained in the text of the overture.*

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 06-13 be answered by the action taken on Item 06-06.

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### **ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-13 regards amending the revised Form of Government (FOG) proposed by FOG Task Force.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

## Item 06-14

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-14. See pp. 21, 22.]

*On Allowing Provisional Amendments to the Book of Order—From the Presbytery of Detroit.*

The Presbytery of Detroit overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Amend the Chapter XVIII of the Form of Government by inserting a new section, “*G-18.0302*,” and renumbering “*G-18.0302*” as “*G-18.0303*,” so that the text shall read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“*G-18.0302*

“*Provisional Amendments*

“*a. The General Assembly may, by a 2/3 vote, appoint up to six volunteer presbyteries, with their congregations, to operate under a proposed amendment to the Book of Order for the purposes of experiment, field-testing, evaluation, and review. These presbyteries shall report their experience and make recommendations to the next biennial General Assembly.*

“*b. The authorization to operate under such provisional amendments shall expire at the next biennial General Assembly, unless that General Assembly sends the same or substantially the same amendment to the presbyteries for their approval. In such case, the volunteer presbyteries shall be authorized to operate under the new proposed amendment until it becomes clear that the presbyteries have not approved the amendment.*

“*c. This provision shall apply only to amendments that would alter the organization, structure, or operation of governing bodies.*

“*G-18.03023*

“*Provisions Not to Be Amended [Rest of text remains unchanged.]*”

### ***Rationale***

Many proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* are very complex and contain potential unforeseen consequences. This is certainly true with the Proposed Form of Government that will be proposed to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

Partly because of the sheer complexity of the New Form of Government, many are seeking to postpone it for some number of years so that the church can better study it.

If it is postponed, it is very possible that there will be little new hard data for the next General Assembly to use in evaluation.

Some have suggested letting a presbytery or two operate under the proposed Form of Government for an interim period, to allow for evaluation. The difficulty is that there is no provision authorizing the General Assembly to allow a governing body to operate under rules not approved by the presbyteries. This amendment will give that authority to the General Assembly by a 2/3 vote.

The effect of this amendment will be:

- Those presbyteries that have operated under the proposal will be able to report to the next General Assembly on what has and has not worked, and to make recommendations for amendments that will improve the proposal or that the proposal be abandoned.
- The rest of the church will be able to observe how well the proposed amendment does or does not work, and the next General Assembly will have better information on which to base its decision.
- In the event the General Assembly does later send the amendment to the presbyteries for their approval, the volunteer presbyteries will be available to the rest of the church for their advice on how it works. The advocacy for the proposed amendment can come from those who have worked with it rather than those who have written it, giving a different kind of credibility. The volunteer presbyteries will be able to respond to questions from experience with it, making it far more likely that the proposed amendment will be approved.

- The overall effect will be to improve the ability of the General Assembly and the presbyteries to discern the will of God in these kinds of complex matters.

This provision is designed to allow consideration of amendments that will affect how governing bodies are organized and conduct their business. It is not designed to test changes that merely allow things not currently allowed or that are prohibited.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-14

*Advice on Item 06-14—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly to disapprove Item 06-14.

#### *Rationale*

Although the proposed constitutional amendment in this overture does not mention the report and recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force, the rationale does make reference to them. Because the impetus for this proposal seems to be an attempt to find a way to use well any time gained by delaying the FOG recommendations, the ACC advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to answer this overture with the answer given to all of the overtures seeking a delay in approving the recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the proposed amendment raises constitutional issues that affect how the Constitution would function as a foundational document of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The amendment proposed in this overture would allow the General Assembly to waive, for the purpose of experimentation, the application of explicit constitutional provisions in certain presbyteries before submitting an amendment to change those provisions to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes.

Second, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the approval of this proposed amendment would insert provisions into our Form of Government that would remain if the recommendations of the Form of Government Task Force are not ultimately adopted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). An additional vote would be needed to remove these provisions.

Third, the text of the overture is unclear as to which functions of the presbytery would be subject to experimentation, what data would be gathered, who would gather the data, and how it would be used. The rationale for the overture states:

This provision is designed to allow consideration of amendments that will affect how governing bodies are organized and conduct their business. It is not designed to test changes that merely allow things not currently allowed or that are prohibited.

The practical implications of this distinction are not clear. The ACC advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the overture should be clarified by identifying with specificity the areas of presbytery or session responsibility that affect how governing bodies are organized and conduct their business and that should accordingly be open to experimentation, as well as by identifying with specificity the areas of presbytery or session responsibility that merely involve things that are not currently allowed or that are prohibited, as not open to experimentation.

Fourth, the overture does not take into account the role and responsibility of synods with respect to presbyteries in areas that some might include in the category of the organization, structure, or operation of the presbyteries. See, for example:

- a. G-9.0404b (consultation with governing bodies above and below),
- b. G-9.0405 (consultation to develop manual of operations),
- c. G-9.0407d(2) (general administrative review),
- d. G-9.0408 (special administrative review),
- e. G-9.0700b (election of executives), G-9.0702 (filling other administrative staff positions), G-11.0303 (presbytery consultation with synod),
- f. G-11.0103c (initiating mission in light of synod's strategy),
- g. G-11.0201 (synod directing presbytery to hold special meeting),

- h. G-11.0304 (budget recommendations from synod),
- i. G-11.0504 (presbytery COMs coordinated by synods), G-12.0102g (synod coordinating presbytery COMs, assisting in calls),
- j. G-12.0102c (synod developing joint plans and objectives with presbyteries),
- k. G-12.0102e (synod facilitating mission of presbyteries, criteria for evaluation),
- l. G-12.0102f (synod consultation with presbyteries), and
- m. G-12.0102n (synod review records of presbyteries).

Moreover, in some areas where presbyteries need to take extraordinary actions, the synod already has an accepted role in concurring with or approving the extraordinary course of action. See, for example, G-14.0472 (extraordinary circumstances for examination of candidates or inquirers) and G-17.0101 (authorizing union presbytery).

Fifth, the overture does not take into account the rights of a minority that does not wish to participate in experimentation within the presbytery. The rights of this minority to expect that their presbytery will organize itself and conduct its business according to the existing provisions of the *Book of Order* should not be infringed in advance of a legitimately adopted amendment.

As an alternative, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that a procedure allowing the whole church to live provisionally under an amendment to the *Book of Order* would be more in keeping with our historic use of our Constitution than a provision that allowed for extraordinary waivers for local experimentation. If the 218th General Assembly (2008) concurs with this overture that the best way to ascertain the workability of the new Form of Government is to put it to work and see whether it meets the needs of the changing circumstances facing the church, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that the following action would accomplish that intent.

a. That the General Assembly submit to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote, the new proposed Form of Government as approved by the General Assembly as the provisional Form of Government for a period to conclude not later than the close of the 221st General Assembly (2014).

b. That, should a majority of the presbyteries vote in favor of the proposed new Form of Government, the ACC in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) be directed to prepare a full evaluation of practice under the new Form of Government for each of the 219th (2010), 220th (2012), and 221st (2014) General Assemblies. The purpose of this evaluation would be to ascertain the impact of practice under the new Form of Government on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in terms of its impact on ministry and mission and the governance of the church. Such evaluation would consider overtures sent to subsequent General Assemblies, and the use of judicial process and ways of dealing with conflictual issues, and shall ascertain how they have been impacted by adoption of a new Form of Government and shall bring a report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

c. That the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly, be directed to maintain a draft of Chapters V–XVIII of the 2008 Form of Government making such editorial changes as may be necessitated by amendments to the new Form of Government during this trial period.

d. That the 218th General Assembly (2008) refer to the 220th General Assembly (2012) a request to appoint a committee to review the biennial evaluations of practice and other available information, and bring a recommendation to the 221st General Assembly (2014) as to whether the new Form of Government shall be retained, or whether the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should return to the 2007–2009 text.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-14

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-14—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-14 regards allowing provisional amendments to the *Book of Order*.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

## Item 06-15

[The assembly answered Item 06-05 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]

*On Revising the FOG Report's G-2.0303b Regarding Temporary Pastoral Relationships—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.*

The Presbytery of Philadelphia overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to replace the language the Form of Government Task Force proposed in the second paragraph of their new G-2.0303b with the language proposed in Additional Recommendation #2 of the Form of Government Task Force's Additional Recommendations and offer the presbyteries the opportunity to vote on the task force's original proposal for the second paragraph of G-2.0303b as the Additional Recommendation. The proposed text for the second paragraph of G-2.0303b, as shown in the Additional Recommendations, is as follows:

“Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A minister of the Word and Sacrament serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with approval of the presbytery. ~~In no circumstance is a minister employed in a temporary pastoral relationship eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor except by a three-fourths vote of the presbytery.~~ *A minister employed in a temporary pastoral relationship other than that of interim pastor may, with the approval of a three-fourths vote of the presbytery, be declared eligible to succeed as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor of the congregation served in a temporary capacity.* Presbyteries may determine that the mission strategy of the presbytery necessitates a further limit on eligibility of temporary pastors to serve as the next installed pastor of a congregation served in a temporary capacity.”

### *Rationale*

The lessons of the past are hard learned: that the role of the interim to address the critical issues of a congregation is severely curtailed when the interim seeks or is lobbied to seek the position for which they are the interim. The interim can no longer stand above the issues if they are seeking to please or otherwise be placed in a light to become the person filling the permanent position. A presbytery will be hard put to say no to a congregation that wants to consider their interim as the person to fill the permanent position. Being known gives the interim an unfair advantage in seeking the position and, if rejected, creates division in the congregation. Neither a presbytery nor its committee on ministry needs to be placed in that light.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-15

*Advice on Item 06-15—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Please see ACC advice at Item 06-02.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-15

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-15—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-15 urges revising the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force report's G-2.0303b regarding the temporary pastoral relationships.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

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## Item 06-16

[The assembly answered Item 06-05 by the action taken on Item 06-01. See pp. 21, 22.]

*On Amending the FOG Report by Retaining All References to the Committee on Representation—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.*

The Presbytery of Philadelphia overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to retain in the Form of Government all references to the Committee on Representation, specifically including but not limited to any sections in the proposed Form of Government that correspond to the current sections G-9.0105; G-9.0106; G-9.0801; G-11.0302; G-12.0301; and G-13.0108.

*Rationale*

At this time, the proposed Form of Government has no mechanism to assure equal representation of people from various, different ethnic groups and people of various abilities. While the proposed Form of Government does insist that there be equal representation, it is entirely too optimistic that presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly will seek equal representation. Racism is not dead in America or in the church. While we may sometimes think that racism is a thing of the past, it is not. Often it is unconscious. We need a group that will hold us to the task of making sure that all people have equal voice in our denomination.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-16**

*Advice on Item 06-16—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Item 06-16 is not clear and consistent with its intent, and advises that the General Assembly answer this overture by its action on Item 06-01, Additional Recommendation C.4., in the report of the Form of Government Task Force.

*Rationale*

Item 06-16 purports to be a request to amend the text of the proposed Form of Government. The ACC has the responsibility to advise the General Assembly on proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* such as the proposal coming from the Form of Government Task Force. Item 06-16 does not propose any specific language to be added to or deleted from the recommendation of the task force. This silence prevents the ACC from fulfilling its responsibility to “examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language” (G-18.0301b).

As submitted the language of the overture is ambiguous in that it makes reference to provisions in the current Form of Government that have no corresponding provisions in the proposed Form of Government.

The ACC advises the assembly that Item 06-01, Additional Recommendation C.4., provides a way to address the need for structures that would advocate for representation, diversity, and inclusiveness consistent with the intention of the drafters of the proposed Form of Government not to mandate specific structures.

Without explaining what it does want the presbytery has made clear that the language of Item 06-01, Additional Recommendation C.4., is not what it seeks. It is possible that what the presbytery is requesting is for there to be a committee on representation mandated for every council of the church beyond the session.

The ACC notes that the Form of Government Task Force was specifically charged to “provide flexibility at all levels, granting authority while permitting governing bodies to develop the structures to carry out their respective missions” (Charge #4 by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to the task force). In service of this charge, the task force has regularly mandated *functions* but left to the discretion of particular councils the *structures* by which those functions are to be accomplished. In so doing, the proposed Form of Government anticipates the possibility that, while all councils shall be committed to principles of diversity and inclusiveness stated in F-3.0303, particular councils may and should find varying ways to live out those principles. Approval of the proposals contemplated in this overture would move our polity in the opposite direction from that contemplated in both the 217th General Assembly (2006)’s charge to the task force and the work of the task force itself.

If the General Assembly feels that provisions as detailed as those in the current G-9.0105, G-9.0106, G-9.0801c, G-11.0302, G-12.0301, and G-13.0108 should be drafted for inclusion in the proposed Form of Government, the ACC advises the assembly that the language in those provisions of the current Form of Government could be amended by replacing every instance of “governing body” with “council,” “governing bodies” with “councils,” “governing or electing body” with “council,” and “governing, electing, or appointing body” with “council,” and the phrase “fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403” with the phrase “implementing the principles of diversity and inclusiveness found in F-3.0303”; by replacing “participation and representation (G-4.0403)” with “diversity and inclusiveness (F-3.0303)”; by striking the phrase “as required by G-9.0105” throughout; by striking the phrase “and in conformity with a churchwide plan for equal employment opportunity. (G-13.0201b)” in G-9.0105e; and by updating the references to G-9.0105a and G-9.0106a in the current G-9.0106.

The second paragraph of the proposed G-3.0104 would be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

~~“[Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation.]”~~

“[a. Each council above the session shall elect a committee on representation, whose membership shall consist of equal numbers of men and women. A majority of the members shall be selected from the racial ethnic groups (such as Presbyterians of African, Hispanic, and Asian descent and Native Americans) within the council, and the total membership shall include persons from each of the following categories:

“(1) majority male membership

“(2) majority female membership

“(3) racial ethnic male membership

“(4) racial ethnic female membership

“(5) youth male and female membership

“(6) persons with disabilities.

“[b. Its main function shall be to advise the councils with respect to their membership and to that of their committees, boards, agencies, and other units in implementing the principles of diversity and inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church.

“[c. The committee on representation shall serve both as an advocate for the representation of racial ethnic members, women, different age groups, and persons with disabilities, and as a continuing resource to the particular council in these areas. The committee on representation shall review the performance of its own council in these matters and shall report annually to it and to the next higher council with recommendations for any needed corrective action. The committee on representation shall consult with the nominating committee of its own council.

“[d. Prior to nomination or appointment of racial ethnic members to committees, boards, agencies, or other units, the committee on representation shall consult with the appropriate racial ethnic membership through a person or persons designated by that racial ethnic membership. In situations where racial ethnic membership is low, the committee on representation of each council shall consult with racial ethnic members, sessions, nominating committees, and persons designated by national racial ethnic membership to discover potential racial ethnic members of such body and to determine achievable representation. Prior to nomination or appointment of women to the above agencies, the committee on representation shall consult with the appropriate constituencies of women through a person or persons designated by those constituencies.

“[e. The committee on representation shall advise the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of diversity and inclusiveness (F-3.0303).

“[f. The committee on representation shall not, in any council, be merged with any other committee or designated as a subcommittee of any other committee.

“[g. Exceptions to the provisions of G-3.0104a requiring a majority of the members to be selected from racial ethnic groups shall be allowed by a council only if it is unable to secure the participation or representation of the necessary persons, and this fact shall be made a part of the official record of the council. No exception is permitted to the requirement that each council above the session elect a committee on representation.

“[h. An exception under G-3.0104g may be allowed for up to one year by council action at a meeting. The approval of such exception shall be promptly reported by the stated clerk to the next higher council through its stated clerk and committee on representation, which committee shall monitor the lower council and its committee on representation during the period of the exception.

“[i. The nominating committee shall consult, at least annually, with the committee on representation of its own council. If the committee on representation of that council has been granted an exception under the provisions of G-3.0104g, the committee on representation of the next higher council shall be invited to participate in that consultation.]”

The following language would be added as a new paragraph at G-3.0309:

“[G-3.0309

“[The presbytery’s committee on representation shall advise presbytery’s nominating committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation and shall regularly inform the presbytery of its progress toward implementing the principles of diversity and inclusiveness found in F-3.0303.]”

The following language would be added as a new paragraph at G-3.0408.

“[G-3.0408

“Each synod shall establish a committee on representation, which shall advise synod’s nominating committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The committee on representation shall report at least biennially to synod progress toward implementing the principles of diversity and inclusiveness found in F-3.0303.]””

The following language would be added as a new paragraph at G-3.0505.

“[G-3.0505

“The General Assembly shall establish a permanent Committee on Representation, which shall advise the General Assembly Nominating Committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation shall report to each meeting of the General Assembly (other than special or adjourned meetings) regarding progress toward implementing the principles of diversity and inclusiveness found in F-3.0303.]””

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-16**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-16—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 06-16 urges revising the Form of Government (FOG) Task Force report’s G-3.0104 regarding committees to advocate for diversity.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 06-02.

**Appendix A**

**Unedited Comments from Subcommittees**

1. Foundations of Presbyterian Polity

Some consider the current 1-4 chapters as being so well respected in broad areas of reformed faith. Some consider the theology and polity as especially well stated in these four chapters and would not want to set up a new section called “Foundations of Presbyterian Polity.”

2. F-1.0302b

Delete “all genders and ages “ and use “both genders and all ages”  
Seems reasonable

3. F-1.01

Author’s comment: “In the foundation F-101 God’ Mission should be expanded to include what is in G 30101a. The absence of the theological perspective of the Book of Order reference is concerning and would improve the focus on mission that nFOG proposes.

4. 1.0302c

Replace “work with witness; replace “through scripture” with “in scripture”

5. F-1.01

Strike the first sentence of the first paragraph of F 1.01. Thought is that the doctrine of creation needs to precede starting with mission. Thought is that second sentence is the better starting place.

6. F-1.01.02

Replace “Word” with “in the Word of scripture”

7. F-1.02.03

Remove “in so far as” in the second sentence which is directly quoted from the Book of Order

8. F-1.0302b



Replace “for” and insert “to”

9. F-1.0302c

Replace “suffering” with “suffering and redemptive love”

10. F-1.0302c

After “Sin of the World” and “Forgiveness is...” add “a gift to be received through faith

11. F-1.01

Title seems presumptive to say “God’s mission” instead of “the Church and its mission” Seems more Reformed to not claim absolutely to know God’s mission.

12. F-101

Take out “...the sovereign mission of the...” to allow that we do not know exactly what God’s mission is. Strike “impoverished.” and just use “poor.”

13. F-1.0201

Strike “authority” and use “power.” Add “who raised Christ from the dead and set him above all rule and authority, all power and dominion, and every name that is named.”

14. F-1.0202

Add, “exercising his authority by the ministry of women and men for the establishment and extension of his kingdom.” Leaving this statement out reduces Christ’s mission.

15. F-1.0203

Use “his” instead of “the” in reference to the Church. Focus on the possessive. Use “officers,” to apply to order and discipline.

16. F-1.0205

Add whole paragraph, “Jesus came to seek and to save the lost; in his life and death for others, God’s redeeming love for all people was made visible and in the resurrection of Jesus Christ there is the assurance of God’s victory over sin and earth and the promise of God’s continuing presence in the world.” Restore G- 3.0102”. Section needs a clearer Title to reflect the content of the section on the foundation of the church.

17. F-1.0205

Strike from “reconciliation....another” and add life and death to redeem all people. In the resurrection of Jesus Christ there is the assurance of God’s victory over sin and death and the promise of god’s continuing presence in the world.”

18. F-1.0302a

Add to start second paragraph: The church is called to tell the good news of salvation a the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ as the only Savior and Lord.” which is taken from G-3.0300a

19. F-1.0302

add “and” at end of paragraph starting “demonstrating...”

20. F-1.0302c

After “sin of the world” add, “Forgiveness is a gift to be received through faith.”

21. F-1.0301

The Church “as” the Body of Christ.

Sin is forgiven”;

Reconciliation is accomplished”; and”

22. F-1.0302

Two places keep BOO language G-30300c3b and c: do not take out “and the powerless”

23. F-1.030203c

Do not take out “Fear” nor “hunger, and injustice”

Key:“(...)” – proposed language to delete

“.....” – proposed language to add

To Recommend to Full Committee include in comments:

72) Move to strike the “Foundation of Presbyterian Polity” and insert the four chapters of the existing, current Form of Government. **\*We recommend study of both possibilities as deserving of consideration as there are significant feelings on our committee in support of both possibilities.\***

16) That all instances of “Ministers of Word and Sacrament” be struck and replaced with “Teaching Elder.” **\*We recommend - Concern is about consistency within the document and stimulating continuing conversation about what is the meaning of ordination.\***

To Recommend to the Full Committee not include in comment:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->35) <!--[endif]-->F-2.01 The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ... they equip the church for its work and proclamation. The creeds and confessions of this church (arose in response to particular circumstances) and reflect a particular stance within the history of God’s people. **\*We do not recommend – intent seems implicit in the text.\***

<!--[if !supportLists]-->49) <!--[endif]-->**Withdrawn**

36) F-2.02 “*These confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him. While confessional standards are subordinate to the Scriptures, they are, nonetheless, standards. They are not lightly drawn up or subscribed to, nor may they be ignored or dismissed. The church is prepared to instruct, counsel with, or even to discipline one ordained who seriously rejects the faith expressed in the confessions. Moreover, a more exacting amendment process is required to change the confessions of the church than is required to change the Constitution in matters of government, worship, or discipline. Yet the church, in obedience to Jesus Christ, is open to the reform of its standards of doctrine as well as of governance. The church affirms **Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei**, that is, ‘The church reformed, (always to be reformed) always reforming according to the Word of God’ and the call of the Spirit. \*We do not recommend – present text is accurate translation.\**

7) F-2.02 “*These confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him. While confessional standards are subordinate to the Scriptures, they are, nonetheless, standards. They are not lightly drawn up or subscribed to, nor may they be ignored or dismissed. The church is prepared to instruct, counsel with, or even to discipline one ordained who seriously rejects the faith expressed in the confessions. Moreover, a more exacting amendment process is required to change the confessions of the church than is required to change the Constitution in matters of government, worship, or discipline. Yet the church, in obedience to Jesus Christ, is open to the reform of its standards of doctrine as well as of governance. The church affirms **Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei**, that is, ‘The church reformed, always to be reformed according to the Word of God’ (and the call of the Spirit). \*We do not recommend – present text commends Trinitarian understanding.\**

8) F-2.02 “*These confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, (as the Scriptures bear witness to him) to whom the Scriptures bear witness. While confessional standards are subordinate to the Scriptures, they are, nonetheless, standards. They are not lightly drawn up or subscribed to, nor may they be ignored or dismissed. The church is prepared to instruct, counsel with, or even to discipline one ordained who seriously rejects the faith expressed in the confessions. Moreover, a more exacting amendment process is required to change the confessions of the church than is required to change the Constitution in matters of government, worship, or discipline. Yet the church, in obedience to Jesus Christ, is open to the reform of its standards of doctrine as well as of governance. The church affirms **Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei**, that is, ‘The church reformed, always to be reformed according to the Word of God’ and the call of the Spirit. \*We do not recommend – present wording is adequate.\**

37) F-2.05 “*In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to this central affirmation of God’s sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:*

*The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;*

*Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;*

*A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God’s creation; and*

*The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.*

**\*We do not recommend – this section is a verbatim copy from current Form of Government which does not include “and”; and the intent of the paragraph does not require “and.”**

Motion 38 – F-3.01 Historic principles of Church Order

The Presbyterian system of government calls for continuity with and faithfulness to the heritage that lies behind the contemporary church. In setting . . .

-Do not concur with this recommendation. This suggests that “continuity with and faithfulness” is not consistent with a church that is reforming. The proposals set forth in the nFOG does not deviate from the Book of Order

Motion 39 – F-3.0102 Right of Self Determination

Change Right of Self-determination to Corporate Judgment

-Note the change in title but suggest a third title be considered to better reflect the content of the paragraph.

Motion 40 - F-3.0105 Mutual Forbearance

To restore the original title

-Do not concur with this recommendation.

Motion 41 – F 3.0106 Right of Election of Officers

Election by the People

This would restore the old title.

-This title is more descriptive of the process and we recommend concurrence with this.

Motion 42 – F-3.02 and F-3.0201

F-3.02 Add “The historic” to the beginning of the title

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->-No advice

F-3.0201 Add

The several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church.

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->-Do not concur with this suggested change

Motion 43 – F-3.0202

Add: The Presbyterian Church (USA) reaffirms, within. . .

-Do not concur with this recommendation. Most of the information mentioned is in the new FOG in a more understandable form.

Motion 44 – F-3.0203 Gathered in Councils

-Do not concur with this recommendation. Historic information is not needed in the new Form of Government.

Motion 45 – F-3.0209 General Authority of Councils

Add: at the end: The jurisdiction of each council is limited . . . with powers not mentioned for either it or a higher -level council . . .

-Do not concur because that would change our present polity. Power does not devolve to the lowest council.

Motion 46 – F-3.0302

Several changes suggested that would change this section back to the former Book of Order

-Do not concur. This group prefers the newer language.

Motion 47 – F-3.0303 Diversity and Inclusiveness

Several changes starting with the second sentence.

-Do not concur with this motion. We prefer the new language.

Motion 48 – F-3.0304 Openness

The Church

. . . to more fundamental obedience. . . .

usefulness of these forms to God's activity in the world; and

-Concur with changing the first church to a capital "C" to indicates the Church universal

-Do not concur with changing to "fundamental"

-There is inconsistency with grammar throughout this document in the use of a conjunction at the end of a list

Motion 52 – F-3.0305 Foundational Statements:

The statements contained in this section, "The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity" describe the ecclesiological and historical commitments on which the polity of the PC (USA) rests. Provisions of any part of this constitution are to be interpreted in light of the whole constitution. Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions."

-Concur with this addition

F-3.0202

Insert after first sentence. While membership in a church is based on a profession of faith in Christ, the requirements for officers are distinct and particular.

\*\*\*\*\*

G -3.0108 be amended by inserting a period after the word society, and deleting the remainder of the sentence.

Comments of G-2.0000 Ordered Ministry, Commissioning, and Certification

G-2.0102

Stick with "ordered ministries" instead of "permanent offices"

G-2.0103b

Beyond the charge of the TF; we respect that limitation for ourselves

G-2.0302a(6)

Strike all of (6)

G-20303a

Stick with permissive succession of associate pastors (Committee was divided on this item) 4-1

G-2.0303b

Stick with permissive call of temporary pastoral relations (Committee was divided on this item) 5-1

G-2.0304a(1)

Stick with proposed requirement for majority vote ILO current requirement for 3/4ths vote

G-2.0406

"Celebrate" ILO "administer"

G-2.0502

Proposed text is sufficiently permissive

G-3.0108

Motions 55 and 73.

Concur with motions 55 and 73.

Both strike the option to store records in places other than presbytery-owned facilities.

Motion 73 adds “or in a temperature and humidity controlled environment of a seminary of the PCUSA.”

G-3.0404

Motion 56

Concur with motion 56.

Amends 3.0404 to read as follows:

Synods may decide, with approval of a two-thirds majority of its presbyteries, to reduce the function of a synod. In no case shall synod function be less than the provision of judicial process and administrative review or the work of presbyteries (g-3.0401c).

G-3.0501c

Motion 70

Concur with motion 70.

Amends 3.0501c to read, “. . . in accordance with the provisions of G-6.02; or through a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in a remedial or disciplinary case (the most recent interpretation of the *Book of Order* shall be binding).”

3.0107

Concur with spirit of amendment that notes “a material injustice...obliging presbyteries to “make up shortages” in session per capita payments. This changes 3.0107 to read, “. . . timely transmission of session-donated funds to their respective synods....”

#### **G-3.0108 (FOG)**

<!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->be amended for the last sentence to read “. . .with the Pres. Historical Society or in a temperature or humidity controlled environment of a seminary related to the PC(USA).”

**Reason:** ownership issue.

#### **G-3.0104 (FOG)**

<!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]--> “be amended with regard to omission of G-90105 (BOO): I urge the presence of some form of accountability with regards to ensuring inclusion and representation of diversity to the greatest extent possible to ensure that G-4.0403 (FOG).”

**Reason:** In response to the concerns of the COR.

#### **G-1.0302 (FOG)**

<!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->“The only requirement...all people who make that profession of faith are welcome to be a member of the church.”

**Reason:** We concur w/the taskforce that naming specific groups actually limit our inclusivity, rather than broadening it. Having groups removed broadens inclusivity as long as accountability to this principle is observed.

#### **G-3.0106 (FOG)**

<!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->strike: “Meetings of councils shall be...” and replaced with “It is appropriate for meetings of councils to be...” ...conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order...

#### **G-3.0201 (FOG)**

<!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->Add G-6.0304a of the BOO as a new paragraph in G-3.0201 (before “In light of this charge...”

**Reason:** To encourage elders to cultivate their ability to interact with scripture alone and in community.

(G-6.02) – The committee recommends retention of the individual’s right to request an interpretation by the stated clerk of the GA as expressed in the current book of order (G-13.0112c).

## 06 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON FORM OF GOVERNMENT REVISIONS

(G-6.02) The committee recommends specifying the roles to be played by the GA and by the GA PJC in constitutional interpretation.

(G-6.01) –We want to make sure that authoritative interpretations remain applicable in the new form of government wherever possible.

We discussed this matter with a member of the ACC who assured us that historical precedents retain validity.  
See G-13.0103r.

### 218 General Assembly Committee 06 Concerns from Small Group Discussions\*

1. Issue of whether Interims and Associates can or can't become installed pastors.
2. The term: "missional" needs clarification. (How are we being kept from being missional by the present *Book of Order*?)
3. Would an absence of definitions of rights & responsibilities lead to abuse of power?
4. How would a new Form of Government affect the culture of the Church?
5. Concern regarding the separation of the Foundations part for independent approval.
6. Concern over so many variant interpretations of the proposed FoG and whether this is being pushed on to the Church..
7. If the new FoG is approved, what happens to the "Annotated" *Book of Order*?
8. Concern that the new FoG might move us away from the essential elements of faith? (Does "flexibility" mean that God and scripture are no longer guiding authorities?)
9. Concern about becoming "congregational" in polity.
10. Concern about the section on validated ministry (G-2.03)
11. Issues of trust: will this ultimately reflect trust or do we use it to build trust?
12. Concern about accountability in the emphasis on function.

There were also a large number of specific and widely variant amendment suggestions.

\* not priority ranked

## Item 07-01

[The assembly approved Item 07-01 as amended. See pp. 14, 15.]

*On Calling for Tolerance and Peaceful Relations Between the Christian and Muslim Communities—From the Presbytery of Newton.*

The Presbytery of Newton overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Commend to the church for study the actions of previous General Assemblies calling for tolerance, mutual respect, and peaceful relations between the Christian and Muslim communities.

2. State that ~~[the PC(USA) affirms that Jews, Christians, and Muslims worship a common God, <sup>1</sup>although each understands that God differently; and] [though we hold differing understandings of how God has been revealed to humankind, the PC(USA) affirms]~~ that, as children of this loving God, we share the commandments of love for God and neighbor<sup>2</sup>, the requirement to care for the poor~~]; and acknowledge Abraham as an expression of our common commitment to one God].~~

3. Build on this understanding by calling for further dialogue among Jews, Christians, and Muslims, viewing each other as equals, and learning from one another to

- promote peace, resolve conflict;
- ensure human rights, prevent discrimination;
- develop dialogue, emphasize commonality;
- recognize differences, celebrate diversity;
- advocate justice, oppose bias.

4. Commend the First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway and other Presbyterian congregations that have initiated dialogue with Muslim and Jewish communities, and to encourage other congregations to initiate three-way dialogues among Jews, Christians, and Muslims consistent with the Presbyterian Principles for Interfaith Dialogue<sup>3</sup>.

- To encourage congregations of these faiths to celebrate religious holidays together, setting aside days of worship during which there can be congregational suppers, and dialogue groups.<sup>4</sup>

- To encourage sustained activities that will promote understanding, respect, and good will, using worship resources and promotional materials prepared by the Offices of Interfaith Relations and Theology and Worship, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and other General Assembly Council (GAC) and Office of the General Assembly (OGA) offices as appropriate.

5. Commission a study on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations that would have the same scope and authority as the 1987 study on Christian-Jewish relations<sup>5</sup>, to be carried out by the Interfaith Relations and Theology and Worship Offices of the General Assembly Council.

6. Call for identification of violations of the civil rights of Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the United States and other areas of the world, along with other incidents of violation of religious freedoms, as part of the regular human rights report to the General Assembly.<sup>6</sup>

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$190; (2009): \$6,390; (2010): \$6,376 (Mission)]

### *Rationale*

Actions of the General Assemblies in 1987<sup>7</sup>, 1993<sup>8</sup>, 1999<sup>9</sup>, 2002<sup>10</sup>, 2004<sup>11</sup>, and 2006<sup>12</sup> encourage dialogue among Christianity, Islam, and Judaism to promote working together for peace, justice, and righteousness.

A denominational pamphlet, *Christians and Muslims in Dialog: Facets of Relationships*<sup>13</sup>, urges support in the search to promote understanding by getting to know and become friends with Muslim neighbors, identifying and counteracting prejudicial and abusive behavior, and being sensitive to stereotypical characterizations of Islam and Muslims.

Prejudice, discrimination, and injustice continue to be pervasive in our society toward our Muslim brothers and sisters, where individuals are judged in stereotypical ways, where jobs are threatened, where apprehensions remain about the threats of detention, and where unfair characterizations of individual Muslims are often made.

Little dialogue has actually taken place between the Christian and Muslim communities.

In this chaotic world, there is an urgency to be proactive in the search for peace and understanding, building bridges of harmony among other faith traditions, and striving to bring peace to the world.

That while affirming these actions, they have not always worked as intended because they do not recognize a common theological basis for shared dialogue and while the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA)) has already affirmed that Jews and Christians worship the same God, we have not given our Muslim brothers and sisters the same recognition<sup>14</sup>, and where dialogue between the religions has begun at local levels, it has often broken down because of lack of a clear statement by the PC(USA) that establishes areas of theological agreement.

All human beings are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27) and we who follow Jesus are called to love one another as he loves us (John 15:13–17).

“In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community” (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.3, lines 29–32).

The prior affirmation between the PC(USA) and Jews was deemed acceptable while maintaining our firm belief in the triune nature of God as revealed throughout the New Testament<sup>15</sup>. So, too, are the affirmations extended to Muslims in this overture. The Qur’anic message taught by Muhammad is that of a special regard for Christians and Christianity and the Qur’an is the only Holy Book other than the New Testament that describes the miraculous birth of Jesus.<sup>16</sup>

Therefore, in this chaotic world, we see this as an essential foundation on which to become proactive in overcoming stereotyping, discrimination, bias, and misunderstandings; building bridges of harmony among other faith traditions; and striving to bring peace to the world.

As an example, people from diverse faith traditions formed a group which participates in interfaith dialogue and has gained a better understanding of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, and is working for better harmony among them. The success of this group resulted in development of this overture, which has been adopted by the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway, New Jersey.

The Presbytery of Newton embraces this peacemaking approach espoused by one of its congregations and wishes to promote it throughout the denomination.

### Endnotes

1. Christianity—Mark 12:29, “Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one.”  
Islam—Quran 47:10, “Know therefore that there is no other God but God.”  
Judaism—Deuteronomy 6:4–5, “Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength,” and Deuteronomy 5:7.
2. Christianity—Matthew 22:37, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,” and Mark 12:3 and Luke 10:27.  
Islam—Quran: 60:7, “It may be that God will grant love (and friendship) between you and those whom ye (now) hold as enemies. For God has power (over all things); And God is Oft-Forgiving and Most Merciful.”  
Judaism—Deuteronomy 6:5, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.”
3. Includes a meeting with the American Joint Multi-faith Association/People of Peace and Justice on July 9, 2005, and the Boonton Mosque featuring Elder Rick Ufford-Chase, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). See also Endnote 9.
4. See Endnotes 9, 10, and 11.
5. See Endnote 7.
6. The 214th General Assembly (2002) approved Item 14-03, Ecumenical Partnership: Human Rights and Religious Freedom Abroad, which encouraged congregations and presbyteries to use the “Checklist for PC(USA) Entities Confronted with Reports of Religious Freedom Violations” (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, p. 668).



7. *A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews*, Minutes, 1987, Part I, p. 417ff. and the Islamic Study (Minutes, 1984, Part I, p. 492ff, starting at paragraph 31.308), accepted by the 202nd General Assembly (1987). The study on Judaism said, “a reaffirmation that the God who addresses both Christians and Jews is the same—the living and true God...” (Ibid, p. 418, paragraph 27.044) and, in the section on “Affirmations and Explications,” “We affirm that the living God whom Christians worship is the same God who is worshiped and served by Jews” (Ibid, p. 419, paragraph 27.051) and calling “upon the church through its agencies and governing bodies to ... search for cooperation” (Ibid., p. 494, paragraph 31.328). The study on Islam concluded in paragraph 31.317 that, “The future holds the possibility that in our common life Christians and Muslims may faithfully respond to God and realize the peace and justice so desperately needed” (Ibid, p. 493).
8. *The Book of Common Worship*, Prayers for the Church, Number 58, For Muslims, “Eternal God, you are the one God to be worshiped by all, the one called Allah by your Muslim children, descendants of Abraham as we are.” Approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993).
9. The 211th General Assembly (1999) approved “Presbyterian Principals for Interfaith Dialog” that states, “We are called to work with others in our pluralistic societies for the well-being of our world and for justice, peace, and the sustainability of creation” (Minutes, 1999, Part I, p. 293, paragraph 23.039).
10. The General Assembly Council recommended that the 214th General Assembly (2002), “urge ... congregations ... to interact with those Muslims in their own localities ...” (Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 394).
11. Item 06-09, Recommendation 1, “to reexamine and strengthen the relationship between Christians and Jews” was approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004) (Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 440).
12. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved a modified version of Item 07-01 that said, “To promote the common effort of Christians, Muslims, and Jews to work together for peace, justice, and righteousness” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 565).
13. Worldwide Ministries Division, 1991.
14. See Endnote 7.
15. See Endnote 1.
16. Qur’an, Maryam, Surah 19, 19–22.

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**Concurrences to Item 07-01 from the Presbyteries of Cayuga-Syracuse, Denver, Genesee Valley, and Newark.**

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

Item 07-01 calls for tolerance and peaceful relations between the Christian and Muslim communities.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that this item be approved.

*Rationale*

Historically, General Assemblies have encouraged interfaith dialogue, especially among Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

Muslims in the U.S. are often identified with terrorism, calling for working together with our neighbors for peace, justice, and righteousness.

The prejudice towards Muslims in the U.S. reflects a growing conflation of religion and racial and ethnic identity. Examples of this bias are seen in the extremes of arrests and detention to everyday mistreatment at work and in neighborhoods, seemingly based on their religious identity. The ACREC believes this kind of dialogue can help combat growing racial stereotypes.

We are able to fight anti-Semitism on a local level because, as a denomination, we affirm that Jews and Christians worship the same God. For the same reason, we need to affirm this theological basis that we share with Islam, which is one of the three Abrahamic Faiths.

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## GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 07-01

*Comment on Item 07-01—From the General Assembly Council.*

This overture builds on earlier actions of the General Assembly, and identifies work already being done by the church to build relations of understanding, respect, and mutual witness between Presbyterians and Muslims in the United States and other areas of the world. Most of the documents regarding interfaith relations cited in the overture are available for reference at <http://www.pcusa.org/interfaith/tools.htm>.

The overture does not detail the many efforts underway to build relations. It is not possible to include all that is being done internationally. Note work such as that of Presbyterian-founded institutions, including the Christian Study Center, Rawalpindi, Pakistan; the Henry Martyn Institute, Hyderabad, India; or the Institute for the Study of Religion and Culture at Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand. Presbyterians participate in and support activities of Middle Eastern partners building a culture of understanding and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims: the Arab Group on Christian-Muslim Relations; the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue; the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services Department of Communications and Forum for Intercultural Dialogue (Egypt); the Middle East Council of Churches' Christian-Muslim Program; and the Near East School of Theology Annual Interfaith Lecture Series (Lebanon). The PC(USA) contributes toward the appointment of an Islamic professor at NEST.

Presbyterians support the work of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa and the Interfaith Resource and Research Center of Ghana. Through the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, secular, Muslim, and Christian universities are cosponsoring a new approach in doctoral education, in which sincere believers of Islam and Christianity study their religions together, with professors from three universities teaching in pairs. Presbyterians are also engaged with church partners in interfaith efforts for peace and justice in conflict situations such as the work of the United Church of Christ of the Philippines in Mindanao, and in addressing interreligious situations in which the religious liberties and lives of Christians have been endangered.

In the U.S., the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has established relationships with seven national Muslim organizations (see <http://www.pcusa.org/interfaith/initiative.htm>), and is engaged in efforts of dialogue, social policy advocacy, and education in particular with the Islamic Society of North America, the Muslim Public Affairs Council, and the mosques affiliated with Imam Warith Deen Mohammed.

In regard to the proposed study, the Offices of Interfaith Relations and Theology and Worship advise that this work will require at least two small consultations with Muslim colleagues, and call on the gifts of a small group of Presbyterians from a variety of perspectives and pursuits in the church. Such a study will have financial implications that have been separately identified, and will require funds development. Such a study may require time and commitment beyond the 219th General Assembly (2010).

## Item 07-02

[The assembly approved Item 07-02. See pp. 14, 15.]

*On Response to an Invitation to Interfaith Dialogue—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

**The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to support *A Common Word Between Us and You*, an invitation to dialogue and cooperation from 138 Muslim clerics, and to commend this document to our congregations, governing bodies, and seminaries for study and consideration as a primary source for engaging in substantive interfaith dialogue with the goal of greater understanding and cooperation among members of the Abrahamic faith traditions as the pathway to a new era of global peace and justice.**

### *Rationale*

On 11 October 2007, 138 leaders and scholars of the global Muslim community issued the document, *A Common Word Between Us and You*. The document is historic in that it is the first time in the history of Islam that its leadership has asked Christians, as the document puts it, "... to come together with us on the common essentials of our two religions ... *that we shall worship none but God, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside God ...*" [page 15, italics in the original, the word lords is lowercase], and that "the basis of all future interfaith dialogue between us, for our common ground is that on which hangs *all the Law and the Prophets* (Matthew 22:37–40), referring to our duty to love God and neighbor."

The invitation to dialogue acknowledges that “Finding common ground between Muslims and Christians is not simply a matter for polite ecumenical dialogue between selected religious leaders ... our common future is at stake. The very survival of the world itself is perhaps at stake.”

It is now the responsibility of Christians to respond to this invitation in the recognition that, as the statement, *A Common Word Between Us and You* points out: “together Christians and Muslims make up 55% of the world’s population” and, “If Muslims and Christians are not at peace, the world cannot be at peace.”

#### Attachment

*In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful*

#### ***A Common Word Between Us and You*** [Summary and Abridgement]

[For the full text please see: <[www.acommonword.org](http://www.acommonword.org)>]

Muslims and Christians together make up well over half of the world’s population. Without peace and justice between these two religious communities, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians.

The basis for this peace and understanding already exists. It is part of the very foundational principles of both faiths: love of the One God, and love of the neighbour. These principles are found over and over again in the sacred texts of Islam and Christianity. The Unity of God, the necessity of love for Him, and the necessity of love of the neighbour is thus the common ground between Islam and Christianity. The following are only a few examples:

Of God’s Unity, God says in the Holy Qur’an: *Say: He is God, the One! / God, the Self-Sufficient Besought of all! (Al-Ikhlās, 112:1-2)*. Of the necessity of love for God, God says in the Holy Qur’an: *So invoke the Name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him with a complete devotion (Al-Muzzammil, 73:8)*. Of the necessity of love for the neighbour, the Prophet Muhammad r said: *“None of you has faith until you love for your neighbour what you love for yourself.”*

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ u said: *‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. / And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. / And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.*” (Mark 12:29-31)

In the Holy Qur’an, God Most High enjoins Muslims to issue the following call to Christians (and Jews—the *People of the Scripture*):

*Say: O People of the Scripture! Come to a common word between us and you: that we shall worship none but God, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside God. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him). (Aal ‘Imrān 3:64)*

The words: *we shall ascribe no partner unto Him* relate to the Unity of God, and the words: *worship none but God*, relate to being totally devoted to God. Hence they all relate to the *First and Greatest Commandment*. According to one of the oldest and most authoritative commentaries on the Holy Qur’an the words: *that none of us shall take others for lords beside God*, mean ‘that none of us should obey the other in disobedience to what God has commanded’. This relates to the Second Commandment because justice and freedom of religion are a crucial part of love of the neighbour.

Thus in obedience to the Holy Qur’an, we as Muslims invite Christians to come together with us on the basis of what is common to us, which is also what is most essential to our faith and practice: the *Two Commandments* of love.

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#### **Concurrence to Item 07-02 from the Presbytery of National Capital.**

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#### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 07-02 calls for the 218th General Assembly (2008) to support *A Common Word Between Us and You* for study and use as a primary source for engaging in interfaith dialogue.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) the 218th General Assembly advises Item 07-02 be approved.

#### *Rationale*

In keeping with previous statements of the General Assembly, an acceptance of this invitation for dialogue and an encouragement to various entities within the PC(USA) demonstrates our words are being actualized.

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#### **GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 07-02**

*Comment on Item 07-02—From the General Assembly Council.*

The action that the overture recommends to the assembly is both consistent with General Assembly policy, and part of a stream of significant Christian responses to the invitation made in *A Common Word*.

In adopting the Study on Islam in 1987, the 199th General Assembly (1987) urged “the dissemination and use by local congregations and other groups of ... materials in Islam and interfaith relations, which present a wide theological approach and viewpoint concerning Christian and Muslim relations” and recommended “coordinating the development and distribution of additional resources for study and reflection as they become available.” That assembly also called on seminaries and church-related colleges and campus ministries to promote programs on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations, and suggested that “Presbyterians ... take every opportunity to come to know and become friends with their Muslim neighbors” (*Minutes*, 1987, Part I, paragraph 31.327). The Office of Interfaith Relations, created in part in response to the recommendations included in this study, has worked consistently since 1988 to provide resource materials and support such efforts.

“A Common Word Between Us and You” is an invitation to such understanding from a remarkably diverse group of Muslims worldwide, including sixteen notable Muslim leaders in the United States. In welcoming the document, Stated Clerk Clifton Kilpatrick said, “I urge Presbyterians to read this letter from the Muslim community, to continue to build honest, searching, and respectful relations with Muslims in our local communities and in our nation, and to seek opportunities for common action where compatible means and ends exist.” Responses to it have also been made by a wide variety of Christian leaders and institutions (see <http://www.acommonword.com/index.php?lang=en&page=responses>). The Presbyterian Church (USA) is actively involved in the process of crafting an ecumenical theological response to “A Common Word” through the Interfaith Relations and Faith and Order Commissions of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. This response, after appropriate review by the churches, will be issued by the NCCC at its fall meeting in 2008, and will then be available for study along with “A Common Word.” The Office of Interfaith Relations will ensure that a guide for use of the two documents will also be ready by that time.

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## **Item 07-03**

**[The assembly referred Item 07-03 to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations. See pp. 14, 15.]**

*On Investigating the Actions and Conduct of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church—From the Presbytery of Peace River.*

The Presbytery of Peace River respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to request the Executive Office of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to investigate the actions and conduct of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, as described below, and to take appropriate action.

#### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in correspondence with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) because both denominations are members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC).

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church is actively pursuing a strategy to persuade Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches to disaffiliate with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and be dismissed to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church has created a transitional Evangelical Presbyterian Church Presbytery to facilitate the process.

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**Concurrence to Item 07-03 from the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys.**

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**GACER COMMENT ON ITEM 07-03**

*Comment on Item 07-03—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER).*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to refer Item 07-03 to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

*Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations is charged with the responsibilities to act on and process recommendations and proposals addressing ecclesiastical ecumenical work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and to give guidance to the nurturing of unity among Presbyterian and Reformed churches in the U.S.A., with one another and with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In addition, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations seeks to work with our ecumenical agencies in addressing issues of mutual concern.

Item 07-03 raises significant issues about our ecclesiastical relationships with another Reformed Church and implications for our ecumenical relationships. Referral of Item 07-03 to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations would allow them to carry out their responsibilities both with another Reformed church and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

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## **Item 07-04**

[The assembly approved Item 07-04 with comment. See pp. 14, 15.]

*Covenant Relationship with the Korean Presbyterian Church in America—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

1. **Approve the “Covenant Relationship Between the Korean Presbyterian Church of America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” as an ecumenical statement (G-15.0302b) and send it to the presbyteries for their ratification.**
2. **Give the following directions in implementing the covenant:**
  - a. **Direct the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to appoint members to serve on a joint implementation committee.**
  - b. **Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to convene tables to develop processes and procedures for the orderly exchange of ministers and the orderly transfer of churches.**
  - c. **Direct that the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council report these processes and procedures to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

***Comment:* The value of the covenant within these two denominations will depend in great measure on agreement about implementation, which will take place across all governing bodies of both denominations. Therefore, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations, the Office of the General Assembly, and the General Assembly Council are urged to consult with presbyteries and synods that have direct experience of working with the Korean Presbyterian Church in America.**

*Rationale*

The Joint Committee on Cooperation Between the Korean Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was established by the 204th General Assembly (1992) of the PC(USA) and the 17th General Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church in America (KPCA). Believing that their work over the past fifteen years has brought them to a point of be-

ing able move into a deeper relationship between the two churches, the joint committee is recommending to our respective General Assemblies that covenant relationship be established.

Constitutionally, for the PC(USA), this covenant agreement is based upon G-13.0103s (establish and maintain ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church); G-11.0405 (receiving ministers from churches with which we are in correspondence and full communion); G-15.0200 (Relations with Other Denominations); and G-16.0000 (Union Churches). It is the intent that covenant is to provide the same authority for our presbyteries as was given them under the Formula of Agreement and accompanying constitutional amendments.

COVENANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
THE KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
AND  
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

*“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:1–6 (NRSV)*

### I. History of Relationship

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)] and the Korean Presbyterian Church in America (KPCA) are denominations with common roots and commitments in the Reformed tradition. The emotional ties are the legacy of their mission history. Protestant Christianity in Korea began through the sending of U.S. Presbyterian missionaries to Korea in 1885. Over the past century, Presbyterians in Korea have demonstrated phenomenal growth despite their difficult experiences of suffering. They have become genuine partners in mission and ecumenical engagement not only in Korea and Asia, but also throughout the world.

In the middle of the 1960s, the U.S. immigration law changed, opening the doors for many Koreans to immigrate to the United States. This started a new page in the history of Korean Presbyterians. Unfortunately, the PC(USA) was unprepared to welcome and accept the large number of Korean Presbyterians into its life. While some Koreans joined the PC(USA), some felt the need to establish an independent Korean Presbyterian Church in the United States. Each of these organized groupings of Korean American Presbyterian churches has contributed to the growth and development of the Presbyterian witness in the United States through its unique gifts and calling.

After many years of informal cooperation between leadership of the two churches, the 204th General Assembly (1992) of the PC(USA) and the 17th General Assembly (1992) of the KPCA authorized the establishment of the Joint Committee on Presbyterian Cooperation Between the PC(USA) and the KPCA. Over the past thirty years, the joint committee has focused its work in the areas of ministries and education, global mission, peace, justice, reconciliation, and church polity. Of particular note, is the opportunity that Korean Americans born and raised in the United States present for our churches to move from immigrant-focused ministries to ministries directed toward future generations. The work of the joint committee has been important in shaping the relationship between the PC(USA) and the KPCA.

The joint committee believes that God is calling us to move to a deeper relationship between the KPCA and the PC(USA) and to request our General Assemblies to declare covenant relationship between the two churches. Covenant relationship establishes a formal mutual commitment in our ecclesial and missional life together. The nature of covenant relationship is a call to mutuality based upon core theological principles.

### II. Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation

A. As churches within the Reformed tradition, each holding membership in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, we recognize each other as churches in which the gospel is preached, sacraments are rightly administered according to the Word of God, and the mission of Jesus Christ is lived out.

B. Baptism marks us as belonging to Christ and Christ’s church. According to Scripture, there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4:5). To that end, we recognize the baptism of each of our churches and welcome one another’s members as brothers and sisters in Christ. We recognize that it is Christ that has showed us the way of self-sacrificing love and given to us the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to remember this love and to be fed with the bread of life and the cup of salvation. We encourage the sharing in the Lord’s Supper together in all arenas of the church.

C. Christ has entrusted the ministry of the gospel to all of his disciples, calling us to follow him in the way of love, righteousness, peace, and justice. Ordination is the act by which men and women are set aside for particular ministries of the Church. We identify and name these ministries as deacon, elder, and minister of Word and Sacrament. We recognize that the calling and setting aside of persons for service in the church and the world is for the sake of the mission of Christ. We recognize the authenticity of one another's ordination of ministers, elders, and deacons.

D. The church lives to fulfill the mission of God in the world. The church does not live for its own sake, but seeks to witness to the saving work of Jesus Christ, the transformative power of the gospel, justice and reconciliation in all areas of its life and witness. God's gift of unity strengthens the witness of the church. While divisions within the church cannot destroy the mission of the church, they do serve as distractions to the message and the mission of the church. We recognize that the mission of our churches is strengthened by commitment to work cooperatively in the areas of congregational support, resource and leadership development, national and global mission.

### III. Covenant Commitments

A. We covenant to support one another through prayer, dialogue, and continued cooperative work. Through mutual affirmation and admonition, we covenant to an honest relationship in which our joys are celebrated, our trials are shared, and disagreements are addressed with the goal of strengthening this covenant. We will seek to affirm the witness of our churches and when necessary speak loving words of correction for the edification of the body of Christ.

B. While we recognize each other's ministries as authentic, we covenant to develop a process of orderly exchange of ministers. This provision will be governed by the principle that the presbyteries decide who shall be members and approves calls for service in churches. This process will allow for ministers to share in the ministry of each other's churches, identify processes for transferring ministers, and the procedures for ministers to be dually affiliated. This process will only apply to ministers who are in good standing and include processes for discipline in accordance with our individual polities.

C. We recognize that we are one family and our congregations have common roots. Many Koreans within the PC(USA) and in the KPCA have shared roots in Korea. We covenant to develop a process of orderly transfer of congregations. This process will encourage, where feasible, congregations to share together in ministry and to be dually affiliated. We covenant to develop a process that seeks to strengthen the witness of our churches and not to contribute to divisions within the body of Christ. This process will be developed in a way that respects our individual polities.

D. We recognize that there is much we share in mission together. We covenant to continue to work together in the following areas of mission and pray that other areas may also emerge—curriculum development; second generation and youth and young adult ministry; congregational support and leadership development; women's leadership and resource development; global mission and justice and reconciliation in the world.

### IV. Enabling Acts

A. This covenant will be forwarded to our General Assemblies through the appropriate channels in each of our churches for action by 2008.

B. Our assemblies will be asked to enter into covenant relationship, make the necessary constitutional amendments to enable this covenant, and to forward it to presbyteries for ratification.

C. Upon the ratification by presbyteries, covenant relationship will be established and a service of worship celebrating and formally entering into covenant relationship will be held by 2010.

D. A covenant implementation committee will be established to shape and support the covenanting process and to make recommendations that enable us to live fully into this covenant.

### V. Prayer for the Future

We offer thanksgiving to you O God, Creator of the Universe, Lord of all peoples. You sent the gospel to Korea through the work of Presbyterian missionaries. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, you have nurtured the faith of Koreans in the midst of difficult sufferings and we witnessed the growth of the church in Korea and amongst Korean Presbyterians in the United States. We recognize that while there has been a separation because of human limitations, you have continued to work in and through each of our churches. You have taken our differences in culture, custom, and language and made us one family in Christ. We are grateful that you are bringing us to this time of deeper relationship and seek your guidance and blessing as we make this covenant between the Korean Presbyterian Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for now and generations to come.

“Now to him who by the power at work at within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”  
(Eph. 3: 20–21 (NRSV))

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-04

*Advice on Item 07-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Item 07-04.

#### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that this proposal comes under the provisions of G-13.0103s, giving the General Assembly the responsibility and power “to establish and maintain those ecumenical relationship that will enlarge the life and mission of the church[.]” It complies with the provisions of G-15.0201 and G-15.0302c. If it is approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) and a majority of the presbyteries, it will be published as a Received Ecumenical Statement of Guidance. As such it will provide the same authority for the Korean Presbyterian Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to explore and carry out shared ministries that the “Formula of Agreement” provides for the four partner churches that that adopted it.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further notes that the “Covenant Relationship” document provides for specific other steps listed in Section IV. Enabling Acts. The completion of these steps is critical to enable the full expression of the partnership that the covenant envisions.

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## Item 07-05

[The assembly approved Item 07-05 as amended. See pp. 14, 15.]

*Ecumenical Policy Statement—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Approve “The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” as a policy statement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

2. Reaffirm the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to work with other ecclesial and mission bodies through our historic conciliar relationships of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the National Council of Churches, and the World Council of Churches; and continue our support and participation in the governance and mission of these ecumenical agencies, while at the same time strengthening links and relationships among ecumenical efforts at all levels.

3. Direct the General Assembly Council and the Office of the General Assembly to develop materials based on the Ecumenical Stance of the PC(USA) for use with local congregations.

~~3.~~ 4. Direct the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to monitor the implementation of the policy and the development of congregational materials within the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, and report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

#### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S. and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. both held consultations on the ecumenical work of the church in 1975 and 1981. Recognizing that much has changed both in the Presbyterian church and in the ecumenical movement over the last twenty-five years, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations called for a Consultation on the Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The mandate of the consultation was to “to review our ecumenical vision and construct an ecumenical stance and policy to guide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) staff and elected bodies for the next ten years.”



## The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

### *Introduction*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its antecedent churches have been at the forefront of local, regional, national, and global ecumenism for more than a century. Presbyterians have been ready to reflect on, pray for, and organize ecumenical initiatives in the life of the worldwide body of Christ and respond to the initiatives of others. From discussions of organic union to the formation of councils of churches, from common efforts in evangelism and mission to upholding concerns for justice and social service, Presbyterians have been deeply involved in the ecumenical work and witness of the church. The Presbyterian church has put considerable material, spiritual, and personnel resources into the ecumenical movement, working to “listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches” and respond in creative ways to our ecumenical calling.

In 1975 and 1981, the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America held ecumenical consultations that were important milestones on this ecumenical journey. No such consultation had ever been held in the PC(USA). In 2006, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) decided it was time to call for a new churchwide consultation on the ecumenical stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Giving thoughtful and prayerful attention to new directions in ecumenism, as well as to the historic Presbyterian commitment to conciliar ecumenical organizations, the GACER believed the PC(USA) should go beyond the ecumenical vision statement approved by the 212th General Assembly (2000).

The mandate of the consultation was “to review our ecumenical vision and construct an ecumenical stance and policy to guide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) staff and elected bodies for the next ten years.” To this end, the consultation of September 27–29, 2007, reviewed the biblical and confessional basis of Presbyterian ecumenical commitment, provided a historical overview of the ecumenical journey, surveyed the changing ecumenical landscape, assessed the PC(USA)’s ecumenical experience in the past decade, and explored the new challenges the church faces in this area. On the basis of the findings of the September 2007 consultation, recommendations were made to the GACER. (The list of participants may be found in Appendix A.) In this way, the consultation sought to renew our church’s commitment to ecumenical engagement in the 21st century and set a framework for its ecumenical endeavors, taking account of the new contextual challenges and opportunities present.

Because the purpose of the consultation was to create policy for the ecumenical stance of the PC(USA)—the relationship of the PC(USA) to other Christian churches—participants did not systematically address interfaith relations or the connection between ecumenical involvement and Christian mission. Yet, these two concerns pressed in upon the conversation repeatedly, since they are significant concerns closely related to ecumenism. There was particular energy in the conversation relating to interfaith relations and a strong sense that this topic will need to be addressed more fully in another forum.

### *Biblical and Confessional Basis of Our Ecumenical Stance*

Many texts in Scripture guide and give shape to the ecumenical stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). One key text is John 17, where Jesus prays for the disciples, “that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (v. 21). Thus, unity is understood as Christ’s intention for the church, essential to its nature and witness. Another text that has been decisive for the PC(USA)’s self-understanding is 2 Corinthians 5. It declares “... in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself ... and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us” (v.19). The divine purpose of reconciliation is illumined here, and the church must consider how our ministry of reconciliation is compromised if we are not reconciled among ourselves. In Ephesians 4:3–4, we are enjoined to make “... every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all ...” Paul’s image of the church as the body of Christ well conveys the nature of our unity: Though there are many members, diversities of gifts, and differences of ministry, there is one body. We belong to one another and are members of one another (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12).

*The Book of Confessions* undergirds the ecumenical work of the PC(USA) in its recurring references to the unity and catholicity of the church. It is a fundamental conviction that, in Jesus Christ, the church is already one. This forms the basis for ecumenical endeavors: to seek to make visible this Christ-given unity.

The confessions, in their reaffirmation of and dependence upon the liturgical traditions and ecumenical councils of the early church, implicitly and explicitly express the unity and catholicity of the church. *The Book of Confessions* begins with two ancient creeds, the Nicene Creed (1.1–3) and the Apostle’s Creed (2.1–3), which implicitly demonstrates this sensibility. Explicitly, too, these historic creeds name unity and catholicity as marks of Christ’s church. We thus understand ourselves to be in continuity with the ancient consensus of these broadly shared confessions, including the underlying Trinitarian theology and Christology that these early confessions proclaimed.

The unity and continuity is not only with apostolic witness in creedal statements, but also with apostolic mission. As the Confession of 1967 affirms,

... This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God's message of reconciliation and shares God's labor of healing the enmities which separate [human beings] from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call." (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.31)

Other confessions make explicit reference to Presbyterian convictions about the unity and catholicity of the church. The Second Helvetic Confession, for example, argues that there is "only one church for all times." Since there is only one God, one Messiah, one Spirit, one salvation, one faith, one covenant, "it necessarily follows that there is only one Church, the Catholic Church. ... We, therefore, call this Church catholic because it is universal, scattered through all parts of the world, and extended unto all times, and is not limited to any times or places. ..." (*The Book of Confessions*, 5.126). This affirmation is accompanied by an explicit rejection of claims that would confine the church to any one group of believers.

A similar pattern can be seen in the Confession of 1967, which claims, "The unity of the church is compatible with a wide variety of forms, but it is hidden and distorted when variant forms are allowed to harden into sectarian divisions, exclusive denominations, and rival factions" (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.34). In this pattern, we see an embrace of difference alongside a rejection of division. For Christians of our tradition, a true church is established wherever the word is rightly preached and heard and the Sacraments rightly administered (*The Book of Confessions*: Second Helvetic Confession, 5.134–.137; Scots Confession, 3.18; Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.143).

Further basis for the PC(USA) ecumenical stance can be found in the confessions where the "communion of saints" is described. A Brief Statement of Faith says, "The Spirit ... binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church" (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, Lines 54–57). So, Christians around the world and down the years all belong to one another, for this communion is to be extended "unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus" (*The Book of Confessions*, Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.147). These references deepen and extend the pattern of difference without division and also serve to give a clearer shape to the nature of our unity, reflecting not a static uniformity, but a dynamic communion.

It is clear from these and other references in the confessions that the unity of the church is God's doing, a gift of God in Jesus Christ. It can neither be created nor destroyed by our efforts. The Heidelberg Catechism asks the question, "What do you believe concerning 'the Holy Catholic Church'?" The answer: "... that, from the beginning to the end of the world, and from among the whole human race, the Son of God, by his Spirit and his Word, gathers, protects, and preserves for himself, in the unity of the true faith, a congregation chosen for eternal life" (*The Book of Confessions*, 4.054). Our divisions, though they may obscure our unity, cannot destroy it. When we come together at ecumenical tables, we are seeking to make visible what, by the grace of God, is already the case. We are one in Christ.

#### *Historical Overview of Presbyterian Ecumenical Involvement*

From the earliest days of European settlement in North America, there has been a dynamic tension between the distinctively Reformed identity claimed by Presbyterians and our confession of "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church" that embraces the larger community of believers and churches. This has played out over the years in varying degrees of emphasis on a Presbyterian "brand" in doctrine and polity, and a simultaneous commitment to unity in Christian ministry and mission.

The first presbyteries and synods were made up of disparate congregations, and subsequent, ecumenical challenges have often arisen within the Presbyterian communion itself. The New Side separated from the Old Side in the 1700s, only to be reunited later in that century. In the 1800s, Old School and New School parted ways, as did the churches of North and South. Some groups developed new ecclesiastical expressions, including the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). At the same time, many Presbyterians struggled against these divisions. American Presbyterians sought reunion among their own denominations, as well as closer relations—from local communities to mission fields—with Congregationalists, Associate and Reformed churches, Calvinistic Methodists, Episcopalians, the Reformed Church, and others. The Presbyterian Reunion of 1983 is the latest in a long line of historical efforts to bring visible unity among Presbyterians through institutional merger.

Presbyterians were enthusiastic supporters both of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (an interdenominational body) and a succession of Presbyterian church agencies for global ministries. Combinations of ecumenical alliances in mission, along with Reformed confessionalism, are also to be found in the cases of the Sunday school movement, home missions, relief agencies, and public advocacy.

From the nineteenth century to today, American Presbyterians have been among the founders, leaders, and principal supporters of global and national ecumenical bodies, including the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), and the World Council of Churches (WCC). In partnership with these groups and

others, American Presbyterians have played a central role in world mission and evangelism, in pursuit of international peace and justice, in bilateral dialogues with Christian world communions, and other alliances of churches. Partnership with ecumenical bodies also provides churches of various traditions a means toward dialogue from a common Christian perspective with representatives of other religions of the world.

Representation of Presbyterian churches in international, inter-confessional dialogue is organized by the theology department of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. In the last fifteen years, dialogues have included: Adventist–Reformed; African Independent Churches–Reformed; Anglican–Reformed; Catholic–Reformed, with a PC(USA) member; Disciples–Reformed; Lutheran–Reformed, currently co-chaired by a PC(USA) member; Oriental Orthodox–Reformed, with a PC(USA) member; Orthodox–Reformed, with a PC(USA) member; and Pentecostal–Reformed, currently co-chaired by a PC(USA) member. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches is also concerned with fostering unity among members of the Reformed family. As the result of work by WARC and the Reformed Ecumenical Council, a plan has been made to unite the two bodies into the World Communion of Reformed Churches in 2010.

Working with churches of many cultures and nations has sensitized ecumenical bodies to issues of justice and contributed toward their adoption of strong positions on public policy, especially with relation to justice. This was demonstrated in the United States civil rights movement, the call for negotiation and understanding between East and West during the Cold War, the campaign for human rights and liberation in Latin America, the anti-apartheid struggle in southern Africa, and strategies for reconciliation in the Middle East. In 2004, the member churches of WARC at the General Council in Accra covenanted to work together for justice in the economy and creation, and the WCC and the Lutheran World Federation have taken up this challenge. Supporters of such actions believe that through the struggle together to find a path of faithful action in the face of injustice, Christians come to deeper understanding of the gospel and find the courage to witness to their faith. They believe that God requires work toward justice for all the human family and for creation.

Critics have often found this ecumenical approach to be too “political,” a distraction from the church’s work, and have [~~militated against~~] [opposed] continuing participation in the National and World Councils of Churches. In the 1980s and 1990s, these councils came under intense criticism, leading to lively debate about Presbyterian participation in them. The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations undertook careful, extensive reviews of the WCC (2003), the NCCC (2004), and WARC (2005), examining their work, their financing, and Presbyterian leadership in them. (Reports of the three reviews can be found in the *Minutes* of the General Assembly for those years.) The outcome of all three reviews was a strong expression of support for the PC(USA)’s participation in the ecumenical movement at the national and international levels. The September 2007 consultation strongly affirmed these commitments as a part of the ecumenical stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the future.

Today, Presbyterians continue to work cooperatively with other churches in the councils of the ecumenical movement by means of presbytery and synod partnerships, in local projects involving multiple congregations and agencies, through evangelical associations such as World Vision International and the Lausanne movement, as well as in emerging fellowships such as Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. and exploratory meetings toward a broadly based Global Christian Forum. These last two fellowships represent a fresh attempt to find a way to gather both those who have traditionally participated in the ecumenical movement and those who have distanced themselves from it.

Central to this discussion is the Lund principle<sup>1</sup> that churches should do together all that is possible in good conscience, affirming the importance of this principle as part of the framework for ecumenical policy in the coming years.

#### *Review of the Ecumenical Work of the General Assembly Over the Last Decade*

The past ten years (1997–2007) of ecumenical work under the auspices of the General Assembly have been marked by new opportunities and continuing challenges. These have been a consequence both of changes in the ecumenical landscape and of changes within the PC(USA) and are reflected in our conciliar relationships, our bilateral and multilateral ecclesial relationships, and our partnerships and organizational structures to implement the ecumenical agenda of the PC(USA).

The 209th General Assembly (1997) approved A Formula of Agreement between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ. This was a historic agreement of Full Communion, the result of thirty-five years of dialogue among these churches. The Lutheran-Reformed Coordinating Committee has overseen the implementation of this agreement, and closer collaboration and cooperation have emerged in shared ministries between congregations.

Subsequently, the 211th General Assembly (1999), upon recommendation of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, created the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER). This new committee replaced the Advisory Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations and “Special Committees of the General Assembly” with ecumenical mandates.

At the conciliar level, the General Assembly holds membership as an ecclesial body in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Caribbean and North American Area Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the National Council of Churches of Christ, all of which have faced organizational and fiscal challenges. Elected representatives from the PC(USA) on these councils and staff members working with them have contributed to a sense of renewal in their mission and financial stability.

In January 2002, the Consultation on Church Union culminated its decades of work by being transformed into Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC), with the goals of expressing unity in Christ and combating racism together. Through the coordinating council of CUiC and its task forces on ministry, racial justice, and local/regional work, the PC(USA) has been an active and energetic participant in CUiC.

In the area of bilateral ecclesial relationships, the sixth round of Reformed-Catholic dialogue (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) concluded in 2001, with a focus on pastoral issues in marriages between members of the Roman Catholic Church and Reformed churches. In response to the papal encyclical, *Ut Unum Sint*, a delegation from the PC(USA) entered into conversation with the Vatican in December 2000 and March 2001. The response of the PC(USA) was presented in the paper, "The Successor to Peter." Several recommendations from this conversation were implemented through the 213th General Assembly (2001).

The seventh round of Reformed-Catholic (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) dialogue, mandated by the 215th General Assembly (2003), began meeting that same year. This dialogue also includes the Christian Reformed Church in North America, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ. The dialogue was charged to work on developing a means for the mutual recognition of baptism and to explore issues related to the Eucharist. Pending recommendations by the GACER, the proposal for mutual recognition of baptism will come to the 218th General Assembly (2008). The bilateral dialogue will then begin to explore issues related to the Eucharist.

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The Moravian-Reformed dialogue was mandated by the 212th General Assembly (2000). The dialogue began in April 2002 with the following goals: (1) to reach an understanding of each tradition's ministry of oversight; (2) to explore areas of cooperative work in global, national, and local settings so that our congregations may have greater knowledge of each other and our cooperative work; and (3) to seek common agreements that could lead to establishing Full Communion between the Moravian Church and one or all of the Reformed churches. Pending approval by the GACER, a recommendation that the PC(USA) enter a Covenant Relationship will go to the 218th General Assembly (2008) for action.

The Episcopal-Presbyterian bilateral dialogue was mandated by the 212th General Assembly (2000). The focus of the dialogue is the reconciliation of ministries between the two churches. This bilateral dialogue has worked closely with the Ministry Task Force of Churches Uniting in Christ. While unable to achieve full reconciliation of ministries, it is anticipated that we will be able to enter into a mutual recognition of our ministries within the next two years.

The Joint Committee on Presbyterian Cooperation Between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Korean Presbyterian Church in America was mandated by the 204th General Assembly (1992). It was charged to foster greater unity of witness between our two churches and to explore the possibility of eventual union between the two denominations. Pending recommendations by the GACER, a proposal to enter Covenant Relationship will come to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

The Joint Cooperative Committee with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was mandated by the 212th General Assembly (2000) and was charged to enter church-to-church conversations searching for means to strengthen their mutual relationships. The work of this cooperative committee culminated in holding concurrent General Assemblies to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Presbyterian witness in the United States in 2006.

Throughout all its work, the General Assembly staff seeks to work ecumenically with counterparts in other denominations, ecumenical councils, and project-specific task groups that involve ecumenical partners. Significant areas of ecumenical cooperation are seen in the areas of disaster relief and development, national and international public witness and advocacy, national and international hunger concerns, theological engagement, youth and young-adult ministries, communications, and international mission partnerships. These partnerships are not only significant for shaping the mission of the PC(USA), but also for bringing PC(USA) resources and insight to the work of our ecumenical partners. A key component has been the understanding that we "do mission in partnership."

*The Changing Ecumenical Landscape*

To commit to an ecumenical vision in this time and place involves a study of the changing ecumenical landscape. It is well known that a demographic shift in the global church from the north to the south has reshaped the dynamics of the ecumenical movement in a number of ways. Most importantly, the flow of influence is no longer from north to south or even west to east, but from every part of the world to every other part of the world. This has meant that ecumenical conversation partners are shaped geographically as well as denominationally.

In this regard, contextualized realities have become as important as confessional considerations; thus, the PC(USA) needs to include new and different partners to address the needs of today. One such group is that of churches made up of new immigrants bringing their languages and traditions from home, churches that are now a part of the PC(USA) context. New immigrants bring different understandings of the church and the world, shaped by the cultures of the places they have left. Their visions and understandings can infuse and enrich our own and help the PC(USA) to see the world in ways not seen previously. A second group of partners is that of service and justice coalitions that are not denominationally circumscribed. Groups such as Habitat for Humanity, Bread for the World, and the Heifer Project respond to human suffering through emergency relief and development programs to help heal a divided world. Many Presbyterian congregations support these organizations. A third group of communities responding to a wounded world is that of people of other faiths and religious traditions. In a world where fear of the ‘other’ exacerbates violence and suffering, working in partnership with those whom we often call “other” is of central importance. [~~Taking the original meaning of “oikoumene” as the whole inhabited earth,~~] [We] are called to join with all those willing to work for the healing of the whole earth and the whole human family.

The purpose of the ecumenical movement is to help make manifest God’s intention for the [~~“oikoumene”~~] [the household of God]. In the past, churches have often limited that vision to a unified Church that would help bring about a unified world or even unify the world within it. The ecumenical vision that is part of God’s vision is actually much larger. John 10:10[b] describes the vision as God’s desire that the inhabitants of the [~~“oikoumene”~~] [the household of God] “may have life, and have it abundantly.” This is a vision of justice and peace that allows space for all of God’s creation to live life in its fullness. God is continually active in bringing loving wholeness to creation, where all can live in peace. God is especially attentive to those who have been excluded from abundant life and calls the church to cooperate in this process.

The Holy Spirit, the Advocate whom Jesus promised, invites us to this kind of work. Dialogue with churches of the Pentecostal movement is essential here, as well as attending to the often-surprising movements of the Spirit in our churches and ecumenical bodies. The discernment of God’s vision for the [~~“oikoumene”~~] [household of God] is a gift of the Spirit, since we understand the [~~“oikoumene”~~] [household of God] to cut across all human lines. Biblically speaking, Pentecost was a unique moment when the Holy Spirit acted in an amazing way, enabling the church to communicate across differences. At Pentecost, seekers from every nation were present, communicating with each other through the Spirit in their own languages. Living with this gift of the Spirit in our present moment in history encourages us to hear the voices of people long silenced. Enabled to read the signs of the time, the church becomes empowered by the Spirit to champion a theology of life by amplifying voices that contend with life-denying forces. In this way, the church may become a “blessing to the nations” and offer hope for healing, reconciliation, and justice in the earth and the economy.

*Contours of a New Ecumenical Reality*

Ecumenism in the 21st century holds varied and diverse nuances for Presbyterians:

- reconciliation in Jesus Christ;
- a spirit of generosity toward others;
- unity and diversity in the Holy Spirit;
- justice in the economy, and for the earth;
- the call of God to mission and evangelism;
- solidarity with the marginalized;
- common memory of a people on a journey;
- hope for the future of the world;
- a gift of God and a task for all human beings.

At the same time, many Presbyterians are confused about the meaning of ecumenism and question how it relates to their own lived realities in congregations and whether it has relevance to a post-modern church and world. There has been an erosion of understanding of some traditional ecumenical activities and loyalty to them. Nonetheless, lively ecumenical activity is taking place in many forms throughout the denomination at the national, regional, and local levels.

Opportunities and challenges clearly present themselves in the landscape of this new ecumenical reality. Membership loss, institutional downsizing, and financial decline in mainline churches have resulted in an atmosphere of crisis in ecumenical structures and their member-denominations. Flourishing post-denominational mega-churches, theological affinity groups, and para-church organizations pose both opportunities and challenges to our traditional ways of being and acting and to our ecumenical vision. Some churches that have previously hesitated to enter into ecumenical conversation are now finding their way to a newly shaped table.

Our faith in the grace of Jesus Christ is with us, “so we do not lose heart” (2 Cor. 4:16). In the face of these challenges and opportunities, God is calling us, in this moment, to reaffirm our commitment to the unity of the Church—of all Christian people—which is God’s gift in Christ. Essential to that calling is an attitude of humility and openness in all of our ecumenical relationships.

While we affirm our commitment to the unity of the Christian church, the ecumenical challenge for today moves beyond that initial vision to the healing and wholeness of the world. This broader goal of Christian ecumenism requires us to ask how we can be partners with others in building the human community that God intended from the very beginning. Where is there convergence between the Christian household and the larger household of God?

In exploring the contours of this new ecumenical reality, there are ten priorities that such a commitment presents:

1. *[Reclaiming] [Growing] the Ecumenical Vision*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must renew its foundational ecumenical identity through recommitment to the search for the visible unity of Christ’s church in its many forms. Presbyterian identity is diminished when the church turns inward, away from an embrace of the whole church and the whole inhabited earth. Recovery of the church’s ecumenical vision must begin with confession and repentance—of our internal divisions, our expectation of a privileged position in ecumenical affairs, our imagined self-sufficiency, our presumption of cultural hegemony, and our neglect of ecumenical relationships.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to listen anew to what the Spirit is saying to all the churches, and to listen to what Christians from other churches are saying to us. The church’s sustained quest for concord in essential things—faith, sacraments, mission, and ministry—will lead it to new and renewed relationships within the one holy catholic and apostolic church.

2. *Facing Obstacles to Christian Unity*

Distinct traditions, communions, and denominations live in various degrees of estrangement from one another. In addition to the significant historical, theological, and ecclesiastical barriers that continue to separate churches from one another, there is an awareness of the ways in which race, gender, class, culture, wealth, and power reinforce divisions in the church and the human community. All of these divisions do not eradicate the church’s unity, but they obscure it, impairing witness to the gospel and weakening common mission.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to recognize the full range of obstacles to Christian unity, and to commit itself to breaking down all dividing walls in both church and world.

3. *Bridging the Gaps Between the Local and the Global, Individual Congregations and the Denomination*

The terms “ecumenical” and “ecumenism” are not restricted to councils of churches or to national and international relationships among denominations. Many congregations are engaged ecumenically in common worship, study, and dialogue, and in partnerships for witness, service, and mission. Theological and structural links between local and broader ecumenism are often weak, however. Contacts among local, regional, and global relationships are often neglected.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to new ecumenical awareness that deepens relationships among congregational, denominational, and conciliar ecumenism. Each must be enriched by the others, leading the whole church to deeper communion in Christ.

4. *Enlarging the Table of Ecumenical Relationships*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) cannot be ecumenical by itself. We are linked to many others as we work for the unity of the body of Christ. The church is called to maintain valued relationships with long-standing partners in ecumenical councils, full communion accords, and other ecclesial agreements. At the same time, we are called to move beyond the limitations of the past to find our place at the ecumenical table. The table belongs to God, and must not be restricted by imagined privileges. All are invited guests of our one Lord, the Lord provides the space for all who are willing to come, and the Lord continues to invite all who are not yet willing.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to discover deeper forms of ecumenical commitment to the integrity of the gospel, embracing new partners whose different theologies, traditions, and structures can enrich our theology, traditions, and structures. All of our ecumenical relationships are for healing divisions and seeking reconciliation in the church and the world.

5. *Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth*

The unity of the church is not an end in itself, but an element in the reconciliation of the whole created order. The pursuit of God's justice is a response to the gospel that embraces the whole world, and that seeks God's abundant life for all people. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to working with other churches, listening to the voices of brothers and sisters who call for human freedom, social justice, and the healing of the planet entrusted to human care. As Presbyterians hear and engage in the work of freedom and justice, we are transformed.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to sustained study and serious engagement with the Accra Confession of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, "Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth" as approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 575).

6. [*Covenanting for*] *Peacemaking in a War-Torn World*

God's intention for the world is shalom—peace and justice for all creation—yet the world is wounded by violence and broken by war. Forces of brutality and aggression are at work in all aspects of human life, even within the church. Christ came to break down dividing walls of hostility and establish God's new way of reconciliation in the world. All who follow Christ are called to live as peacemakers in a world that lacks the deep reality of God's concord and unity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to renew its commitment to peacemaking within families and communities, in the church, and among societies and nations. As we live in unity with brothers and sisters around the world, working ecumenically to overcome violence, we both embody and proclaim fullness of the Lord's peace.

7. *Nurturing Interreligious Engagements*

Commitment to peacemaking and to justice in the economy, for the earth and in the social order, is more than a Christian concern. God is at work in the whole world, within and beyond the bounds of the church. God's household is larger than the church, and all God's people are integral to each other's wholeness and the healing of the world.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to forge interreligious relationships with all who yearn and work for the healing of our wounded world, grounding interreligious engagements in our ecumenical commitments and practices.

8. *Renewing a Commitment to Disciplines of Christian Spirituality*

Jesus prayed that all may be one, so that the world may believe that the Lord was sent by the God who loves the world (cf. John 17:1–26). The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to pray with Jesus, deepening our relationship to the One who gathers us. Through the ecumenical movement, American Presbyterians have been enriched by the worship practices of other Reformed Christians and other Christian traditions, capturing our imaginations and giving voice to our yearnings.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to renew its commitment to disciplines of Christian spiritual formation, especially worship, regular reading of Scripture, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. As we join with other Christians in praying with Jesus, we can better discern God's will, join God's mission, and nurture our life together.

9. *Celebrating Gifts We Receive and Share*

The church's engagements in ecumenical councils, its bilateral dialogues with other churches, its developing relationships with nontraditional partners, and its encounters with churches in the global community have brought gifts that enrich our understanding of Christian faith and life. We have also offered Reformed gifts such as commitment to scriptural authority and confessional integrity; the bond of grace and gratitude; the shared ministry of deacons, elders, and ministers; confessional declaration of the inclusion of women and men in all ministries of the church; and the indissoluble bond between faith and life, theology and ethics.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to receive gratefully the gifts God gives through others, and to share generously with others the gifts God has entrusted to us.

10. *Revitalizing Practices of Ecumenical Formation*

Ecumenical commitment and engagement was once central to Presbyterian identity. In the present time, when many Christians move easily from one denomination to another, confessional identity is ambiguous and the need for ecumenical dialogue is dimly recognized. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must revitalize practices of ecumenical formation so that a new generation, with all its diversity, can embrace a vision of Christian unity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to encourage commitment to the unity of Christ's church through a range of educational, experiential, and missional opportunities. Study materials for children, youth, and adults; seminary engagement with ecumenical documents; national and international ecumenical encounters; and regular worship with congregations of ecumenical partners are some of the ecumenical formation possibilities that must become regular features of Presbyterian life.

*An Affirmation of Our Ecumenical Commitment*

We affirm the goal of unity that Jesus described in his high priestly prayer:

We seek to become fully one in Christ, so that the world may believe.

We believe in one God, known to us in three persons,  
eternally united in the bond of love.  
In love we proclaim our faith in the Triune God  
and acknowledge one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

We are called to unity, but not uniformity, as people of God  
who, though many, are members one of another  
and who, together, constitute the body of Christ on earth.

We come as disciples bearing marks of diverse cultures and traditions,  
bringing unique insights, experiences, strengths, and vulnerabilities.  
We are eager to learn from one another, to seek formation and transformation,  
knowing that each of us stands in need of correction and mutual upbuilding.

We confess that too often we have undertaken alone  
projects and ministries that could have been enriched by broader participation,  
and we recommit ourselves to the historic Lund principle  
that Christians should take united action whenever they find this possible.

Our vision of unity in Christ is universal,  
concerned for the whole of creation, as well as the rights and needs of humanity.  
We are called to join with others in bold, prophetic [~~denunciation and resistance~~  
~~when confronting the power of empire~~] [witness when confronting the abuse of power] and threats to the planet,  
and in covenants for justice in the economy and the earth.

[As Christians,] [~~We~~] [we] remain open to the working of God's Spirit among people of other faiths, both in their individual and in their corporate religious lives and are prepared [as we are called by Jesus Christ,] to dialogue and cooperate everywhere with people of good will on behalf of justice, peace, and the common good. We pursue the journey of faith [with Christ] wherever we find ourselves, in whatever company, all in each place.

The tasks of Christian witness, service, justice, and peacemaking  
are addressed by councils, alliances, and national churches,  
but also in local encounters, congregational interaction,  
and common prayer across traditional religious boundaries.

Guided on our way by the Holy Spirit,  
we rejoice in the hope of perfect unity in Christ, a unity not of our making,  
but a gift designed and revealed by the Maker of us all.

Appendix A

Participants in the Consultation on the Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Carol Adcock  
Jack Baca  
David Baak, *Reformed Church in America*



Peter Barnes-Davies  
 Mary Gene Boteler  
 Anna Case-Winters  
 Jose Luis Casal  
 Ed Chan  
 Gary Cook  
 Vincent Das  
 Edward Davis  
 Jane Dempsey Douglass  
 James Fother, *United Church of Christ*  
 Jonas Georges  
 Theodore Gill Jr.  
 Arlene Gordon  
 Steve Grace  
 Krystin Granberg  
 Ted Gulick, *The Episcopal Church*  
 Catreli Hunter  
 David E. Jensen, *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*  
 Yong-Bok Kim, *Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea*  
 Emily Krause  
 Lew Lancaster  
 Eileen Lindner  
 Michael Livingston  
 Jerrod Lowry  
 Sarah McCaslin  
 Earl McCloud Jr., *African Methodist Episcopal Church*  
 Oscar McCloud  
 Rose Niles McCrary  
 Don Mason  
 Aimee Moiso  
 Blair Monie  
 Damayanthi Niles  
 James Noel  
 Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Methodist Church of Ghana*  
 Kathleen Owens  
 Joseph Pallikathayil  
 Rebecca Todd Peters  
 Neal Presa  
 Syngman Rhee  
 Allison Seed  
 George Telford  
 Oommen Thomas  
 Peggy Thomas  
 Kristine Thompson  
 Rebecca Tollefson  
 Eugene Turner  
 Cathy Ulrich  
 Philip Wickeri

PC(USA) Staff

Molly Casteel  
 Jon Chapman  
 Hunter Farrell  
 Ann Ferguson  
 Eric Hoey  
 Christian Iosso  
 Clifton Kirkpatrick  
 Sara Lisherness  
 Carlos Malave  
 Jay Rock  
 Joe Small  
 Tom Taylor  
 Linda Valentine  
 Robina Winbush

Endnote

1. The third world conference on Faith and Order in Lund, Sweden (1952) issued this challenge, “should not our churches ask themselves whether they are showing sufficient eagerness to enter into conversation with other churches, and whether they should not act

together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?" This principle has been adapted in many forms as the Lund Principle and often is formulated as "we should do together all things except those in which deep differences of conscience demand that we do separately."

## **\*Item 07-06**

[The assembly approved Item 07-06. See pp. 13, 15.]

*Invitation to Churches to Send Ecumenical Advisory Delegates to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) invite the following churches to send ecumenical advisory delegates to the 219th General Assembly (2010):**

**Overseas: Presbyterian Church in Nicaragua, Reformed Church in Argentina, Episcopal Diocese of Haiti, Orthodox Church of Belarus, Korean Christian Federation (DRPK), Presbyterian Church of Pakistan, Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Zimbabwe Synod.**

**Within the United States: Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, United Church of Christ, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Episcopal Church.**

### *Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations nominates to each General Assembly churches to be invited to send ecumenical advisory delegates to the subsequent assembly (Standing Rule B.2.g. and Section IV.C.7.d.(11) of the *Organization for Mission*). We recommend ten overseas churches and five churches from within the United States. Of the overseas churches, we recommend at least one church from each area staffed by the Worldwide Ministries Division. Of the churches within the United States, we recommend at least one church from the Formula of Agreement, at least two churches from Churches Uniting in Christ, and at least one church in our conciliar relationship.

## **\$Item 07-07**

[The assembly approved Item 07-07. See pp. 14, 15.]

*On Peaceful Relations Between the Christian and Muslim Communities—From the Presbytery of Chicago.*

**The Presbytery of Chicago overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

- 1. Affirm the PC(USA)'s commitment to and call for understanding, mutual respect, and peaceful relations between the Christian and Muslim communities.**
- 2. Instruct the Office of Theology & Worship and the Office of Interfaith Relations to undertake a study of current and evolving Presbyterian theological understanding of our relationship with our Muslim sisters and brothers. We strongly urge that such a study be done in a context of relationships and dialogue.**
- 3. Work to improve good relations between Presbyterians and Muslims at the level of national and international dialogue in order to promote peace, enhance mutual understanding, counteract bias and discrimination, recognize commonality, and celebrate diversity.**
- 4. Encourage and provide resources to presbyteries and local congregations to improve good relations and mutual understanding between Presbyterians and Muslims at the local level for the same reasons. Practices might include participation in sacred and holy observances in each other's traditions, shared meals, dialogue groups, and joint community projects, among others.**
- 5. Encourage PC(USA) governing bodies at all levels to advocate for human rights and civil rights protections for Muslims; identify areas where the civil rights of Muslims may be violated and work to counteract such violation. Communicate Presbyterian solidarity and support for those who are targeted or whose rights are violated.**

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$190; (2009): \$6,390; (2010): \$6,376 (Mission)]

*Rationale*

Given current political and humanitarian crises in the world, there is an urgency to be proactive in the search for peace, building bridges of understanding between faith traditions, and protecting the inherent worth and dignity of all human beings.

Prejudice, discrimination, and injustice continue to be pervasive in our society toward our Muslim sisters and brothers, where individuals are judged in stereotypical ways, where jobs are threatened, where apprehensions remain about the threats of detention and deportation, and where unfair characterizations of Muslims are often made. We seek to challenge these injustices mindful of the fact that in predominantly Muslim countries Christians may also be misunderstood and suffer discrimination.

Based on a Christian understanding that all human beings are created in the image of God, and propelled by Jesus' reiteration of the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves, we who follow Jesus are called to work for justice, to pursue understanding, and to extend love and kindness to all those created in the image of God.

## Resources

*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Office of Interfaith Relations*

Brochure: "Christians and Muslims" PDS # 74-292-04-002

Occasional Paper # 8: "Striving Together in Dialogue: A Muslim-Christian Call to Reflection and Action" PDS # 74-292-01-005

**Item 07-08**

[The assembly approved Item 07-08. See pp. 14, 15.]

*Mutual Recognition of Baptism with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

- 1. Receive the report on baptism from the Catholic Reformed Bilateral dialogue.**
- 2. Approve the Common Agreement on Baptism as an ecumenical statement for guidance and send to the presbyteries for ratification.**
- 3. Direct the General Assembly Council, through the Theology Worship and Education ministries area, to develop congregational study guides for the *Pastoral Recommendations: Tangible Expressions of Mutual Recognition of Baptism* and make readily available to congregations, pastors, and seminaries.**

*Rationale*

As a follow up to the 2001 delegation visit to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the 213th General Assembly (2001) instructed the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to invite the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to join in a study that would enable us to mutually affirm one another's baptisms. The 215th General Assembly (2003) authorized the seventh round of dialogue with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and requested that a report be given to the 218th General Assembly (2008). As part of that round, the dialogue was asked to focus on the meaning and practice of baptism, the relationship of baptism to Eucharist, and the role of both sacraments in shaping our churches and drawing them toward fuller communion. The methodology of the dialogue was to be designed to address issues that are theological, ecclesiastical, and pastoral. The dialogue has completed the section on baptism and is forwarding this report and common statement to the churches. The dialogue will continue to work on issues related to the Eucharist.

**REPORT OF THE CATHOLIC REFORMED BILATERAL DIALOGUE ON BAPTISM<sup>1</sup>**

## A SEASON OF ENGAGEMENT

The 20th century was one of intense dialogue among churches throughout the world. In the mission field and in local communities, in regional ecumenical bodies and in bilateral discussions between churches, Christians made commitments to engage each other not only in cooperative activity but theological deliberation. The Roman Catholic Church and churches of the

Reformed tradition have been no exceptions. This report on baptism is offered in the context of more than forty years of dialogue between the Reformed churches in the United States and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (now the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). The relationships in the United States form only a part of our context, however, and our dialogue has been enriched by encounter and relationships around the world.

#### OUR GLOBAL ROMAN CATHOLIC AND REFORMED CONTEXT

Important ecumenical events of the last forty years have influenced our theological perspectives as well as our maturing ability to understand each other. Liturgical renewals, encouraged by relationships with the Roman Catholic Church, have engendered in many Reformed Christians a deeper appreciation of our common roots. These renewals have heightened awareness of the richness of our common liturgical tradition. Roman Catholic seminaries have developed a renewed focus on the preaching of the word in the context of the sacramental liturgy, a strong emphasis in the Reformed tradition. In addition, in recent decades Roman Catholics have come to read Reformed theologians with new lenses. The discovery of new source material—both patristic and biblical—has greatly enhanced our collective ability to affirm a common heritage. More than ever before, ecumenical prayer services include a ritual for the reaffirmation of our baptismal vows, a reminder of that which binds us to each other as kindred in Christ, acknowledging our one calling through our one baptism, claimed by one God.

Earlier in our history, movements within our traditions sought to provide bridges between us. In the German Reformed community, for example, theologians of the Mercersburg liturgical movement made explicit commitments to rebuild relationship with the Roman Catholic Church as one element in manifesting the full visible unity of the church. Roman Catholic dioceses, in the aftermath of Vatican II, established diocesan ecumenical offices which nurtured the formation of “living room dialogues” in which many Reformed church members participated, enhancing relationships across the United States and the world. There are many examples of local and regional efforts in this area among the Roman Catholic and the Reformed churches.

Churches in relationship through the ecumenical movement have also sought to articulate specific beliefs about baptism. Our practices and our theologies have varied widely, but even without complete consensus there have emerged important experiences of convergence and deeper understanding. As a result of numerous bilateral dialogues, a growing familiarity with baptismal theology and practice among churches has made a profound contribution to the church’s ability to claim its vision of unity. As recently as 2002 the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in the Vatican urged ongoing study and dialogue of many theological issues for the enhancement of Roman Catholic and Reformed church relationships, most especially urging a focus on baptism as a basic to our Christian identity.

Some landmark studies have offered us encouragement and guidance along the way. The 1982 World Council of Churches document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* presented the churches with an important opportunity to engage in dialogue on these important matters. Through those studies, Christians came to appreciate more deeply their own and each other’s baptismal expressions and theology.

More recently, in the Eighth Report of the Joint Working Group between the Vatican and the World Council of Churches (2005), Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox Christians explored the meaning and the practice of this sacrament. While this important study was much broader in ecclesial scope than the one we offer here, it reflects many issues found in our own bilateral dialogue, and it urges, as we do, further study in those areas of ongoing difference. Finally, the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches is completing work on a document on our one Christian baptism, seeking mutual recognition, due to be released in 2008.

#### OUR REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

The international arena is only one among many vital settings for dialogue and reflection between Reformed and Roman Catholic Christians. Official discussions in national church settings in the United States have been equally important in advancing mutual understanding. Topics in the last forty years have included theological, liturgical and ethical issues. These issues have been explored with a consistent expectation that they are in primary service to the pastoral settings of all of our churches. Sound pastoral practice, however, rests on solid theological foundations. The current report, succeeding one on *Interchurch Families*, grew from a recognition that our pastoral customs reflect our different theological and ecclesiological traditions – differences which must be understood if we are to relate to each other in healthy ways.

In the United States, members of our traditions also encounter each other in local settings through common service and community worship experiences. Learning in those settings has been both intentional (through the formation of discussion groups between congregations and parishes) as well as informal (as neighbors work together on projects for the common good). Common work and intentional dialogue, where it has occurred consistently, has enabled members of both of our traditions to respond to community concerns effectively and deepen appreciation for the different gifts each brings to common public life.

Finally, the family has been a vital setting for dialogue between Roman Catholic and Reformed Christians in the United States. Increasingly, marriage and the mobility of extended families have contributed to this intimate encounter between the traditions, an experience which can be both a joy and sometimes also confusing. Families are the settings where the gifts that each tradition brings can be most concretely received, but also the place where our differences can be most keenly felt, and where the pain of our divisions may have the most significant impact. It has been important, therefore, in official settings, to approach with utmost care those topics which affect the experience of our members and the pastoral leaders who serve them.

In all of these settings, both the Reformed and the Roman Catholic churches have affirmed the value of ecumenical engagement and increased mutual understanding. Through our ongoing encounter we have come to know each other's ecclesial characteristics, value each other's strengths, and make commitments to deeper relationships.

We hope this study will provide an occasion for ongoing dialogue among Roman Catholic and Reformed lay and ordained leaders, both in those places of longtime engagement, and in those settings where it will be entirely new. Such dialogue can contribute to the common witness of the church on the local level, and make ecumenical ideas a lived reality of Christian faith.

#### OUR HOPE

It is precisely the gift of our unity in the church of Jesus Christ through our baptisms which enables us to come to dialogue tables not just as acquaintances but as kindred—as members of one family in Christ—to consider in depth these matters of baptismal theology and practice.

The theological reflection in this report is intended to provide a sound basis on which our communions can express, in tangible ways, a mutual recognition of each other's baptisms. We have acknowledged areas of agreement and of difference. Through active engagement we have experienced our own faith tradition more clearly by seeing ourselves through the lenses of our partners. Through dialogue we have become reacquainted with our own tradition, the scriptures, and the sacraments. We have had the opportunity to examine, and, perhaps most important, to correct, past misunderstandings and caricatures. As our relationships have deepened we have celebrated those areas of theological consensus and we give thanks for the patient and careful dialogue which has brought our traditions closer together; we note those places where consensus has yet to be achieved but where ongoing dialogue holds promise for closer convergence; and we acknowledge those aspects of our theology and practice where there is no convergence but where the commitment to the eventual full, visible unity of the church will be well-served by enhanced mutual understanding.

Through an honest desire to understand each other, and therefore to acknowledge both the limits and the possibilities of what we can accomplish together, we believe we can make an enduring statement about what we hold in common.

We offer this report not simply as an academic study to be reviewed by those with a particular interest in the theology of baptism but to the entire constituency of all of our churches as a discernment of where the Holy Spirit is leading us together. We offer a prayer of hope that each encounter may move us to even deeper recognition and into a more faithful relationship with the Triune God. Ultimately our unity is not something we create but is a gift given us by God. Its visible manifestation is something for which our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ prayed (John 17), and we know that the earliest witnesses to the Christian faith proclaimed both the present reality and the eschatological hope of one Lord, one faith, and one baptism (Ephesians 4). Where we have fallen short of answering the call to that full visible unity, we confess our culpability and the enduring scandal of division within the body of Christ.

And so in celebration of what we hold in common, and in testimony to our desire to make God's gift of unity more visible, we offer our common witness.

#### **COMMON AGREEMENT ON MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF BAPTISM** **Roman Catholic-Reformed Church dialogue**

1. Together we affirm that, by the sacrament of Baptism, a person is truly incorporated into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13 and 27; Ephesians 1:22–23), the church. Baptism establishes the bond of unity existing among all who are part of Christ's body and is therefore the sacramental basis for our efforts to move towards visible unity.
2. Together we affirm that Baptism is the sacramental gateway into the Christian life, directed toward the fullness of faith and discipleship in Christ.
3. Together we affirm that incorporation into the universal church by baptism is brought about by celebrating the sacrament within a particular Christian community.

4. Together we affirm that Baptism is to be conferred only once, because those who are baptized are decisively incorporated into the Body of Christ.
5. Together we affirm that baptism is a sacrament of the church, enacted in obedience to the mission confided to it by Christ's own word. For our baptisms to be mutually recognized, water and the scriptural Trinitarian formula "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28: 19–20) must be used in the baptismal rite.
6. Together we affirm that the validity of Baptism depends on its celebration according to the apostolic witness by the church and its authorized ministers.
7. Together we affirm, as a sign of our unity and as a witness to ecumenical commitment, the practice of inviting the presence and, where appropriate, the participation of members of our respective communions in the celebration of Baptism. At the same time, we affirm our responsibility to respect the integrity of the distinct baptismal practices of the communions in which the rite of Baptism is administered.
8. Given our mutual recognition of Baptism, we encourage using baptismal registers in the local church community and, when requested by another church for a pastoral need in the life of an individual, providing written attestations of Baptism, including the liturgical formula used. Such cooperation and mutual accountability honors the dignity of the sacrament of Baptism.

We rejoice at the common faith we share and affirm in this document. We understand that the journey toward full, visible unity depends on openness to the grace of God and humility before the initiatives of God's Spirit among us. Because of these convictions, we encourage Roman Catholic and Reformed pastoral leaders to continue their commitment to regular dialogue about theology and pastoral practice from local to international settings. Pastoral leaders engaged in such dialogue embody our hopes for unity, collaborative effort, and common witness. We believe that respectful dialogue can provide a strong witness to the wider church about our commitment to a relationship in Christ and can stand as a safeguard against the unreflective judgments that have, at certain times in our history, diminished and distorted our relations.

**Pastoral Recommendations: Tangible Expressions of Mutual Recognition of Baptism**  
Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue

1. In our Agreement, we have given the grounds for formal mutual recognition of the validity of our baptisms. The following are recommended to the consideration of our communions on the basis of the ecumenical commitments that bring us to the dialogue table. *It is understood that these recommendations should be implemented in accordance with existing regulations.*
2. We recommend that our local communities maintain the custom of keeping baptismal records and providing baptismal certificates when requested at various times in the Christian life of our members. Compatibility in the form and content of these documents would be sign of ecumenical cooperation and a safeguard of the validity of what we celebrate together as Christians.
3. We recommend that prominence be given to the placement of the baptismal font and water near the worshipping assembly as a sign of continuity in faith.
4. We recommend the practice of inviting members of our respective communions to reaffirm their Baptism together at times of prayer for Christian unity.
5. We recommend, where the custom of baptismal sponsors, witnesses, or godparents has been maintained, that these be selected from our respective communities of faith as a sign that Christians belonging to our communions are truly members of the Body of Christ. This is particularly important when welcoming interchurch families and their congregations to a celebration of Baptism.
6. We recommend the active participation of the families of those to be baptized in the selection of readings, intercessory prayers, and music as a way of giving tangible evidence of the unity that we share in Christ.
7. Mindful that the active participation of clergy and laity of the respective communions of the spouses is at present allowed in interchurch weddings, we also recommend the practice of inviting clergy or lay guests to offer prayers, proclaim a Scripture reading, preach, and/or confer a blessing in the rite of Baptism, maintaining respect for the rites of each communion.
8. We recommend the participation of clergy in local ministerial associations in order to facilitate the pastoral dialogues that need to take place to foster ecumenical cooperation at Baptism and at other important times in the faith

journeys of Christians. Ministerial associations can be a means for fostering life-long spiritual accompaniment in faith both for clergy and for the laity whom they serve. In addition, such associations may find other creative symbolic ways to foster ecumenical sharing in a town, neighborhood, or village.

9. At the funeral rites of members of our communions, including other Christians with whom we are in ecumenical dialogue, we recommend the use of a prayer or rite (e.g. sprinkling of the casket, the white pall, etc.) as a final commendation that calls to mind the enduring gift of grace received in Baptism.
10. We recommend the use of those liturgical options already available in our official ritual books for the celebration of Baptism that enhance ecumenical awareness on the local level.
11. Mindful that in many instances local congregations may not be able to implement all these recommendations at the present time, we recommend a patient and prudent process of discernment among laity and clergy. We recognize that the journey towards full, visible unity depends on openness to the grace of God and humility before the initiatives of God's Spirit among us, which are themselves based on Baptism. Let us above all work to promote the works of charity and service not only to those who are of the household of the faith, but also to all people and to all of creation.

#### Endnote

1. Martha Moore Keish and Richard Mouw serve as PCUSA representatives to the dialogue and Rev. Robina Winbush served as staff. Dr. Mouw also serves as co-chair of the dialogue. A complete list of participants may be found in the full document on baptism.

## \*Item 07-09

[The assembly approved Item 07-09. See pp. 13, 15.]

*PC(USA) Delegation to the National Council of Churches of Christ (2008–2011)—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations nominates to the 218th General Assembly (2008) the following persons to serve as the PC(USA) delegation to the National Council of Churches of Christ for the quadrennium beginning in 2008 and ending in 2011.**

**By virtue of office: Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for Ecumenical Relations, the General Assembly Council Executive Director.**

**Cesar Carhauchin, Jose Luis Casal, Elsi L. Dursi, Arlene Gordon, Leslie R. Hyder, Jin S. Kim, Aimee Moiso, Lewis Mudge, J. Herbert Nelson II, Kathleen Owens, Rebecca Todd-Peters, Daniel Rift, Oomen Thomas.**

**Alternates: Bridgett Green, Jennifer Lancaster, George Telford.**

#### *Rationale*

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds membership in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A (NCCC). We have sixteen delegates to the General Assembly of the NCCC. The GACER nominates the above persons to represent the PC(USA) in the NCCC General Assembly based upon experience, expertise, and ability to represent the breadth of the PC(USA) membership.

## Item 07-10

[The assembly approved Item 07-10. See pp. 14, 15.]

*Covenant Agreement with the Moravian Church—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

1. **Receive the report of the Moravian/Reformed bilateral dialogue.**

2. **Receive the Moravian/Reformed Covenant Partnership Agreement as an ecumenical statement (G-15.0302b) and send it to the presbyteries for their ratification.**
3. **Give the following directions in implementing this ecumenical agreement:**
  - a. **Direct staff in the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to work with Moravian colleagues to develop processes and procedures for the orderly exchange of ministers.**
  - b. **Direct staff in the General Assembly Council to explore with Moravian colleagues opportunities for strengthening mission partnerships, joint evangelism efforts, and development of shared resources, and to encourage Presbyterian conferences and gatherings to extend invitations to Moravians for participation as appropriate.**
  - c. **Direct staff in the Office of the General Assembly to explore with Moravian colleagues opportunities for appropriate invitations to share in the governance and communal life of each other's churches.**
  - d. **Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to work with presbyteries in understanding this agreement and facilitating their partnership with Moravian synods.**
  - e. **Direct the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to give oversight to this agreement and report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) progress that has been made and any additional recommendations to support this agreement.**

**AN INVITATION TO THE TABLE:  
A PROPOSAL FOR A MORAVIAN/REFORMED COVENANT PARTNERSHIP**

*We're gonna sit at the welcome table,  
We're gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days, Hallelujah!*

*—Traditional Spiritual adapted*

As representatives of five different communions met for theological discussion, worship, and fellowship between 2002 and 2007, the image—and reality—of *the table* emerged as central in the group's understanding of its task. We have identified three ways (happily and conveniently Trinitarian) in which this image speaks to our past work and our future hopes.

*First is the table of conversation.* We recognize that each communion brings specific gifts to this table, and that all share a commitment to honest and far-ranging exploration of our differences and similarities. The table of conversation is graced by sincere questioning and respectful listening. We have discovered that miscommunication can result when shared terms carry different meanings, and have spent long and fruitful hours expanding our understanding of one another's polity and practice.

For example, both the Moravians and the Presbyterians include the office of elder, so at first glance it would appear that this is one instance of commonality. But as we discovered, the structure and functions of the office are quite different. Moravian elders are elected for a fixed term and installed to serve only the congregation, district, or province in which they are elected. They form a governing board and have oversight responsibility within the jurisdiction, which they serve. Presbyterian elders, on the other hand, are ordained for life and can function as elder within any Presbyterian congregation. They have ministerial duties, which in the Moravian church are reserved for the ordained clergy.

Another example is the office of bishop. One of the gifts that Moravians bring to the table of conversation is the concept of bishop as a pastor to pastors, one charged with providing spiritual leadership and praying for the welfare of the church. Considerable discussion centered on the function of the bishop within the Moravian Unity. Reformed partners in the Dialogue were surprised and intrigued to learn that Moravian bishops have no administrative duties by virtue of their office.

As Christians we are a people of story. In sharing the narrative of our faith journeys, as individuals and as denominations, we make of the table of conversation a place to gather in witness to the wonder and graciousness of God's work in the world.

*The second table is the table of fellowship.* The simple act of sitting together to share a common meal recalls the Agape meal of the early church, with its emphasis on hospitality to all who gather. While all of our denominations recognize the benefits to the community of church suppers and other opportunities for food and fellowship, the Moravians demonstrate with their practice of Lovefeast a way to integrate meal and liturgy in a service of worship engaging all the senses. The Lovefeast, precisely because it is not sacramental in nature, has the added advantage of being a liturgical meal in which all may participate freely.



The Psalmist invites us to “taste and see that the Lord is good” (Ps. 34:8). In the Lovefeast hymns, participants taste sweet words of praise and thanksgiving, and in the Lovefeast meal itself they taste the sweet buns and pungent coffee, filling mouths and hearts with gratefulness for the Lord’s bounty. The table of fellowship invites all to delight in God’s graciousness.

*The third table is, of course, the Eucharistic table.* It is the place where each of us encounters our crucified and risen Lord. It is the table of nourishment for our spirits, before which we stand or kneel in awe and wonder. The covenant partnership to which we aspire recognizes no barrier to full participation by any of our members in the celebration of Holy Communion in any one of our churches. The verse of a familiar Moravian hymn expresses it clearly and simply: “With one cup and with one bread thus one cov’nant way we tread.” In such manner we join to bear witness to God’s all-encompassing invitation. The feast is prepared. The banquet table is spread. Let us work together to gather in all who are hungry and thirsty, that all may be satisfied.

To this end we offer a proposal for Covenant Partnership.

#### *A Brief Introduction and Background for This Proposal*

The Moravian-Reformed Dialogue, and its proposal for “covenant partnership” among the Moravian Church,<sup>1</sup> the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ, are products of earlier ecumenical work.<sup>2</sup> In 1998, *A Formula of Agreement* initiated a full communion relationship between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and three Reformed partners: the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA)), the Reformed Church in America (RCA), and the United Church of Christ (UCC). In 1999, the ELCA and the Moravian Church entered an agreement of full communion.

For almost fifty years, Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC) and its predecessor body, the Consultation on Church Union (COCU), have searched for a meaningful and demonstrable expression of church unity that is “truly catholic, truly reformed and truly evangelical.” The PC(USA), the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the UCC have been full participants in this process from the beginning; more recently the Moravian Church-Northern Province has become a full participant. Among the stumbling blocks to progress have been questions and tensions regarding certain reformed and episcopal practices of the ministry of oversight. “Reformed” generally refers to oversight by representative bodies of both clergy and laity. “Episcopal” generally refers to oversight vested in an individual, especially a bishop whose authority derives from participation in the historic succession.<sup>3</sup>

Recognizing that the Moravian Church practices a ministry of oversight that is at once reformed and episcopal, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 2000 invited the Moravian Church to enter into a formal dialogue. Because of earlier ecumenical commitments made through the *Formula of Agreement*, the United Church of Christ and the Reformed Church in America were also invited to join; the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was included because of its participation in CUiC and its long-standing ecumenical partnership with the UCC.

The PC(USA) entered the dialogue with several goals: (1) to reach an understanding of the ministry of oversight in each tradition; (2) to explore areas of cooperative work in global, national, and local settings; (3) to enable PC(USA) and Moravian congregations to gain greater knowledge of one another and of the denominations’ cooperative work; and (4) to seek common agreements that could lead to establishing full communion between the Moravian Church and one or all of the Reformed churches.<sup>4</sup> The dialogue began formally in April 2002 in Winston-Salem, and representatives have met once or twice annually through May 2007, although changes in the Moravian Church occasioned a yearlong hiatus in 2003. Initial meetings focused on introducing and clarifying the several communions’ structures and the ordering of ministry within those structures. The group gave particular attention to identifying the divisive issues within each of the five churches, recognizing that many of these issues were common to all. Equally important, conversation about the theological principles held in common among all five communions made clear that no doctrinal or ecclesiological barriers stand in the way of closer relationships.

While the impetus for this dialogue, and the present proposal, was the relationship of “full communion” that both the Moravian Church and three of the four Reformed churches have with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we have chosen to use the language of “covenant partnership” in our recommendation that a new relationship be established. There are two reasons for this linguistic choice. First, in both the Reformed and the Moravian traditions, we understand ourselves to be called into covenant relationship with the Divine. As a covenant people we are called to seek meaningful relationships with other Christian bodies as a reflection of our covenant with Christ. Covenant partnership indicates a commitment to gather at Table together—for dialogue, fellowship, and Eucharist; it also indicates commitment to rise from Table and to engage in mission together. Second, we believe that the language of “full communion” suggests a relationship accomplished, rather than—as we envision—a relationship emerging and ongoing. “Covenant partnership” points toward a shared journey, one that leads us together to greater faithfulness and witness to the ministry of Jesus Christ. It seeks to name relationships that already exist on many levels, and to open the door for growing relationships in the future.

*Toward a Deeper Relationship: Past History and Ecumenical Commitments*

Both the Moravian Church and the four Reformed bodies see no obstacles, present or past, to covenant partnership. Moreover, all five churches have histories of cooperative and ecumenical commitments.

*The Moravian Church*

The Moravian Church has a long history of ecumenism. In its first decade (1457–67) adherents managed with dissident Catholic priests before they sought an ordained ministry of their own. Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf, the chief influence in the renewal of the church in the 1700s, saw the Moravian Church as an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, a pietist “yeast” and mission society within larger state churches of Germany and Scandinavia. In the 18th and 19th centuries, many Moravian preaching places in America became congregations of other communions. More recently, Moravians have been active in ecumenical groups from local bodies to the World Council of Churches. In 1999, the Moravian Church concluded a full communion agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and it is now involved in dialogue with the Episcopal Church, as well as with the four Reformed partners in this dialogue.

Because of their world mission heritage, identification with the global Moravian communion has always been important for American Moravians. However, with the end of political colonialism and the independence of former “mission fields,” this is less central than in the past. Also, Moravians are increasingly aware that denominationalism has sometimes distracted them from seeking relationships with other Christians and responding to social issues closer to home.

There appear to be no discernible barriers to deeper relationships between the Moravians and the communions engaged in this dialogue. The Moravian spirit toward traditional creeds and confessions is expressed in *The Ground of the Unity*, the official doctrinal statement of the denomination, adopted in 1957 and modified only slightly since then:

The Unitas Fratrum recognizes in the creeds of the Church the thankful acclaim of the Body of Christ. These creeds aid the Church in formulating a Scriptural confession, in marking the boundaries of heresies, and in exhorting believers to an obedient and fearless testimony in every age. The Unitas Fratrum maintains that all creeds formulated by the Christian Church stand in need of constant testing in the light of the Holy Scriptures.

It acknowledges as such true professions of faith the early Christian witness: “Jesus Christ is Lord!” and also especially the ancient Christian creeds and the fundamental creeds of the Reformation.<sup>5</sup>

The irenic spirit with which the Moravian Church approaches creeds also inform its approach toward potentially church-dividing issues such as baptism and human sexuality. Because of the understanding of prevenient grace, the normal practice of the Moravian church is children’s baptisms; however, parents have the right to postpone the baptism of their children. There are differing convictions among Moravians regarding sexual orientation, but the Unity Synod (the highest international Moravian body) has stated that the issue of human sexuality “does not rise to the level of the Lordship of Christ,” indicating that believers can in good faith disagree on some questions of sexuality.

There are, of course, differences of emphasis. Moravians, for example, have put more stress on devotional life and have been less likely than some Reformed bodies to see social and political advocacy as part of the total Christian witness. This is one of the many areas in which we can learn from one another.

*The Four Reformed Churches—Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Reformed Church in America, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), United Church of Christ*

Although these four Reformed communions have different origins, structures of governance, and confessional emphases, all share historical commitments to, and participation in, ecumenical activities. Beginning in the mid-1790s, members of the Dutch Reformed Church (now the RCA) partnered with other denominations to send missionaries to the American Indians. In 1801, Presbyterians and Congregationalists<sup>6</sup> adopted a Plan of Agreement, often called the first formal ecumenical agreement in America, which for half a century committed the two bodies to work cooperatively in planting churches on the frontier. Roughly two decades later, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) emerged as a movement committed to ending the unscriptural “party divisions” of both belief and practice that separated denominations.

All four bodies are presently active in numerous bilateral and conciliar ecumenical relationships. All are members of the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches; individually, each participates in other ecumenical alliances and conversations, including Christian Churches Together and Churches Unit-ing in Christ. Three of the four participants (the UCC, PC(USA), and RCA) were signatories to the *Formula of Agreement* with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shares with the United Church of Christ an ecumenical partnership that enjoys full reconciliation of ministries.

None of the Reformed bodies perceives historic or present barriers, either of theology and practice or of governance, to fuller and deeper partnership with the Moravian Church.

*Toward A Deeper Relationship: Current Cooperative Work*

Moravians and Reformed bodies already work together in many ways, both formal and informal. All participant communions in this dialogue are members of the National Council of Churches of Christ. The Moravian Church—Northern Province and three Reformed bodies (UCC, CC/DC, and PC(USA)) are members of Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC). Reformed bodies have at various times worked with Moravians in Nicaragua and Honduras. Sister bodies in the Caribbean work together at a seminary in Jamaica. Since the fall of the iron curtain, Moravians, Presbyterians, and others in Alaska have done church planting among people in nearby Siberia.

Theological seminaries of all the bodies welcome students from the other groups, and faculties serve across denominational lines as well. (This is a significant change from a not-too-distant past when pastors were educated almost exclusively at denominational seminaries.) Ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament serve across denominational lines, both as interim pastors and as installed pastors. A closer ecumenical agreement will only facilitate the ongoing exchange and eventual reconciliation of ministries.

Most of the communions in this dialogue are concentrated in some geographic areas and less represented in others. (For example, there are Moravian congregations in only seventeen states.<sup>7</sup>) This regional distribution has affected where congregations of the dialogue communions have worked together thus far. Nevertheless, there are many local instances of common effort, especially in social service—for example, homeless shelters, Habitat for Humanity projects, CROP Walks, food pantries, and racial justice work.

*Covenant Partnership: A Proposal*

The value of a covenant partnership between the Moravian Church and one or more Reformed bodies is evident. Such partnership reminds us, first of all, that our separate churches have missed many opportunities to share in ministry and mission, although God calls us to work together as one. Equally important, covenant partnership makes intentional witness to the churches' diversity in unity. Discussions in our five-year-long dialogue have highlighted a number of ways, both in practice and in polity, in which each communion brings unique and valuable gifts to the table. Rather than minimize denominational differences in favor of bland uniformity, a covenant partnership will recognize and celebrate the many different ways in which partners are able to worship the one Triune God and proclaim the Gospel of Christ to the world. Contemporary groups, both civil and religious, too often suggest, "my way is the only way." Partnership offers the opportunity to speak a prophetic word to those who disparage diversity.

Finally, covenant partnership will facilitate a process for joint—and thus more effective—mission. Ideally, the various mission boards will come to the point where a covenant partner or partners will automatically be invited to participate in any new mission efforts. (Indeed, if covenant partnership is to become real locally, joint mission is essential. Perhaps, for example, concrete goals—such as local partnerships to build Habitat for Humanity houses—could inaugurate the partnership and make it more meaningful.)

What is involved, specifically, in a covenant partnership between the Moravian Church and one or more of the Reformed communions?

- As Covenant partners, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Moravian Church Northern and Southern Provinces recognize each other as churches in which the gospel is rightly preached and the sacraments rightly administered according to the Word of God in the Scriptures.
- As Covenant partners, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Moravian Church Northern and Southern Provinces recognize each other's ordained ministries as valid and will seek to reconcile their ordained ministries. We will develop a process to provide for the orderly exchange and mutual oversight of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament. When possible, partners will regularly consult regarding the preparation of candidates for ordination, and the processes necessary for preparing them to serve both within their tradition and ecumenically.
- We covenant to work cooperatively—locally, regionally, and nationally—in mission. Such efforts may include sharing models of existing cooperation, as well as creating new opportunities for common witness and mission.
- We covenant to invite mutual participation in governance and other activities. We will invite each other regularly to participate in church-wide assemblies, synods, and councils; and where appropriate, to give advice and counsel regarding the ongoing work and decision-making in the churches. We will also encourage and invite mutual representation in various causes, conferences, and other gatherings, with particular attention to youth/young adult and racial/ethnic caucuses.

- We covenant to develop joint resources, as appropriate. Such resources may include but not be limited to Christian education curriculum, mission education resources, and liturgical resources that could be used jointly and may facilitate mutual understanding and commitment throughout the wider church.
- We covenant to seek regular opportunity to sit at Table together for conversation, fellowship, and sacramental celebration. In this intimate sharing, partners will deepen their knowledge of one another, their faith in God's abundant presence, and their commitment to being Christ's body together in a world that needs both help and hope.

We find this language, adapted from *A Formula of Agreement*, to be an appropriate way to conclude:

In affirming covenant partnership, each participating communion acknowledges that it is undertaking a serious commitment, one that involves actions as well as words. Covenant partnership cannot be achieved without awareness of existing differences and similarities among the partners; it will demand dedication to walking and working together in ways that may, at times, represent a break with the past. Walking together involves not only the likelihood, but also the certainty of mutual challenge and change; because of this commitment, each body will eventually be different in ways that presently cannot be seen. The partner churches commit themselves to this new relationship with seriousness of intent, and full assurance that the One who calls us to greater visible unity is faithful and worthy of trust.

#### *Five Communion Have Participated in the Moravian-Reformed Dialogue*

*The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* is a faith community of some 700,000 members across the United States and Canada. From its founding along the western frontier of the United States in the early 19th century, this church began as a movement proclaiming the unity of the church and oneness among all Christians gathered at a common Table of the Lord's Supper. Initially the vision of unity was based upon the restoration of New Testament practices; today, the denomination's efforts in seeking unity focus upon covenantal agreements and shared mission.

The church is structured in three expressions: congregational, regional, and general. Each expression has its own particular responsibilities and authority, but always in covenant and ministry with the other expressions to fulfill the whole church's mission. The congregations are divided into thirty-three geographic regions that bear responsibility for oversight and nurture. Eleven general ministries and the Office of General minister and president link the denomination with the wider church, world missions and support services to expand the church's ministry to fulfill the mission of being "a faithful, growing church, that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice."

*The Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum)* is a worldwide body consisting of nearly 800,000 members in nineteen provinces. In the United States and Canada, the Northern and Southern Provinces together include, respectively, roughly 25,000 and 18,000 members. Alaska and Labrador are separate provinces. Governance is representative: quadrennial synods plan the work of provinces, while provincial elders' conferences, with both lay and clergy members, exercise ministries of oversight (including ministerial ordination and discipline) between synods. There are three orders of ministry: deacon, presbyter, and bishop; all three orders may preside over the rites of the church, including baptism and Holy Communion. Bishops, elected for life, exercise no special ministries of administrative oversight; rather, they serve as theological resources, servants at the request of the provincial elders' conferences, intercessors for the church and "pastor to pastors."

The Moravian Church recognizes a variety of historic creeds and confessions; it steadfastly maintains, however, that the Bible contains no single system of doctrine, and it refuses to use any one creed as a litmus test of faith. (Indeed, the best picture of Moravian doctrine may be found in the group's hymns and liturgies.) Moravians are eager to recognize and partner with all Christians and Christian denominations that recognize the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Two mottos guide members' life and work: "Our Lamb has conquered; let us follow him"; and "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, love."

*The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA))* traces its ancestry back to Scotland and England by way of reformers John Calvin and John Knox. In the United States, the Presbyterian church has split and united several times. The PC(USA), formed in 1983, is the result of reunion between northern and southern branches of the church. With roughly 2.5 million members, it is the largest Presbyterian denomination in the United States.

The Constitution of the PC(USA) consists of two volumes, *The Book of Confessions*,<sup>8</sup> which includes ancient and contemporary creeds and confessions, and the *Book of Order*, which enumerates governmental, worship, and disciplinary standards. The latter volume makes clear that "the nature of Presbyterian order is such that it shares power and responsibility. The system of governing bodies,<sup>9</sup> whether they have authority over one or many churches, sustains such mutual relationships within the structures as to express the unity of the church."<sup>10</sup>

The PC(USA) understands itself to be only one part of the Body of Christ. It is committed to seeking the full visible unity of the church and is active in conciliar, cooperative, missional, and bilateral dialogues and partnerships, including

membership in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to living its faith both in creedal affirmation and in faithful public witness and social action.

*The Reformed Church in America (RCA)* was founded in 1628 as the established church of the Dutch Colony of New Netherland. Strongest in the mid-Atlantic region and the upper Midwest, it consists of roughly 300,000 members. Governance is presbyterian and conciliar. Ordained ministers, elders, and deacons meet in deliberative assemblies at four levels: local consistories, classes (analogous to presbyteries, with the power of ordination and discipline), regional synods, and a general synod.

The denomination's heritage is Calvinist; today the RCA is theologically conservative but irenic and nonjudgmental. Traditionally it has stressed doctrine over lifestyle. Pastors must hold to several historic creeds and Reformed confessions, including the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort. From the 19th century, foreign missions were ecumenical, and the RCA has historically been a strong participant in ecumenical activities. This commitment is expressed both in a pattern of partnership globally with indigenous bodies, and in conciliar and full communion relationships with other denominations, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Church of Christ.

*The United Church of Christ (UCC)* was formed in 1957, the union of two previously merged bodies in the United States. The Congregational and the Christian churches (joined in 1931) have their origins in the English reformation and post-Revolutionary America, respectively; the Evangelical Synod and the Reformed Church (joined in 1934) were churches of German heritage with roots in the continental reformation. Current membership is roughly 1.2 million. The UCC polity is both congregational (the rights of local churches are inalienable) and connectional (ministerial standing and discipline are handled regionally, by Associations). The concept of "covenant"—mutual accountability and respect among individuals in, and settings of, the church—binds together otherwise autonomous Associations, Conferences, and a biennial General Synod. The latter representative body, which coordinates the work and witness of the denomination, speaks "to, not for" the local churches.

Theologically, the UCC "looks to the word of God in the Scriptures," and "claims as its own" historic creeds and confessions, while insisting that Christians in each generation must re-examine and re-interpret these authoritative sources.<sup>11</sup> From its founding in what has been called "an ecumenical crucible," the UCC has engaged in numerous bi- and multilateral conversations and partnerships. Its members are active nationally and globally in direct action for social and economic justice and peace.

#### *Moravian Reformed Dialogue Participants*

##### *Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*

The Reverend Darwin Collins  
The Reverend Dr. Robert Welsh, staff

##### *Moravian Church*

The Reverend Dr. Daniel Crews  
The Reverend Dr. Worth Green  
Marian Shatto  
The Reverend Dr. Hermann I. Weinlick, staff

##### *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

Elder Margaret "Chess" Campbell  
The Reverend Joseph S. Harvard III  
The Reverend Alyce Kelly  
The Reverend Elizabeth Brookens-Sturman  
The Reverend Robina M. Winbush, staff

##### *Reformed Church in America*

The Reverend Dr. Daniel Meeter  
The Reverend Douglas Fromm, staff

##### *United Church of Christ*

The Reverend Dr. Elizabeth Nordbeck  
The Reverend Lydia Veliko, staff

#### Endnotes

1. For the purposes of this document and the relationships it establishes, reference to the Moravian Church is exclusive to the congregations who are organized under the authority of the Northern and Southern Provinces.

2. Descriptions of each of the participating communions are at the end of this document.
3. In practice, denominations mix and vary these elements of collective and individual oversight. Moravian bishops, while standing in historic succession, do not exercise judicial oversight; rather such oversight is exercised by the Provincial Elders Conference, a representative body of clergy and laity. The PC(USA) and RCA, on the other hand, vest oversight exclusively in representative bodies (presbyteries and classes) of clergy and laity.
4. It should be noted that the three other Reformed partners (RCA, UCC, CC/DC) entered the dialogue primarily with the first three goals in mind. As the dialogue proceeded, however, representatives of all three communions perceived the appropriateness and usefulness of seeking deeper formal relationships with the Moravian Church. If pursued, such relationships would be effected bilaterally, rather than (as with the Formula of Agreement) by the Reformed bodies acting together. It is further understood that the Moravian Church will proceed in each case only if both the Northern and Southern Provinces agree to pursue a closer relationship with a given denomination.
5. In the various Provinces of the Renewed Unitas Fratrum the following documents gained special importance, because in them the main doctrines of the Christian faith find clear and simple expression: The Apostles', Athanasian, and Nicene Creeds, The Confession of the Unity of the Bohemian Brethren of 1535, the Twenty-one Articles of the unaltered Augsburg Confession, Martin Luther's Shorter Catechism, the Synod of Berne of 1532, the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, the Barmen Declaration, the Heidelberg Confession.
6. Congregationalists are the largest constituent body within the United Church of Christ.
7. North Carolina, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Wisconsin, Maryland, Minnesota, District of Columbia, Florida, Virginia, California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, North Dakota, Michigan.
8. Included are the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds; the Scots, Heidelberg, Second Helvetic, and Westminster Confessions; the Shorter and Larger Catechisms; the Barmen Declaration; the Confession of 1967, and A Brief Statement of Faith.
9. The governing bodies are sessions (local congregations), presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly.
10. From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Book of Order*, G-4.0302.
11. *The Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ* (2001), 2.

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#### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 07-10

*Comment on Item 07-10—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).*

On Item 07-10, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly would like to inform the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the document, "An Invitation to the Table: A Proposal for a Moravian/Reformed Covenant Partnership," will need to be approved as "a received ecumenical statement" by our General Assembly, the majority of our presbyteries, and the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church.

Because of our deep commitment to this move toward visible unity, it is our common understanding that if any of these bodies are not able to approved the document, the dialogue would be reconstituted to continue working toward the goal of covenant relationship.

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## Item 07-11

[The assembly approved Item 07-11 with comment. See pp. 14, 15.]

*Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

1. **Receive the report of the Episcopal/Presbyterian bilateral dialogue.**
2. **Receive the Episcopal/Presbyterian Agreement as an ecumenical statement (G-15.0302b) and send it to the presbyteries for their ratification.**
3. **Give the following directions in implementing this ecumenical agreement:**

a. Authorize the next round of dialogue with the Episcopal Church for purposes of further study and dialogue in the areas of diaconal ministries, historic episcopate, the office of elder, and other related subjects as a continued effort toward the full reconciliation of our ministries and interchangeability of our ministers.

b. Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to work with presbyteries in understanding this agreement and facilitating their partnership with Episcopal dioceses.

c. Direct the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to give oversight to this agreement and report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) progress that has been made and any additional recommendations to support this agreement.

**Comment:** In recognizing the spirit of cooperation already present in the agreement, the 218th General Assembly (2008) suggests that further dialogue between the PC(USA) and the Episcopal Church give special attention to mutuality in language regarding both church governance and worship practice.

### *Rationale*

The 212th General Assembly (2000) mandated a bilateral dialogue with the Episcopal Church for the purposes of moving toward mutual reconciliation of ministries within the Consultation on Church Union (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 107). The bilateral dialogue began meeting in June 2002 and worked closely with the Ministry Task Force of Churches Uniting in Christ. It became clear through the CUiC process that we are not yet able to reconcile our ministries. However, the dialogue team is prepared to recommend actions that will allow our churches to recognize each other's ministries as authentic and valid with the prayer that we will one day be able to fully reconcile our ministries.

Constitutionally, for the PC(USA) this agreement is based upon G-13.0103s (establish and maintain ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church); G-11.0405 (permission for ministers of other denominations to serve in temporary pastoral relationships); G-15.0200 (Relations with Other Denominations). This agreement does not require amendments to the *Book of Order*.

## PRESBYTERIAN/EPISCOPAL BI-LATERAL DIALOGUE

### I. Background

It has been nearly fifty years since the Reverend Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., proposed in a sermon at Grace Episcopal Cathedral, San Francisco, the establishment of a dialogue between the Protestant Episcopal Church and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., in the hope that this would result in a united church that would be "truly catholic, truly reformed, and truly evangelical." This would later be expanded to include the United Methodist Church and, subsequently, seven other denominations, including three historically black Methodist denominations. This would give rise to the Consultation on Church Union, which would subsequently be succeeded in this vision in 2001 by Churches Uniting in Christ, with ten denominations from the Reformed, Anglican, Methodist, and Moravian traditions.

Historically, Anglicanism and Presbyterianism grew up as cousins, if not siblings, in England, Scotland, and later in Ireland and Wales, and these traditions were transplanted into the American context during the colonial period. Having had common roots in Britain, as well as in the colonies, and being generally of similar socioeconomic and educational levels, Presbyterians and Episcopalians have over the years engaged in conversations towards unity on and off since the 1890s.

The definitive statement of the basis for church union in the Episcopal Church, indeed in Anglicanism as a whole, is the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. Originally an invitation by the American Episcopal Bishops to discussions of union with various other church bodies, churches from the Presbyterian tradition alone responded. There were no permanent results of these discussions, although these conversations were background to subsequent and serious proposals towards merger in the 1940s.

### II. The Dialogue

The current Presbyterian-Episcopal dialogue is a direct outgrowth of our common participation on the Consultation on Church Union. At the 1999 plenary of COCU, the PC(USA) and The Episcopal Church were asked to consider engaging in a bilateral discussion in an attempt to address questions of ministry and polity that would need to be resolved if COCU was to go forward. The 2000 General Convention of the Episcopal Church authorized a bilateral dialogue with the PC(USA). At their initial meeting, held concurrently with the inauguration of CUiC in January 2002, it was decided that the dialogue's

conversations would take place within the larger context of CUiC's Ministry Task Force, which was to drafting a proposal for the recognition and reconciliation of ministries.

Members:

*For PC(USA):* Elder Freda Gardner, co-convener; Dr. Dale Gruder; Elder Moon Lee; Elder Janice Sperry; the Reverend Dr. George Telford; and the Reverend Dr. Philip Wickeri. Staff support has been provided by the Reverend Robina Winbush and the Reverend Carlos Malave. The Reverend Dr. Lewis Mudge and the Reverend Dr. Joseph Small, Office of Theology have consulted.

*For The Episcopal Church:* James Foster; the Reverend Dan Krutz; the Reverend Dirk Reinken; the Reverend Sandra Richardson; the Rt. Reverend Douglas Theuner, co-convener; and Dr. Fredrica Harris Thompsett. Staff support has been provided by the Rt. Reverend Christopher C. Epting and Dr. Thomas Ferguson. The Reverend Canon J. Robert Wright has consulted.

The dialogue has met twice annually since its first meeting in January 2001 in a variety of venues, including seminaries, diocesan/presbytery offices, and at two Presbyterian-Episcopal congregations, Indian Hill Church in Cincinnati and St. Matthew's Episcopal/Wilton Presbyterian Church in Wilton, Connecticut. The dialogue team was also in conversation with the concurrent work of the Ministry Task Force of CUiC.

The dialogue has extensively examined relevant documents and deliberations from the past and present both in the United States and abroad, including the Formula of Agreement between the PC(USA) and the ELCA, United Church of Christ, and the Reformed Church in America; Call to Common Mission agreement between the Episcopal Church and the ELCA; and the Mutual Recognition and Mutual Reconciliation of Ministries draft document of the CUiC Ministry Task Force. At every meeting of the dialogue, members have worshipped together using rites approved by either denomination or according to the authorized CUiC liturgy, with ordained ministers of each denomination officiating.

Among the most significant achievements of the dialogue was the co-sponsorship with CUiC of a Consultation on Episcopate held in St. Louis in October 2006. In addition to opening and closing remarks by representatives of the Disciples of Christ and the Methodist tradition, there were five scholarly papers presented: one by an Episcopalian, two from the Reformed Tradition (PC(USA) and UCC), and one each by a member of the ELCA and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. These papers, together with three Bible studies by the Reverend John Ford (Roman Catholic) and other related presentations have been published in *Call to Unity: Resourcing the Church for Ecumenical Ministry*, generously published by the Council on Christianity Unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

### III. Conclusion

At its initial meeting in Memphis in January 2002, members of the dialogue present all agreed that both churches were within the "apostolic succession" as defined by the *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry* statement: to stand in the succession of the apostolic faith. However the dialogue was still unable to agree on a basis for full mutual recognition and reconciliation of ministry. Disagreements centered on the concepts of "personal" and "corporate" episcopate. Episcopalians hold that in order to be in full communion there must be a sharing in the sign of the historic succession of bishops. Presbyterians believe that episcopate has been passed on corporately from apostolic times through the laying-on-of-hands within the presbyterate and speak of a threefold office of ministry (deacon, presbyter, and bishop) within the local congregation as a reflection of the ordering of ministry within the apostolic period. Of concern to Presbyterians was the feeling that the CUiC Ministry Task Force proposal failed to recognize the significance of the presbyterate, which Episcopalians felt that they had done in the United States through the requirement of lay involvement and approval at virtually every level of ecclesiastical governance, albeit their lay people are not ordained as elders.

Mutual recognition and reconciliation seems to rest upon mutual acceptance of the concepts of "personal" and "corporate" episcopate. Until this matter is mutually resolved it will be difficult to move into full altar and pulpit fellowship, the place where mutual ministry between the denominations seems most likely to have an effect at the parish level. Because of that the dialogue has met with collaborating congregations of each denomination and seeks to encourage church leaders to initiate and nourish additional relationships of that type. Although full mutual recognition and reconciliation of ministry still eludes us, we believe we have found a way in which to encourage preliminary altar and pulpit fellowship and, hence, to allow our congregations of both denominations to commonly pursue the mission and ministry of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, a reality which we believe already exists in the Mind of God.

To that end, the Presbyterian/Episcopal Dialogue requests our respective authorizing bodies to consider the following agreement; to reconstitute the dialogue for future deliberations; and that both of our Heads of Communion commit themselves publicly to this effort and to consider a public celebration of our progress to date and our hope for the future.



**Agreement Between The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

1. We acknowledge one another's churches as churches belonging to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.
2. We acknowledge that in our churches the Word of God is authentically preached and the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist are duly administered.
3. We acknowledge one another's ordained ministries as given by God and instruments of grace, and look forward to the time when the reconciliation of our churches makes possible the full interchangeability of ministers.
4. We acknowledge that personal and collegial oversight (*episcopate*) is embodied and exercised in our churches in a variety of forms, episcopal and non-episcopal, as a visible sign of the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry.
5. We agree that authorized ministers of our churches may, subject to the regulations of the churches and within the limits of their competence,<sup>1</sup> carry out the tasks of their own office in congregations of the other churches when requested and approved by the diocesan bishop and local presbytery.
6. We agree that The Episcopal Church will invite members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to receive Holy Communion in their churches and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will invite members of The Episcopal Church to receive Holy Communion in their churches. We encourage the members of our churches to accept this Eucharistic hospitality and thus express their unity with each other in the one Body of Christ.
7. We agree to continue to dialogue in the areas such as diaconal ministries, historic episcopate, the office of elder, etc., that would lead to full reconciliation of our ministries and interchangeability of our ministers.
8. We encourage diocesan bishops and presbyteries to provide regular occasion for planning, discussing, resourcing for missional, educational, and liturgical life together. In addition, to explore possibilities for new church development and redevelopment together.
9. We agree to develop a process to support and implement the above recommendations.<sup>2</sup>
10. We affirm these proposals mark an important step in moving toward the full, visible unity of the Church. We know that beyond this commitment lies a move from the recognition to the reconciliation of churches and ministries within the wider fellowship of the universal Church.

Endnotes

1. Because we do not yet have reconciliation and full interchangeability of ordained ministries, all authorization for these special opportunities must confirm to the *Book of Worship* and the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Constitution and Canons* of The Episcopal Church.
2. Guidelines will be developed by each of the communions.

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**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 07-11**

*Comment on Item 07-11—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council recognizes the importance of this bilateral consultation, appreciates the evident progress that has been made to date, and commends the report for serious consideration and deliberation.

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## **Item 07-12**

**[The assembly approved Item 07-12. See pp. 14, 15.]**

*World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) Gender, Leadership, and Power Consultation.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

1. **Receive the WARC report from the Gender Leadership and Power Consultation.**
2. **Direct the General Assembly Council (GAC) that it provide leadership and participation in the North American region with our partner WARC communions and include a strategy for a study process for gender, leadership, and power in the PC(USA).**
3. **Recommend to the GAC ministry areas to include this work in the 2009–2010 work plans.**
4. **Request the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) to monitor this process and report its findings to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

#### *Rationale*

Churches continue to struggle with sexism and other structural and systemic ways of being that diminish God's children and the community of believers. Sexism harms men and women. Ecumenically, there was a consultation held in Limuru, Kenya, on Gender, Leadership, and Power to begin a new conversation about these concerns. The consultation was held on June 29 to July 4, 2007, and brought together forty-eight persons (39 women and 9 men) from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, and North America. This historic event was organized by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

A report from the event was received in the fall of 2007, and the committee discussed next steps on ecumenical relations (the report is attached). The WARC will begin, in 2008, a two-year, action-oriented research and documentation process that will reflect the diverse perspective and locations of woman as leaders in the church with a comparative focus from different regions/cultures. The complimentary nature of several movements within the PC(USA) as well as the ecumenical world was noted. Participating in the study was seen as advantageous for the PC(USA) and was encouraged by the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

Complimentary actions by both the Women of Color Consultation Task Force and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) are coming to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

Gender, Leadership and Power  
Limuru, Kenya, June 29 to July 4, 2007

#### BRIEF REPORT

The Office for Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches organized a Consultation on Gender, Leadership and Power in collaboration with St Paul's United Theological College, Limuru, Kenya. The consultation was held on June 29 to July 4, 2007, and brought together forty-eight persons (39 women and 9 men) from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, and North America. Participants included eleven students from St Paul's United Theological College. Participants explored possibilities for a radical shift in leadership and power and discussed ways to encourage churches to re-examine current models of leadership and their limitations as well as to share models of leadership and power that affirm partnership.

The key objectives of the consultation were to

- examine power and leadership within local, regional, and global geopolitical contexts;
- analyze and reflect on power and leadership in the church from a theological perspective;
- challenge patriarchal aspects of ministry and identify negative impacts;
- envision new models of leadership by drawing on feminist theology, principles, and practice within various cultures and traditions;
- offer alternative models of leadership that address the gender gap in church leadership.

The first day of the consultation set the pace with the opening event and panel discussion on Women and Leadership—in Politics, the Ecumenical Movement, Theological Institutions, and the Church. Participants examined critically models of leadership, structures of power in church and society; androcentric formulations of language and curricula in theological institutions; inadequate exposure to feminist theology; and the need to redefine gender in the context of equity and equal opportunity for both women and men.

A panel discussion on Women and Leadership: Threats and Challenges was brought into context by case presentations from Zambia, the United States, Korea, Argentina, Hungary, and Taiwan. These studies brought to the fore the crosscutting threats and challenges to transformative leadership, and provided a backdrop against which regional experiences were shared. Participants worked in small groups to identify barriers and possibilities for transformation cutting across cultural, theological, socioeconomic, and political boundaries.

Sessions on Masculinity, Race and the Empire followed by an Exploration of Leadership Models Which Embrace Feminist Principles were logical links between critical analysis, reflection, and envisioning a process of transformation as a key outcome of the consultation. The Bible studies on the story of the widow and the judge (Luke 18.1–7) and Queen Esther (Esther 1–3) were essential grounding for analysis and reflection.

To ensure a high level of participation and interaction, the process included plenary sessions and workgroups, drama and table conversations. On Sunday, participants worshipped in various local churches where they preached, shared testimonies, presented songs, and had conversations and meetings over lunch with pastors, elders/deacons, and other members of the congregations.

Participants discussed strategies for moving forward and decided on two, concrete follow-up projects: A publication, which draws out the main themes of the consultation and a two-year process of action-oriented research and documentation. Participants developed draft outlines for the following five themes through which transformation of gender and power constructions would be facilitated:

1. *Racial and Ethnic Identity*

- To develop and promote leadership models that facilitate healing brokenness in church, community, and the world.
- To deconstruct models of leadership that secure and maintain imperial systems of patriarchy; to unmask fears that undergird the status quo—xenophobia, racism, ethnic/caste.
- To reconstruct models of leadership that resist and liberate.

2. *Cultural Identity*

- To create an all-inclusive society with the aim of empowering women and men.
- To dig deep into culture and its role in perpetuating injustice to understanding of gender, which informs society in terms of power (relations).

3. *Use of the Bible and Theology in Church*

- To transform our interpretations and our applications using approaches to Bible studies and theological explorations that are analytical, critical, and liberative.

4. *Globalization*

- To engender the Covenanting for Justice process by designing an approach that enables women and men to talk about their experiences of “globalization” and how it could be transformed.

5. *Leadership*

- To make visible the leadership of women in the church.
- To empower women leaders in the church.

The study will be multidimensional in form, reflecting the diverse perspective and locations of women as leaders in the church and with a comparative focus from different regions/cultures. The methodology will include techniques and approaches such as stories, narratives, interviews, interdisciplinary analysis, systems approach, peer mentorship, workshops, drama, and networking. It will also include case studies, for example, focus on a specific community. It was proposed that a small international group, including feminist theologians, pastors, economists, and environmentalists should design and test the process, drawing on existing resources.

## Item 07-13

*Transfer of Ministers and Congregations to Transitional Presbyteries—From the General Presbyter/Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Charlotte.*

[The assembly approved Item 07-13, Recommendation 1. See pp. 14, 15.]

1. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 07-13 with the following recommendation:

With respect to the first question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question presents a matter in which interpretation of G-11.0103i and G-15.0203a and b is advisable. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) respond to the question with the following interpretation:

“Presbyteries may dismiss congregations to other ecclesiastical bodies of this denomination, and to denominations whose organization is conformed to the doctrines and order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). No congregation may be dismissed to independent status, or to the status of a nondenominational congregation. It is the responsibility of the dismissing presbytery to determine whether the receiving body meets these standards, and this responsibility cannot be delegated to any other entity within the presbytery (such as an administrative commission). Thus the General Assembly may not determine in advance whether a particular denomination or its constituent bodies qualify under these standards.

“The provisions of G-15.0203 a and b do, however, require that the General Assembly, as the highest governing body of this denomination, advise its presbyteries in this matter. The 218th General Assembly (2008) therefore advises the presbyteries that they must satisfy themselves concerning the conformity with this denomination of a transitional presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) in matters of doctrines and order. Presbyteries may facilitate the exploration of conformity by means of an administrative commission, although such commissions may not be empowered to approve the dismissal of the congregation. In exploring this matter, presbyteries should consider such questions as whether the receiving EPC presbytery is

- “• doctrinally consistent with the essentials of Reformed theology as understood by the presbytery;
- “• governed by a polity that is consistent in form and structure with that of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A);
- “• of sufficient permanence to offer reasonable assurance that the congregation is not being dismissed to de facto independence.

“Failure on the part of the presbytery thoroughly to explore and adequately to document its satisfaction in these matters may thus violate, however unintentionally, the spirit of the polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”

### *Rationale*

The *Book of Order* grants to the presbytery the power to “divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches, in consultation with their members” (G-11.0103i). While the language of this provision is quite broad, there are important limitations imposed by two judicial cases from the polity of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and by the provisions of G-15.0203a and b.

*Anderson v. Synod of Florida* (Minutes, PCUS, 1973, Part I, pp. 119–21):

In 1973, the Presbytery of Florida (Presbyterian Church in the United States) dismissed three congregations from its membership without specifying the ecclesiastical body to whose membership they were transferred. A remedial complaint was filed against the presbytery with the Synod of Florida, which ruled that the presbytery had acted in violation of the *Book of Church Order*, 16-7(8). The case was appealed to the Permanent Judicial Commission of the PCUS, which sustained the synod’s ruling. In its finding, the PCUS Permanent Judicial Commission stated:

The language of BCO § 16-7(8) is unspecific and does not expressly spell out the limitations on the powers of presbytery in dismissing a church. Nevertheless we feel that the authority of presbytery is not an absolute and unqualified one.

We further hold that a presbytery can dismiss a church to the ecclesiastical bodies with which union is permitted. These bodies include churches within our own denomination, the United Presbyterian Church of the United States, the Reformed Church in America, (BCO § 31-1) or any other ecclesiastical body “whose organization is conformed to the doctrines and order of this church.” BCO § 18-6(13), (17). Although presbytery has great latitude in the exercise of its dismissal jurisdiction, it does not have an absolute and unlimited power.

*Anderson* is usually interpreted to mean that a presbytery may not dismiss a congregation to “independency.” In fact, *Anderson* also limits the denominations to which a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation as those “whose organization is conformed to the doctrines and order of this church.” It is thus incumbent on the dismissing PC(USA) presbytery to determine whether the denomination to which the congregation proposes dismissal meets this standard.

Furthermore, *Anderson* imposes on the presbytery the obligation to inquire fully into the circumstances under which the request for dismissal is made. The commission’s reasoning speaks as eloquently to the present question as it did to the circumstances of 1973:

An ecclesiastical court is no more required than is a civil court “to fail to know what the whole world knows.” It may take judicial notice of facts not a formal part of the record before it which lie within the common stock of knowledge. We know that this case arises out of the tragic dissidence that exists within some parts of the church. One of the tactics of the dissident elements is to seek to have churches in which they are members dismissed as entities. They perceive certain benefits in this which might not be realized by orderly individual withdrawals followed by reassociation in other ecclesiastical bodies. This judgment says that this course is not constitutionally possible under the procedures of this church.

*Strong and Bagby v. Synod of the Mid-South (Minutes, PCUS, 1976, Part I, pp. 92–96)*

Three years later, the PCUS Permanent Judicial Commission rendered a second decision regarding the limitations on a presbytery’s right to dismiss congregations. The *Bagby* decision overturned the action of East Alabama Presbytery to form an administrative commission to which it then delegated broad powers to dismiss congregations to the Continuing Presbyterian Church (later the Presbyterian Church in America). *Bagby* underscored the decision of *Anderson*, and then went on:

This case remains the law of the Church, and it would clearly prohibit the delegation by presbytery (even were delegation generally permissible) of carte blanche power to an administrative commission to dismiss ecclesiastical bodies not falling within the stated category. Whether another ecclesiastical body does fall within the general classification mentioned is itself a matter of judgment which must be determined by the dismissing authority as a precondition to dismissal.

We hold, therefore, that BCO § 16-7(8) restricts a presbytery in dismissing a church to the necessity of doing so to another ecclesiastical jurisdiction and forbids dismissal to independency.

In its supporting rationale, the commission grounded this finding in the connectional nature of the church:

In this denomination the different courts in their regular order of gradation “are not separate and independent tribunals” but “have a mutual relation” which is designed to “express the unity of the church.” This mutual relation is exactly ordered by the specific constitutional allocations of original and appellate jurisdiction. ... It is critical to the maintenance of this form that the various courts exercise the specific jurisdiction conferred upon them, neither usurping that not given them nor declining to exercise that given, whether by default or by attempted delegation. This connectional form of government is imbedded in our Constitution and can only be altered, generally or specifically, by formal amendment of that Constitution. ... Within this constitutional system exclusive original jurisdiction to dismiss churches, BCO 16-7(8), and to dismiss ministers, BCO 16-7(13), is vested in presbytery.

The thrust of the *Bagby* decision is twofold: (1) it upholds *Anderson* in prohibiting a presbytery from dismissing a congregation to autonomy, and (2) it requires that the decision to dismiss be reserved to the presbytery itself, and not delegated to a commission or other entity of the presbytery.

The *Bagby* decision can be distilled into four areas of concern that presbyteries should consider in determining whether to dismiss a congregation to another denomination. The four areas are:

- a. The nature of the ecclesiastical body to which the congregation is dismissed,
- b. The disposition of the property of the dismissed congregation,
- c. The status of any pastors or associate pastors of the dismissed congregation, and
- d. The transfer and status of members of the congregation, including both those who wish to be transferred and those who wish to retain membership in the PC(USA).

*G-15.0203 a and b*

The provisions of G-15.0203a define the procedures by which a PC(USA) presbytery may receive a congregation from a presbytery or similar governing body of another Christian denomination. Those procedures include (1) verification that the congregation has been regularly dismissed by the governing body of jurisdiction, and (2) receipt of “the advice of the highest governing body of that denomination dealing with relations between denominations.”

By requiring that “similar procedures shall be followed in dismissing a particular church from this denomination to another,” G-15.0203b mandates that presbyteries receive and consider the advice of the General Assembly concerning relations between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the denomination to which the congregation proposes to be dismissed.

### *Transitional Presbyteries*

By action of its 27th General Assembly (June 2007), the Evangelical Presbyterian Church created “transitional presbyteries,” which exist for a limited time (June 2007 to June 2012), and which are empowered to receive congregations from other denominations. The action leaves a great many questions unanswered regarding the future of congregations received into such entities.

Does the theology of the EPC “conform to the doctrines ... of this denomination?” The EPC General Assembly action requires that

All churches and pastors entering the EPC on a transitional basis *must affirm “Essentials of our Faith” without any reservations.*<sup>1</sup>

In both our polity and in the theology on which it is founded, we have long recognized that “reservations” and points of disagreement in some matters of faith are not only inevitable but ultimately nourishing for the health of the church. Moreover, we have resisted listing the “essential tenets of the Reformed faith” (W-4.4003c), precisely because such lists tend to confine the theology of the church within the narrow strictures of the historical moment in which the list was created, robbing it of its life and liveliness. For this reason, we have deemed it wise to have not one confessional statement but a *Book of Confessions* (Part I of this denomination’s constitution), in which are registered multiple statements of faith that stand in both mutual support and occasional tension. Can such theological suppleness be said to characterize the doctrines of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?

Does a polity that contains such presbyteries “conform to the ... order of this denomination?” At the very least, the presbyteries so created appear to be operating under an understanding of presbytery membership that does not visibly conform to that of the PC(USA). According to the statement approved by the 27th General Assembly of the EPC, the purpose of transitional presbyteries is not to receive congregations into full membership in the EPC, but

to provide a means by which congregations or associations and groups of congregations from other denominations and their pastors within the Reformed family of churches may become members of the EPC on a transitional basis *toward the goal of full membership.*<sup>2</sup>

Membership in such presbyteries is designed to

allow existing presbyteries and transitional member churches and pastors the time and opportunity to fully assess the mutual expectations doctrinally, missionally, legislatively and financially *before committing to full membership.*<sup>3</sup>

The meaning of “transitional membership” and its differentiation from “full membership” is not fully clarified, leaving open the question of whether there are limits on the nature of congregational participation in the life of the EPC during the transitional period.

What happens to congregations in transitional presbyteries that elect not to be received into full EPC membership? When the five-year sunset date for the provisions is reached,

all congregations and ministers *not received into full membership shall be dismissed.* Transitional congregations and ministers may request dismissal from transitional membership at any time according to and following the provisions of the Book of Government including 5-6.<sup>4</sup>

Neither the EPC *Book of Government* or the enabling actions of the 27th General Assembly contain any property trust provisions; indeed, both maintain absolute congregational ownership of church property. This appears to mean that congregations dismissed from membership in EPC transitional presbyteries at or before the sunset date for transitional presbyteries may thereby attain independent status. It thus appears quite possible that a congregation seeking membership in an EPC transitional presbytery may be, in effect if not in actual intent, seeking dismissal to independent status. Such an eventuality would result in the loss of the investment of the time, money, energy, and faithfulness of generations of Presbyterians to the witness of the Reformed faith. It would certainly violate the spirit, if not the letter, of the *Anderson* and *Bagby* decisions.

[The assembly approved Item 07-13, Recommendation 2. See pp. 14, 15.]

**2. With respect to the second question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question presents a matter in which interpretation of G-11.0416 and G-15.0202 is advisable.**

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) respond to the question with the following interpretation:**

**“Presbyteries may dismiss minister members to transitional presbyteries of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) under the provisions of G-15.0202, provided that they have determined that such transitional presbyteries properly have jurisdiction over the work to which the dismissed minister is called. In making this determination, presbyteries should consider the advice of the General Assembly concerning such transitional presbyteries found in response #1 above. In addition, presbyteries should honor their pastoral obligation to the minister requesting dismissal by informing him or her of the General Assembly’s grave concerns over the uncertainty and impermanence of the transitional presbyteries of the EPC, and of the consequences of the dismissal for any future relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”**

### *Rationale*

The decision to receive ministers from or dismiss ministers to other Christian denominations belongs to the presbytery, and is made on the basis of the presentation of particular credentials and certifications by the minister from the dismissing presbytery or other appropriate ecclesiastical body. In the case of the receipt of a minister from another Christian church by a presbytery of the PC(USA), G-15.0202 specifies certain procedures that shall be followed:

- a. the minister shall have a call “to a work properly under the jurisdiction of the presbytery”;
- b. the constitutional conditions of G-11.0404 and G-11.0405 shall be met, including presentation of required credentials, examination by the receiving presbytery, receipt of a call to an appropriate work, and provision of evidence of removal from the roll of all previous denominations of which the minister has been a member; and
- c. that, having been satisfied regarding a and b, the receiving presbytery shall recognize the minister’s previous ordination.

A presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) dismissing a minister to other Christian denominations, including to a geographical presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, should be prepared to provide certification of good standing and educational qualifications of the minister seeking dismissal and such other documentation as may be required by the receiving denomination. It shall remove the name of the minister from the roll of ministers in active service and shall furnish evidence of the removal to the receiving presbytery or governing body.

The issue posed by the request for interpretation is whether dismissal of a minister to a ‘transitional presbytery’ created by the action of the 27th General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church qualifies as “dismissal from this denomination to another” (G-15.0202).

Unlike the requirements of G-15.0203 for dismissing a congregation to another denomination, G-15.0202 does not require that the presbytery considering the dismissal receive the advice of the General Assembly concerning relations with the receiving denomination. Thus, the dismissing presbytery is responsible to determine whether a “transitional presbytery” constitutes a body that properly be said to have jurisdiction over the work to which the minister is called. In light of concerns raised in the previous discussion about the uncertain and impermanent character of the transitional presbytery/ies of the EPC, dismissing presbyteries would be within their rights to determine that such transitional entities do not meet the standard of jurisdiction implied in G-15.0202.

Even if the dismissing presbytery determines that the EPC transitional presbytery does have proper jurisdiction over the work to which the minister is called, it would be remiss in its pastoral responsibility to its minister member if it did not make clear the transitional and uncertain character of the entity to which he or she requests dismissal. Once dismissed by the PC(USA) presbytery of membership, his or her continued standing as a minister of the Word and Sacrament will be dependent on the disposition by the EPC General Assembly of the transitional presbytery when the sunset date for such presbyteries is reached in 2012. Dismissal from this denomination to the EPC requires forfeiture of ordination in the PC(USA). Should the minister so dismissed desire to return to the PC(USA), restoration to ordained ministry is at the discretion of the PC(USA) presbytery that proposes to receive the minister under the provisions of G-15.0202 and G-11.0404 and .0405.

In the event that a minister of this denomination unilaterally accepts membership in a transitional presbytery of the EPC without having been dismissed by the presbytery of current membership (except under the provisions of G-11.0411), the presbytery of membership shall record this fact and remove the minister’s name from the roll (G-11.0416). The effect of this action is the same as renunciation of the jurisdiction of the church (see G-6.0702; also *Minutes* 1990, Part I, p. 239, paragraph 21.121, Request 90-4). Should the minister who has renounced jurisdiction desire to return to the PC(USA), resumption of ordained ministry requires that the minister reenter through the full candidacy process as defined in G-14.0400 (see *Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 238).

### Questions Received

Item 07-13 from the Presbytery of Charlotte presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

1. Can a presbytery dismiss a congregation to a transitional presbytery in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?
2. Can a presbytery dismiss a minister of the Word and Sacrament to a transitional presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?

#### Endnotes

1. "Structure for Receiving Churches and Pastors Transitionally," adopted by the 27th General Assembly of the EPC, June 27, 2007. Source: [www.epc.org/general-assembly/documents/ReceivingChurchesPastorsTransitionally.pdf](http://www.epc.org/general-assembly/documents/ReceivingChurchesPastorsTransitionally.pdf). Emphasis added.
2. "Structure for Receiving Churches and Pastors Transitionally." Emphasis added.
3. "Structure for Receiving Churches." Emphasis added.
4. "Structure for Receiving Churches."

## \*Item 07-14

[The assembly approved Item 07-14. See pp. 13, 15.]

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) elect the following persons to be delegates and alternate delegates to the 25th General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches meeting in June 2010.**

**Delegates: Stated Clerk, by virtue of office; Associate Stated Clerk, with primary ecumenical responsibilities, by virtue of office; director of Presbyterian World Mission, by virtue office, or designee; Carol Adcock; Claudia Carvalhaes; Arlene Gordon; Cliff Kirkpatrick; Neil Presa; Marsha Snulligan-Haney; Aaron Stauffer; Rick Ufford-Chase.**

**Alternates: member of GACER Class of 2010; member of GACER Class of 2012; Scott Anderson; Alice L. Hageman; Jeffrey Jaynes; Rachel Medema.**

#### *Rationale*

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches will hold its 25th General Council, June 18–28, 2010, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This General Council will be the Uniting General Council with the Reformed Ecumenical Council, out of which will emerge the World Communion of Reformed Churches. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been asked to name eleven delegates to the 25th General Council. The GACER sought to nominate persons who represented a cross-section with particular connections to global mission, middle governing bodies, and local congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## Item 07-1NB

[The assembly approved Item 07-1NB. See pp. 14, 15.]

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), meeting in San Jose, California, gives thanks to God for Clifton Kirkpatrick, celebrates his years of ministry in this church and the worldwide church of Christ, and asks God's blessing on him in the days to come for the good of the wider ecumenical family and to the glory of God.**

## Item 07-Info

### A. *General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations Agency Summary*

#### A. *Purpose*

The purpose of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations is to give a high profile to the vision of the ecumenical involvement and work as central to the gospel and key to the life of the church; plan and coordinate, in consulta-



tion with the agencies and governing bodies of the church, the involvement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ecumenical relations and work; connect the ecumenical efforts of all governing body levels of the church; provide a common point for all ecumenical efforts connecting us with those outside our church; keep a unity of vision that includes the ecclesiastical, programmatic, ecumenical, and denominational parts of our ministries and commitments; articulate the Reformed and Presbyterian identity in the midst of our ecumenical commitments; promote awareness of the role of the unity of all humankind in the search for the unity of the church; and promote the unity of the church as an exhibition of the kingdom of God to the world.

The committee is composed of sixteen members, elected by the General Assembly, ecumenical members, the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, and other ex-officio members.

#### B. *Ministry and Accomplishments (2006)*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations held its fall regular meetings on October 12–14, 2006, at the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. The meeting was called to order with prayer and brief introductions. The following are highlights of the meeting:

##### 1. *Fall 2006 Meeting*

On the first day, Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo led the committee in Bible study with Scripture reading from Acts 15:1–21. The committee divided into small groups to reflect on the text. After small group discussion, the committee reconvened and shared their thoughts and vision. The second day of the meeting Frances Adeney, professor of Evangelism and Global Mission at the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, led the committee in Bible study on the topic of unity and read from Ephesians 1:3–10 and 3:14–21.

Lemuel Arroyo-Garcia and Carlos Malave conducted a PowerPoint overview of our churches' ecumenical mandate and involvement. The purpose of the presentation was to remind and reclaim the committee's responsibilities and to orientate the new members.

The committee approved that the spring meeting of 2007 would focus on reviewing the PC(USA) ecumenical work, which included planning and coordinating the involvement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ecumenical work, connecting with governing bodies, and giving guidance to General Assembly Council.

The committee entered into conversation with the various General Assembly agencies, which included the new program directors of GAC, to learn what the agencies were doing ecumenically and to have an impact and provide guidance in their efforts. These conversations lead up to the ecumenical consultation in the fall of 2007. The spring meeting of 2008 focused on the review of the consultation and preparations for the General Assembly.

Gary Cook, Pat Chapman, and Sara Lisherness, members of the General Assembly Council (GAC) transition team, gave background information on how and why the team was established and updated the committee on where things stand now. The GAC moved from three ministries divisions to six work areas: Peace and Justice; Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women; Relief and Development; Worldwide Mission and Partnership; Evangelism and Church Growth (including Vocation and Leadership); and Theology, Worship, and Education (including Stewardship). The General Assembly Council has made a commitment to use an ecumenical filter in the process of moving forward.

Leading up to the ecumenical consultation, the committee looked at the breadth, growth, and depth of ecumenical work in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Over the next year, the committee will build a map of what the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s ecumenical engagement will look like. To begin the mapping process, the committee was led in activities, which explored each member's ecumenical journey.

The committee had a conversation with the new Executive Director of the General Assembly Council (GAC), Linda Valentine. After her presentation, the floor was opened for comments and questions from the committee.

The committee was introduced to the new working configuration in specific focus groups (agencies/conciliar relationships; ecumenical formation and educational strategy; connecting local and national ecumenical work; and interfaith). Each member was asked to self-select a group they would like to put energy in for the next couple of years.

The evening of October 13, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) participated in a joint meeting with all the permanent committees of the Office of the General Assembly, at the Presbyterian Center. After guided small groups conversations, the floor was open for dialogue with the Moderator, Joan Gray, and Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick.

The Stated Clerk reported on his work with World Alliance of Reformed Churches, National Council of Churches in Christ in the U.S.A., and the World Council of Churches. In his report he shared that he views the fundamental problems facing the PC(USA) as an ecumenical problem. We can be a church that honors a deep sense of diversity and difference and yet be in community with one another and find the power of the gospel to overcome and become a unity in Christ that the world might believe. There is urgency about the renewal of our ecumenical sensitivity, vision, commitment, and connection in the PC(USA) that is also for the salvation of our own church. He hoped that the GACER would be able to seriously address these issues.

In the fall of 2005, the GACER began discussing the possibility of holding a consultation on the ecumenical stance of the PC(USA). They identified goals and issues to be addressed as well as the spectrum of persons who might be invited to participate. At its January 2006 meeting, the GACER approved a proposal for the consultation and authorized the executive committee to appoint a committee of three persons to plan the consultation. The outgoing executive committee appointed Philip Wickeri and Kathleen Owens and the incoming executive committee appointed Arlene Gordan. J. Oscar McCloud agreed to serve as a consultant/facilitator with the consultation and will be working closely with the planning committee. It is expected that the GACER will fully participate in the consultation.

## 2. *Other GACER Related Activities, Reports and Actions*

- a. Appointment of Nancy Keehan to serve on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Church Council.
- b. Give the Executive Committee of GACER full authority to select a person with General Assembly Council and/or wider church experience to serve on United Church of Christ Executive Council.
- c. Give the Executive Committee full authority to select two persons, one to serve a four-year term and the other to serve a two-year term on the Lutheran/Reform Coordinating Council. One should be a seminarian (preferably president or dean) and the other a middle governing body person, both with General Assembly Council and/or wider church experience.
- d. Voted to appoint Barbara Wheeler as the PC(USA) representative to the Church of Scotland General Assembly May 19–25, 2007.
- e. Voted by the GACER to approve the following participants in the Adventist/Presbyterian conversation: the Reverend Eunice McGarrahan (pastor at Vienna Presbyterian Church, Virginia); Dr. David Jensen (Austin Presbyterian Theological); and Dr. Aurelio Garcia (University of Puerto Rico). The GACER had already approved the conversation at its meeting in January 2006. Carlos Malavè (OGA) and Sheldon Sorge (GAC) will provide staff support.

## C. *Ministry and Accomplishments (2007)*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations held two regular meetings in 2007: the winter meeting on April 19–20, and the fall meeting on September 27 and 29.

### 1. *Winter 2007 Meeting*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations met at the Holiday Inn Hurstbourne, in Louisville, Kentucky. The meeting was called to order with prayer and brief introductions.

At the October 2006 meeting of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations it was agreed that the Agency Conversation Team would engage in conversation with the Office of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the Foundation, the Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Historical Society prior to its next meeting. Since the last meeting of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations, it became apparent the actual impact the restructure has had on the agencies. Rather than focus on the outside agencies at this point, the team decided to focus on what was currently occurring in GACER.

The Agency Conversation Team recommended that the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations meet with the General Assembly Council and the Office of the General Assembly at its spring meeting to raise awareness, offer education, and explore ways in which they are currently involved in ecumenical work.

The committee heard from a panel of individuals from different faith groups exploring the question “What does it mean to be a good neighbor in an interfaith context?” The panel participants were Imam Muhammad Siddeeq (Muslim) of Indianapolis, representing Imam Warith Deen Mohammed and his ministry; Jan Arnow (Jewish/Quaker), executive director of the Center for Interfaith Relations in Louisville, Kentucky; and Dr. Anantanand Rambachan (Hindu), professor of Religion at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. Following the presentation, the floor was opened for comments and questions.

Because of the new configuration of the General Assembly Council, the GACER felt the need to have a conversation with Tom Taylor, executive director of Mission, General Assembly Council. Most of the conversation geared around the advisory functions of the GACER and Tom Taylor's expectations of the September 2007 Ecumenical Consultation. Members of the committee were glad that the conversation took place because it helped to clarify mutual expectations. The committee agreed that there was still a need to have further conversations with the General Assembly Council to give them a better understanding of the work of the committee.

The committee reviewed the plans of the ecumenical consultation that would take place September 27–29, 2007, in Louisville, Kentucky. The purpose of the consultation was to review the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations' ecumenical vision statement and construct an ecumenical stance and policy to guide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), staff, and elected bodies for the next ten years. The objectives of the consultation were the following:

- Review the "Ecumenical Vision Statement" of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and survey our historic ecumenical stance and commitment.
- Discern the implications of religious pluralism, secularization, global injustice, and our nation's international role for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ecumenical stance.
- Envision and redefine the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ecumenical commitments and relationships in light of the changing ecumenical landscape.
- Affirm and renew the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) commitment to ecumenism and ecumenical formation.
- Construct an ecumenical stance and policy statement to guide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

a. *Bilateral Dialogues and Joint Committees Reports*

(1) *Episcopal Presbyterian Bilateral*: In their report, the members of the Episcopal/Presbyterian Bi-Lateral Dialogue acknowledged, with appreciation, the work of Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC) and its Ministry Task Force and pledged to continue in collaboration with them as they further the efforts of CUiC. The dialogue participants were thankful for CUiC's implementation of their suggestion for a consultation on episcopate. This was held in St. Louis in October of 2006. The meditations, presentations, and group discussions were published in *Call to Unity* and have been of significant help to us in our conversations. They also stand to be an ongoing resource for future study of the nature of episcopate. In the dialogue, they have recognized and acknowledged authentic forms of ministry and oversight that are already present in our churches. Presbyterians have come to a deeper understanding and appreciation of personal expressions of episcopate. Episcopalians have recognized a need for greater lay involvement in the collegial episcopate of the church. We see our dialogue as a step toward the full reconciliation of our ministries. The bilateral dialogue has reached a point where they are able (as stated in the Meissen Agreement of 1988 between Anglican, Reformed, and Lutheran traditions in Europe) to "acknowledge that personal and collegial oversight (episcopate) is embodied and exercised in our churches in a variety of forms, Episcopal and non-Episcopal, as a visible sign of the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry" (17.A.iv) with the expectation that "authorized ministers of our churches may, subject to the regulations of the churches and within the limits of their competence, carry out the tasks of their own office in congregations of the other churches when requested" (17.A.iv). The dialogue participants pledged to encourage and empower local Episcopal and Presbyterian initiatives in mission and ministry. To that end, they are examining existing relationships between Anglican and Reformed traditions around the world with the view towards working with the Episcopal Church Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations in developing guidelines to facilitate our own local efforts and relationships as the next step in moving toward the ultimate goal of full communion between our churches, which is the gift and mandate given to us by our shared life in Christ. The GACER voted to affirm the direction of the Presbyterian/Episcopal Bilateral dialogue; encouraged the bilateral to include definition of recognition in any proposal and how it differs from reconciliation at this time and affirms this direction; and that a letter be sent by the chair with this request.

(2) *Moravian/Reformed Dialogue*: The dialogue group has decided to recommend that both churches enter into a covenant relationship. They met on April 30–May 1, 2007, to complete the final proposal. If finally approved by GACER, this proposal will go to the 218th General Assembly (2008) for action. The committee received the Moravian/Reformed Dialogue report, and requested that staff further explore what covenant partnership/relationship means as in comparison with full communion.

(3) *Reformed/U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Dialogue*: The seventh round of Reformed/Catholic dialogue began meeting in 2003. The dialogue was charged to work on developing a means for the mutual recognition of baptism and to explore issues related to the Eucharist. A penultimate draft came to the churches for response in June (2007), and the final proposal was sent to the churches for action in the fall of 2007. Pending recommendation by GACER, it will go to

the 218th General Assembly (2008). The bilateral dialogue is exploring issues related to the Eucharist. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has asked that this round of dialogue be completed by 2010.

(4) *Korean Presbyterian Church in America (KPCA)/PC(USA) Joint Committee*: The KPCA/PC(USA) joint committee on cooperation has been meeting since 1992. There has been a brief break in our relationship because of tensions evolving out of a split in the First Presbyterian Church in Torrence, California, involving the KPCA. However, a meeting of the leadership of KPCA and PC(USA) was held this February and it was agreed to move forward with the development of a proposal for covenant relationship between both churches. Pending recommendations by GACER, this proposal will go to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

(5) *World Council of Churches*: The GACER approved to encourage its members to review the documents *Call to One Church* and *The Nature and Mission of the Church*, and requested that the General Assembly Council, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and three theologians (Paul Hooker, Cynthia Campbell, and Rebecca Todd-Peters) provide written feedback to the GACER by the fall of 2008, in order to develop a formal response.

b. *Other GACER Related Activities, Reports and Actions*

(1) *National Workshop on Christian Unity Report (NWCUR)*: A report was given on the National Workshop on Christian Unity held January 29–February 1, 2007, in Washington, DC. It was a great opportunity to share with twenty-five different denominations. Robina Winbush, Carlos Malave, and Jay Rock were present, along with sixteen other Presbyterians. Along with the workshop, the PC(USA) Ecumenical and Interfaith Network held its meeting. The next meeting of NWCUR will be April 14–17, 2008, at the Chicago O'Hare Marriott. The Ecumenical and Interfaith Network will meet on April 13, 2008.

(2) The committee voted to recommend that the General Assembly Council, as they approach the 2009–2010 mission work plan, give particular attention to nurturing and equipping people in ecumenical engagements, including providing financial resources and scholarships to accomplish this.

(3) In regard to interfaith, the GACER approved to recommend the General Assembly establish a formal conversation between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Reformed, Conservative, and Re-constructionist religious movements of the United States on issues of common concerns. It was also approved to invite the Jewish, Islamic, and Buddhist religious organizations to send a representative to attend our 218th General Assembly (2008). The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly was instructed to invite the National Council of Synagogues, the Islamic Society of North America, and the American Buddhist Church to send a representative to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

(4) The GACER received as information the report of the strategic plan of the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC). It was acknowledged that concerns were addressed and that a letter of appreciation and affirmation of the strategic plan be sent to the NCCC (attached).

(5) The World Alliance of Reformed Churches & Reformed Ecumenical Council proposal to merge was reviewed (attached).

(6) The committee made appointments to Caribbean and North America Area Council (WARC) Youth Assembly and the National Council of Churches delegation.

2. *Fall 2007 Meeting*

The meeting of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations was convened on Thursday, September 27, 2007, at the Hampton Inn, Louisville, Kentucky. The meeting was called to order with prayer and introductions. This was an abbreviated meeting celebrated before and after the ecumenical consultation.

a. *Dialogues and Conversations*

(1) *Update on Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC)*: Robina Winbush presented an update on the Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC) for information and discussion. In her report she shared that as of July of 2007, both the African American Episcopal and the African American Episcopal Zion Churches have formally suspended their participation in Churches Uniting in Christ because they questioned the seriousness of CUiC's commitment to the struggle of racism. She also reported that the GACER Executive Committee had appointed Sarah McCaslin, George Telford, and Oommen Thomas to review the issues, interview some of the parties involved, and bring a report to the January 2008 meeting of GACER with their recommendations.

(2) The committee voted to confirm and support a four-year series of conversations between the PC(USA) and the African American Muslim Wallace D. Mohammed community, for the purposes of:

- (a) Learning from each other about each other's faith and experience as American religious communities;
- (b) Reflecting together on the responsibilities of faith communities in the U.S. today;
- (c) Articulating our values in each other's presence in order to identify shared values;
- (d) Exploring possible ways to cooperate in calling people to a different way of living, based on our understandings of what God/Allah wants for the transformation of the world; and
- (e) Identifying ways to work together in common service to all humankind.

(3) The GACER also approved to participate with the National Muslim-Christian Consultative Group. The National Muslim-Christian Consultative Group is a new consultative group between several of the Muslim communities within the United States and Christian churches within the United States.

(4) World Alliance of Reformed Churches: The GACER received a report on World Alliance of Reformed Churches—Gender, Leadership and Power Consultation for information. In relation to this report, it was approved to:

- (a) Endorse a design for global study process and actively participate in the study;
- (b) Express appreciation to the Reverend Dr. Unzu Lee for attending the consultation on behalf of Presbyterian Women and encourage and support her ongoing work in this area;
- (c) Recommend to the General Assembly Council that it include a strategy for a study process for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as well as leadership and participation in the North America region, and that this work be considered for the General Assembly Council's Mission Work Plan 2009–2010;
- (d) Encourage our ecumenical partners to participate in the study; and
- (e) Request to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that this work be considered in the General Assembly Council's Mission Work Plan 2009–2010.

b. *Other GACER Related Activities, Reports and Actions*

*Debriefing on the Ecumenical Consultation:* The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations engaged in a period of debriefing regarding the Ecumenical Consultation and reached a consensus around several broad themes, as follows:

- (a) Reclaim the historic ecumenical commitment that we are called to do all things together except those things that, in conscience, we need to do separately;
- (b) Call upon the church to engage a new dialogue between our core ecumenical commitments and emerging forms of church life;
- (c) Call the whole church to a commitment to justice in the economy and the earth.
- (d) Call to the church to be peacemakers between building bridges of dialogue and common work for peace and justice with people of other faiths;
- (e) Celebrate ecumenism at the local level;
- (f) Continue the work of peacemaking in a war-torn world.

D. *Ministry and Accomplishments (Winter 2008)*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) met in Louisville, Kentucky, on January 17–19, 2008, for its winter meeting.

At the heart of its work for this meeting was the discussions and preparation of the final report of the Ecumenical Consultation celebrated back in September of 2007. The different subcommittees of the GACER worked on different areas of the report, seeking to faithfully reflect on the deliberation of the consultation, and at the same time drafting a document that could be useful to the church in general as we look into our ecumenical work during the next decade. The GACER decided to propose for approval by the 218th General Assembly (2008) as policy the document “Our Ecumenical Stance.”

Another important item addressed at the meeting was a report on the current situation of the Churches Uniting in Christ (CUiC). The CUiC celebrated a meeting during the second week of January 2008, primarily to address their commitment to “combat racism.” One of the big issues addressed at this meeting was the retreat of two African American churches from CUiC. The GACER approved the following:

1. To request that the ecumenical staff monitor the progress being made on issues within CUiC and report these findings back to GACER.
2. In addition to and support of the efforts of reconciliation of ministries within CUiC, GACER also is to engage in and consider new efforts to reconcile ministries through bilateral dialogue and other ecumenical conversations.
3. To recommend bilateral conversations with those churches in CUiC with which the PC(USA) do not already have bilateral agreements, with first commitment being given to the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ), and Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME) churches.
4. To recommend to staff and committees charged to lead the PC(USA) in its commitment to combat racism that efforts be made to collaborate and partner with CUiC member churches in their own efforts to combat racism through advocacy, public witness, and education, both within the church and society.
5. To report to the 218th General Assembly (2008) the current situation within CUiC and invite the assembly’s prayerful support of CUiC and its future.

The GACER also agreed to revisit the situation in CUiC in their next scheduled meeting. As part of this effort, they will engage in a discernment of approaches and methodologies to encourage the relationship between the historic African American churches (especially those to which the PC(USA) has been historically related through ecumenical instruments) and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the possibility of bilateral dialogues or multilateral consultations.

#### *E. Other GACER Reports, Actions, and Related Activities*

The GACER approved its new leadership for the next two years: George Telford (chair); Krystin Granberg (vice-chair); Kathleen Owens (chair of United and Relations Subcommittee); Sarah McCaslin (chair of Ministry and Formation Subcommittee); Damayanthi Niles (chair of Interfaith Subcommittee).

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations approved several recommendations to the 218th General Assembly (2008):

- That the assembly approve the “Covenant Relationship Between the Korean Presbyterian Church of America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” as an ecumenical statement and send it to the presbyteries for their ratification.
- That the report on baptism from the Catholic Reformed Bilateral dialogue be received; and that the Common Agreement on Baptism be approved as an ecumenical statement for guidance and sent to the presbyteries for ratification.
- That the report of the Episcopal/Presbyterian bilateral dialogue be received; and that the Episcopal/Presbyterian Agreement be approved as an ecumenical statement and sent it to the presbyteries for their ratification.

The GACER received a report from the Christian Churches Together (CCT) Study Group. The CCT Study Group will continue its work, and will bring its next report, with recommendation for the General Assembly, to the GACER winter meeting in 2010.

The GACER took the initial steps to celebrate a consultation on interfaith relations in the near future. The staff was asked to bring a fuller plan to this effect.

#### **B. Delegation Report of 2006 NCCC General Assembly**

The General Assembly of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC) and Church World Service took on the issues of the world in the name of the gospel of Jesus Christ at its annual meeting held in Orlando, Florida.

Among the work of the 248 delegates from thirty-five member Christian denominations was passage of a pastoral message on the war, a new policy on human biotechnology, and resolutions banning human reproductive cloning, bio-warfare oversight, and combating global warming.

The three-day gathering also heard from several speakers each issuing unique challenges to the oldest Christian ecumenical organization in America. “America is back,” said the Reverend Dr. James Forbes in the closing keynote conversation with delegates. “The people’s voice will speak the truth and the government will hear,” said Forbes, who recently announced his retirement as the senior minister of The Riverside Church, New York City. He thanked the Reverend Bob Edgar, general secretary of the NCCC, for calling him in 2004 to help start the Let Justice Roll Living Wage Campaign to address the needs of the poor.

A statement of the general assembly on the election acknowledged the NCCC’s “strong support for raising the minimum wage.” The statement expressed a “real sense of joy and thanksgiving” at the six states voting to help raise workers out of poverty “acknowledging that such public policy is good for business as well as workers.”

The theme of the general assembly meeting was “For the Healing of the Nations” based on Revelation 22:1–2. Healing was on the minds of many speakers as well the NCCC general secretary who reacted to Tuesday’s voting results by calling for a “season of healing” among our national elected officials.

The NCCC president, the Reverend Michael Livingston, urged the representatives of 45 million Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, historic African American, and traditional “peace” churches to claim their leadership by asserting greater national influence.

“In a society that values volume over substance, so much greater is the need to be a ‘national’ council of churches,” said Livingston, a Presbyterian who is executive director of the International Council of Community Churches.

“Simple cooperation is not enough to bear the weight of the witness our times demand,” Livingston said. “Being a national council means that we bear witness together, stand and testify together, that we become the exclamation points—like the cross stabbed into the ground on Calvary.”

Women delegates to the annual assembly have been meeting in caucus sessions for twenty-five years. They heard from Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D., author of “Faith and Feminism: A Holy Alliance.” Dr. Hunt said “every woman has a story” and urged her audience to tell theirs. She shared parts of her own story about being told “feminism was a bad word” and how she came to reconcile it in her own faith journey.

On the Iraq war, delegates voted overwhelmingly to approve a pastoral message that calls for “an immediate phased withdrawal of American and coalition forces from Iraq.” The withdrawal plan is linked to “benchmarks for rebuilding Iraqi society.” It will be sent to the Bush administration, members of Congress, and is also addressed to people of faith and all people of goodwill.

“As men and women of faith, we believe that freedom, along with genuine security, is based in God, and is served by the recognition of humanity’s interdependence,” said the message, “and by working with partners to bring about community, development, and reconciliation for all, and that such freedom and security is not served by this war in Iraq.” Of the nearly 250 delegates voting, only two abstentions and one “no” vote were heard.

The assembly also adopted a new policy on human biotechnologies entitled, “Fearfully and Wonderfully Made.” The policy proclaims the sanctity of all human life as God’s creation and condemns human reproductive cloning. But it acknowledges differences exist among the thirty-five different member communions regarding stem cell research. The policy was presented to the delegates by Clare Chapman, chair of the drafting committee.

The new policy was the basis for two resolutions based on the biotechnologies policy. One calls for a worldwide ban on human reproductive cloning. A second, “Biotechnology and National Security,” calls for more oversight of government and private sector laboratories developing bio-warfare weapons. The resolution calls for creation of a National Science Advisory Board for Bio-defense within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It would have “powers of regulation and oversight” of government and private bio-defense projects. Both passed unanimously.

The 2007 general assembly meeting was held in the New York City area.

The delegation of the PC(USA) was composed of the following: the Reverend Fahed Abu-Hakel, Elder Janice Burgrabe, the Reverend José Luis Casal, the Reverend Robina Winbush, Elder Elsie L. Dursi, the Reverend Dr. Leslie R. Hyder, the Reverend Dr. Clifton Kirkpatrick, Elder Jean M. Livingston, Aimee Moiso, the Reverend J. Herbert Nelson II, the

Reverend Gordon Webster, the Reverend Arlene Gordon, the Reverend Paulette Mixon-Weller, the Reverend Kent Winters-Hazelton, and the Reverend Carlos Malave.

*Delegation Report of 2007 NCCC General Assembly*

The Evangelical Lutheran Church lead the assembly in worship, providing the delegates with the right spirit to do the work of the assembly. Following worship, the Reverend Dr. Randall Bailey guided the assembly on a thought-provoking bible study. His two main points were the use of women to advance men's purposes and desires, and the disguised ways in which the church many times gets involved with the empires.

On the first afternoon, the assembly heard a report from the president, the Church World Service (CWS) executive director, and the acting general secretary.

The Membership and Ecclesial Relation Committee presented a proposal for a comprehensive plan of visitation of all the member communions of the council. This was in response to the desire of the council to strengthen the relationship between the member communions. The goal is to develop a stronger relationship of the communions with each other, instead of a relationship with an organization, in this case the National Council of Churches of Christ.

The director of Church World Service and the board of directors presented their report to the assembly. They gave at glance a review of CWS work. One of the major items reported was the implementation of the recently finished strategic plan. Concern was expressed about the need to include in the delegations to the general assembly people who are involved with CWS. At the same time it was reported that there had been good progress in the relationship between CWS and NCCC.

Representing the Special Commission for the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast, Bishop Hoyt presented an insightful report. The commission is in need of more financial resources to pay for consulting work. The commission released a report card, "Triumphs and Struggles and the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast, which examines the response and progress being made toward rebuilding efforts in the city of New Orleans, as well as in Louisiana and Mississippi. The report card grades federal, state, and local government agencies in areas such as transportation, healthcare, housing, schools, insurance, and environmental justice. They reported that very slow progress is happening. Some communions have been actively sending working groups to the region, including our own church.

The report from Faith & Order emphasized the recent celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Faith & Order (F & O) movement held at Oberlin. One of the successes of the celebration was the participation of more than fifty seminary students. These students are the hope of the F & O movement. The report included a DVD with highlights of the conference. A panel of several ecumenical leaders present at the conference shared their perspectives about the conference. A copy of the video will be sent to all the churches. We were encouraged to move the spirit of the conference forward to the church.

The general assembly received a "Social Creed for the 21st Century" that had been approved by the governing board in September. The NCCC and many of its member communions developed this social creed for the 21st century to address issues of globalization, poverty, and violence, among others.

Financial report: In 2007 the net assets decreased from \$7.5 to \$6.3. Of the \$7.7 million spent in 2007, almost 74 percent of funds were spent on programs. Revenues were less than expected from member communions and foundations. The council was forced to cut staff to lower the budget. New job descriptions were created with a leaner staff for the council.

Acting NCCC General Secretary Clare Chapman announced the Claire Randall women's development fund at a celebratory luncheon for the NCCC's Women's Caucus. (Randall was the NCCC's first woman general secretary.) Randall is credited with overseeing turbulent times for the ecumenical movement, including the NCCC's backing of a much-contested plan to ship U.S. grain to Vietnam in the mid 1970s.

One of the exciting and important components of the general assembly is the Stewards Program. This year, ten young adults participated in this program. They serve in the logistics of the assembly, but more importantly they have their own reflection and discussion times. The assembly provided time for them to report on their reflection on the work and issues addressed in the assembly and their critique or perspective on these issues.

The general assembly urged the U.S. House of Representatives to pass legislation recognizing the slaughter of Armenians in 1915 as genocide.

On the final day of the assembly, His Eminence Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, a Turkish-born priest who represents the Diocese of the Armenian Church in America in Washington, was installed Thursday (November 9) as the president of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. The Reverend Peg Chamberlin, a Moravian clergywoman and executive director of the Minnesota Council of Churches, was installed as president elect of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. in



annual meetings that week. Under the current NCCC constitution, her position means she will automatically assume the presidency in January 2010.

The Reverend Dr. Michael Kinnamon, a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) clergyman and a long-time educator and ecumenical leader, was installed Thursday as the NCCC's ninth general secretary. Kinnamon was unanimously elected to the office by paper ballot.

A member of our delegation, the Reverend Jose L Casal, was elected secretary of the NCCC board. Other PC(USA) representatives in the executive board include: Jerry Van Marter, Gradye Parsons, and Robina Winbush.

The PC(USA) delegation included: Elder Janice Burggrabe, the Reverend José Luis Casal, Elder Elsie L. Dursi, the Reverend Dr. Leslie R. Hyder, Elder Jean M. Livingston, Aimee Moiso, the Reverend J. Herbert Nelson II, the Reverend Gordon Webster, the Reverend Arlene Gordon, the Reverend Paulette Mixon-Weller, the Reverend Kent Winters-Hazelton, the Reverend Gradye Parsons, the Reverend Fahed Abu-Hakel, Elder Linda Valentine.

### ***C. World Alliance of Reformed Churches Report to the PC(USA), 2006–2007, Report of the General Secretary***

#### ***A. Introduction***

The most exciting news of this period is the journey that the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) have begun towards uniting. This is a step in faith in response to the desire of our Lord Jesus Christ expressed in the High Priestly Prayer recorded in John 17. In a world of so much fragmentation that pushes even churches to contemplate division, this development has been described as a breath of fresh air in the Reformed family. We ask that the entire Reformed family, including the PC(USA), prays along with us on this journey. More will be said about this in the body of this report.

In the last two years, we have focused on deepening our reflection on who we are as a communion of faith and our calling to foster justice especially as in 2007 we commemorated two hundred years after the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. Presbyterians and Reformed people have often struggled with their sense of calling as a worldwide communion. In 2006 and 2007, we have been taking steps to engage in reflection on what it would mean if the quality of our relations was to be deepened beyond what it currently is. What would communion mean in the Reformed family? Our calling to be a communion is not an end in itself. An increase in the quality of relationships within the Reformed family worldwide is indeed a contribution to the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ for which our Lord Jesus prayed. Reformed communion therefore comes out of our commitment to ecumenical engagement and Christian unity. While this is in many ways an ecclesiological question, we also realized that it could have implications on how we relate to the global challenges we face together, including global insecurity and widespread economic difficulties in many nations. The WARC continues to take very seriously its calling to be a source of inspiration, strength, and accompaniment as member churches face and address these questions and challenges.

#### ***B. A Rearticulated Vision***

The year 2006 began with our working with the vision rearticulated in our October 2005 executive committee meeting as follows: "We are the World Alliance of Reformed Churches consisting of Reformed, Congregational, Presbyterian, Waldensian, United and Uniting churches. We are called to be a communion of churches joined together in Christ, to promote the renewal and the unity of the church, and to participate in God's transformation of the world."

The structure that became effective in January 2006 took this as the main inspiration of how we are to fulfil our callings. We now work on our seven core callings through networks facilitated by staff. The Geneva Secretariat began this process in 2006 with the executive staff for the Theology and Ecumenical Engagement Office, the Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership Office, the Mission Project, the Covenanting for Justice Project, the Finance and Fundraising Office, and the Communications Office and able administrative assistants. The Youth Project was covered within the Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership Office. Later in the year 2006, the Covenanting for Justice Project was also redesigned with its oversight lodged in the Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership Office. We have begun appointing consultants for each region to facilitate the work. The North American consultant is the Reverend Gretchen van Wieren.

In addition the vision strengthened the effectiveness of our participation in the World Council of Churches' 9th General Assembly in Porto Allegre, as we all joined in praying, "God in your grace, transform the world." God has been transforming the world (cf: John 10:10, Luke 4: 18–21, Romans 12, 1–3, etc). In the last clause of our vision statement we acknowledge that we are called to participate in God's transformation of the world.

This document highlights some of the work we have done through our Geneva offices and networks.

### C. *Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership*

The Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership Office is under the able leadership of Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth. The office has worked mainly with the Gender Justice, Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth, and Youth Networks.

### D. *Covenanting for Justice Project*

The network developed a program that had as a focus bringing the work of the Covenanting for Justice Project closer to the constituency through regional consultants. The regional consultants have been working with the area councils to develop a more engaging process with churches and partners in studies, reflection, mission, and spiritual renewal based on the Accra Confession.

Through this, the Covenanting for Justice Project, building on the spirit of Accra and the Accra Confession, has been able to press ahead with its important task of enabling Reformed churches to relate their faith with economic justice and ecological concerns. In January 2007, the Covenanting for Justice staff team was strengthened with two consultants (Roberto Jordan for Latin America and Gretel van Wieren for North America). In June 2007, the staff team was further enhanced with Puleng LenkaBula as the Africa consultant.

The WARC and the Council for World Mission (CWM) joined hands to hold a consultation (May 15–19 2006) that challenged churches to elevate the level of their engagement in economic justice from one of social engagement to that of mission—placing it at the very heart of the mission of the Church. The Kuala Lumpur meeting decided to launch a five-year Covenanting for Justice movement.

Following up on the Kuala Lumpur invitation, WARC, CWM, and World Council of Churches (WCC) began the process of working together to build a Covenanting for Justice movement. The movement will carry forward the hopes expressed in the Covenanting for Justice process before and after Accra. It was agreed that the AGAPE process be brought on board in what is seen as a Covenanting for Justice/AGAPE movement.

A small workshop on global empire took place from 13–15 July 2006, in Antipolo City, near Manila, the Philippines. Seventeen theologians who have been working on this issue gathered together and issued a document on global empire under the title, *An Ecumenical Faith Stance against Global Empire for a Liberated Earth Community*. This document is meant to stimulate debate and study not only for Reformed churches, but also for ecumenical organizations in their theological reflection and discernment in their responses to global empire.

A major focus of the Covenanting for Justice Project is “living out the Accra Confession.” Building platforms for critical reflection and dialogue, the executive staff and consultants are developing strategies to engage churches and partners in a process of living out the Accra Confession.

In North America, Gretel van Wieren, our consultant, is working very closely with all our churches, the Caribbean and North American Area Council (CANAAC), and North American Executive Committee members. A meeting of church representatives was held in Louisville, Kentucky, in April 2007. The participants agreed to form a North American Covenanting for Justice Working Group that will convene three times a year from now until 2011. Gretel van Wieren is serving as the coordinator of the group. Participants agreed to work together on the following key steps:

- publishing an Accra Confession educational pamphlet to be widely distributed among North American churches (in English, French, Korean, and Spanish);
- ensuring that the Accra Confession is introduced to the appropriate church bodies within each denomination;
- incorporating the Accra Confession at several upcoming seminary and theological/academic events;
- organizing scholarly events around the 200th year celebration of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade to look at the ways in which the consequences of slavery affect the current global political economy;
- developing a model for regional community-based hearings regarding “signs of the times” and transformative actions related to economic and environmental injustices (to be organized by WARC member churches in collaboration with local Diaspora communities and community-based organizations).

Gretel van Wieren has also developed a study guide for the Accra Confession. It was published in September 2007.

The other regional consultants are also developing similar processes.

An international ecumenical conference—*Abolished, But Not Destroyed: Remembering the Slave Trade in the 21st Century*—has been organized by WARC, the WCC, and CWM. The conference was hosted by the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, from December 10–15, 2007. The main purpose of the conference is to gather Africans from Africa and the Diaspora in collective sharing of memories, critical reflection, analysis, and consequences/impact of the legacy of slavery and the continued injustices based on race. The conference also celebrated resistance to slavery and oppression, African cultures and spiritualities from various places, the struggles of the Dalits and indigenous peoples.

#### E. Gender Justice

The Gender Justice Network responds to the core calling, “promoting inclusivity and partnership in church and society,” by working together with churches and partners to provide a platform for dialogue between women and men, drawing attention to women’s inequalities and gender injustices, as well as promoting action towards gender justice. The location of Gender Justice within the Office for Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership provides more scope for strengthening the voices and visions of women in core programmes of the alliance and to mainstream gender perspectives, methodology, and strategy into its work for justice and peace.

In 2006 and 2007, twenty-nine women from eighteen countries were awarded scholarships to study theology in preparation for the ordained ministry within our Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women in the South. This fund has had a significant impact on WARC’s member churches, especially in the recognition of women’s ministry and in the acceptance of women in the ordained ministry.

In June 2007, a team of five coordinated by the executive secretary visited the Reformed Church in East Africa (RCEA) to follow up on discussions between WARC and the RCEA regarding women’s ordination and to offer support and accompaniment to the church in its struggle towards the acceptance of women in the ordained ministry.

In February 2006, the Reformed Church in Carpatho-Ukraine announced a decision of its synod, stating that “it did not wish to employ female ministers” and further stating that the “decision takes effect retroactively,” thus debarring all women ministers from performing their duties as ordained ministers. Nine women ministers were affected by this decision. The WARC Network coordinated a worldwide discussion and show of solidarity and concern. Actions included a small team within the Gender Justice Network to address these concerns, a solidarity letter sent to the church and to all the women affected, and an invitation to one of the women affected to the Reformed Church in Austria. The 2007 synod “retracted” the 2006 decision but the status and situation of women in the church has not changed in any significant way. The synod agreed that women would not be allowed to be leaders in congregations. The appalling injustices against women sanctioned by the Ukrainian church and other WARC member churches in the 21st century need to be addressed in a more proactive way with support of partners/member churches who are in a position to help.

From June 29 to July 4, WARC, in collaboration with St Paul’s United Theological College, Limuru, Kenya, held a Consultation on Gender, Leadership and Power, in Limuru, Kenya. Forty-eight participants from seventeen countries, including eleven students from St Paul’s and ecumenical partners from the WCC and CWM participated in the consultation. The main purpose of the consultation was to challenge leadership based on a domination/subjugation model of power and to explore liberating, empowering, and participatory models of leadership as well as addressing the gap between women and men in leadership positions.

The Reformed Church of the Canton Argovia in Switzerland has established a prize to support and encourage women in church leadership, and has invited WARC to be a partner in the implementation and management of the prize. The prize of USD5,000 will be awarded every two years by the Reformed Cantonal Church of Argovia in cooperation with the Office for Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership (CRJP).

The Pacific Workshop on Gender Awareness and Leadership Development was held at the Jovili Meo Mission Centre, Pacific Theological College, Suva, from November 21–25, 2006. This workshop was a follow-up to the Gender Awareness and Leadership Development Workshop for the Pacific Region, which was carried out by WARC in November 2000. The WARC took the opportunity to include a one-day meeting with Pacific church leaders on their role in the Pacific and within the worldwide family of Reformed churches. There were two sessions on the Pacific member churches and the Accra Confession. Participants indicated that the opportunity of such a gathering was very enriching as they learned so much from each other and that together they can find a way to move jointly forward.

The WARC continues to receive positive feedback on its gender manual, *Created in God’s Image: From Hierarchy to Partnership*. Partners we have worked with in promotion and distribution include Mission 21 in Basel, Switzerland. The demand for the books has increased significantly—even beyond the borders of the Reformed family and there have been many requests to WARC for free copies. From information received, the manual is being translated into Burmese with support from CWM and into Mandarin by the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan.

Papers presented at the August 2005 consultation on Women and the Accra Confession: Covenanting for Life in Jamaica were published in the March 2006 issue of *Reformed World*, edited by the executive secretary for CRJP. It is also on the CRJP web page of WARC.

#### F. Youth

One of the tools for youth mobilization is the Reformed Youth Forum (RYF), which was established following the WARC 23rd General Council, 1997, as a vibrant global network of young people. It is a network of friends who continue to share events of their lives, churches, and countries. The forum also provides space for sharing positive and exciting news of experiences of young people in Reformed churches.

The European Youth Executive Committee member, Jitka Krausová, has been instrumental in organizing and coordinating a European Reformed Youth Forum (ERYF).

The CANAAC Steering Committee organized a youth gathering as a youth pre-executive committee event as well as a CANAAC pre-assembly youth event in Trinidad and Tobago in October 2007. The event brought together young people from CANAAC/CANACOM member churches for engagement, dialogue, and discussions through the medium of presentations on current issues affecting them. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the Trinidadian context and participate in a Mission Project. This event helped to challenge and affirm our young people and the vital contributions they make for praxis towards transformation and liberation within their communities and their personal lives.

In April 2007, a questionnaire was sent out to all member churches and youth contacts in order to update the youth database. So far thirty member churches have responded and have named new youth contacts. In addition twenty-two persons on the database have also responded positively affirming their interest in WARC's work and indicating their interest in being in the database.

An annual Reformed Youth Newsletter has been initiated. The first newsletter came out in January 2008. The network is looking for a volunteer coordinator/editor for this project.

A questionnaire was developed to find out the effects of technology on relationships among young people. It will also encourage young people to share three priority issues for young people in their communities and regional contexts. The questionnaire was sent out in August 2007.

In July-August 2006, Krysta Bisnauth, a final year undergraduate student served as an intern. She contributed much in the areas of justice and mission as she learned from the WARC staff team.

#### G. Theology and Ecumenical Engagement

The Office of Theology and Ecumenical Engagement works primarily with the Theology and Communion networks. To get the networks started, the office sent out two newsletters to the membership of each network in the first half of 2006. Meetings were held with the moderators at different times to review the different aspects of the life and work of the alliance to which the Communion Network or the Theology Network is called to contribute.

In order to facilitate the initial reflections on the significance and implications of the WARC vision, the then executive secretary, Odair Pedroso Mateus, prepared a short paper—*Called to Be a Communion of Churches*. The main topics of that paper are: I. The Vision. From an Alliance of Churches to a Communion of Churches; II. "Alliance" Means Federation; III. Koinonia, Communion; IV. Towards a Discussion on Communion; V. Communion and Compassion. The paper was circulated among the members of the two Networks and executive staff. Network members organized discussion groups and executive staff had a workshop to discuss these issues.

The third phase of the Catholic-Reformed International Theological Dialogue started in 1998 and ended in 2004. In 2006 and 2007, a small group worked on drafting and editing the final report, *The Church as Community of Common Witness to the Kingdom of God*. The report was submitted to all members of the joint commission for final approval in September 2006. It has been published in the June-September 2007 issue of *Reformed World*.

The 10th biennial session of the Orthodox-Reformed Dialogue took place in Volos, Greece. The dialogue series aims at deepening mutual understanding of the Christian faith through the joint study of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. In May 2006 Archbishop Christodoulos, the head of the Church of Greece, visited the WARC offices and held discussions with the executive secretary and the general secretary. In January 2007, a delegation led by the president visited the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople. These visits went a long way in enhancing the relations between Reformed and Orthodox.

The Pentecostal-Reformed Dialogue held a dialogue session in the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in Kentucky, USA, in May 17–23, 2006. The overarching theme of this dialogue was “Experience in Christian faith and life.” The 2006 theme was “How Pentecostals and Reformed understand and experience communion (koinonia) in the local congregation, with other congregations, and between Christian churches at the national and international level.” The 2007 session was held in Cape Town, South Africa, 19–26 May 2007.

The first meeting of the newly established Lutheran-Reformed Joint Commission took place at the headquarters of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, Utrecht, July 1–7, 2006. The joint commission decided that in the two years to come it will focus on the theological and practical tasks related to the challenge of making more visible the fellowship that already exists among Lutheran and Reformed churches. This will include matters of mutual responsibility, understanding of confessing and confessions, church order and worship, oversight and mission. The second session took place in August 11–16, 2006, in Windhoek, Namibia, hosted by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Through *Reformed World*, WARC has developed a good forum for reflections on “church and theology today.” It has offered space for theological reflections on issues that are related to the life of WARC member churches, high on the agenda of the alliance, and also related to our commitment to ecumenical engagement.

For the last two years, a group of different Reformed-related organizations, including WARC, the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (FAP), the Theological Faculty of the University of Geneva, The Protestant Church of Geneva, and the John Knox International Reformed Center have worked hard to build an international platform of coordination and information on the upcoming Calvin Jubilee (2009). From April 15 to 19 2007, fifty-five people, representing Reformed churches on different continents, gathered in the John Knox Center for a consultation on the theme, “Why and how do we celebrate the legacy of John Calvin?” The consultation identified the aspects of the life and teaching of Calvin that are relevant for the life and witness of Reformed churches today and offered space for a broad exchange on ongoing preparations for the Calvin Jubilee in 2009.

The theme of the 2006 edition of the Georges Lombard Prize was “Water, source of life: socioeconomic, theological, and interreligious perspectives.” Fourteen theological students/young pastors from eleven countries submitted essays for this contest that honours the memory of Georges Lombard, WARC treasurer from 1948 through 1970. An international jury examined the submissions. The Reverend Anderson Jeremiah of India won the first prize. The second prize went to the Reverend Clifford Rawlins from Trinidad and Tobago, and the third prize went to the Reverend Carola Ruth Tron of Argentina. Their essays were published in the March 2007 edition of *Reformed World*.

Currently, twenty-four institutions participate in the WARC Scholarship Programme. In 2006, the office processed a total of six applications. The majority of the scholarships went to candidates from Africa, followed by Asia and Europe. Seventy-four requests, again mainly from Africa, were received from candidates who were not eligible to benefit from a WARC scholarship.

#### H. *Mission Project*

In the first months of 2006, the mission project worked hard to secure the necessary funds and build the necessary linkages to get the project going.

Under *Mission Study, Reinterpretation and Empowerment*, the project’s main program is the Making a Difference Project 2006–2008. This was made possible because of a Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and United Church of Canada (UCC) funding arrangement. The program is based in three WARC member churches—the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda, and the United Protestant Church of Belgium. The Making a Difference Project or MADIP focuses on peace, reconciliation, and justice action with special reference to dealing constructively with ethnic and race differences. Missiological reflection is an integral part of the MADIP programs.

Under the programme priority *International Mission Relations*, we note a renewed interest in how the vision of partnership in mission, which in the 1970s became the guiding principle to reshape mission relations between North and South, might be given shape and content today, at a time of diminishing financial resources in the North. The consultative processes recently initiated by, for example, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, and the UCC helped to shape the study on Partnership in Mission presently under design in the Mission Project.

Another focus of the project is *New expressions of Reformed unity*. The project began a new initiative in Cameroon in which several churches are engaged in a mission action/reflection process in four pilot groups that takes between six weeks and six months. Meanwhile the Lutheran World Federation has joined WARC in the facilitation of these pilot groups, with the idea that cross-fertilization will also take place between the participating countries, and that this intercultural learning process be documented as one of our joint contributions to the Towards the 2010 (Edinburgh) Process.

Between March and August 2007, an evaluation was made of the Mission in Unity initiative carried out in the Ukraine and Belarus since the year 2000. In June 2006, a reflection process was launched by the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands to develop a case study on the church's union processes since the 1950s and the significance of these for UCJCI's mission. A further planning and research meeting will take place in Kingston in November 2007. The Mission Project facilitates the process at various planning moments and also facilitates the publication of the study.

The WARC as a whole, and the Mission Project in particular, has followed with much interest the study on "Peace, Unity, and Purity" (PUP) of PC(USA) and has agreed to develop the PUP study into a case study and learning tool for the wider Reformed family. The PUP findings offer insight into ways of dealing with conflict and disagreement that do not lead to division and splits, something that is of great importance for the Reformed family. The case study will be made available in 2008–2009.

Under *Relations and cooperation of historic and immigrant churches in the North*, networking between different groups in Europe and North America working on these issues has continued. The MADIP I has dimensions of this program focus, especially in the MADIP programs carried out by the United Protestant Church in Belgium, which is increasingly multicultural.

The project continues to document and share widely samples of mission renewal and cooperation that are undertaken by WARC member churches, and to highlight some of the issues at stake as churches and groups seek to develop as interdependent missional churches. It also facilitates networking between resource people in different countries working on the same issues. Some of the ways in which this was achieved during the period under review are listed below.

The year 2010 will be the centenary of the 1910 Edinburgh Mission Conference out of which the modern missionary movement grew. The Scottish churches, the WCC's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) and other international organizations have put in place a process of study and events that reflects on the hopes and issues of 1910 but also and especially seeks to identify the mission frontiers for today and tomorrow. Our mission project executive secretary represents WARC on the International Planning Council, anchoring WARC inputs into the process. The WARC contributions will include a study on Reformed mission statements, the study on Partnership in Mission, and the Cameroon and British Pilot Projects on Mission Today.

#### I. *Church and Spiritual Renewal*

This core calling has not had as much attention in the two years under review. While the work we have done in justice, mission, theology, and ecumenical engagement has contributed to church renewal, we have only just begun working on worship and spiritual renewal in response to the Accra mandates. Together with the leadership of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC), we have approached the Calvin Institute of Worship in Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., to help us put together a group of worship experts gathered from the different regions in a consultation that will contribute to worship renewal. Such a consultation can also be the foundation for planning the worship life of the next general council. We sent out a worship renewal questionnaire in late 2007, hoping this will document where our churches are in order to inform WARC in our next steps.

#### J. *Communications Office*

The task, the ministry, and the joy of WARC's Communications Office is to help let the light of WARC be seen, to use our limited resources to find the best lampstands to show the Reformed community and the world beyond what we are up to as followers of Jesus Christ.

For most of the past two years, the job of reshaping, updating, and maintaining the WARC Website ([www.warc.ch](http://www.warc.ch)) has been a major challenge that has been bravely tackled by the Communications Office in spite of the limited financing. For most of that time, the Johannes A Lasco Library in Emden, Germany, functioned as our technical Webmasters, making design and structural changes and helping staff in Geneva work with a content management system that allowed them to make changes. We are now doing most of the updating of the Website in-house in the Communications office. In the past two years, many changes have been accomplished with much work from the particular offices, as well as the Communications Office. The changes affect the following Web pages: Theology, Covenanting for Justice, Finance and Fundraising, Communications, Member Churches, What We Do, and Youth. We have also created pages such as the WARC Forum, Donate, Member Fees, Publications, Subscriptions, Reformation Sunday, and Opportunities to Serve. We are now far more consistently able to put up Web versions of *Update* in all four languages in a more timely fashion and use the site better to promote resources such as *Water—God's Gift for Life*, Reformation Sunday materials, and *Reformed World*.

Another area where significant progress has been made is in media and constituency relations. Our regular news releases have reached WARC member churches, leaders, formal and informal networks, as well as both the secular and religious me-

dia around the world on a wide variety of issues that are being tackled by the secretariat and WARC as a whole. A number of staff have been interviewed by the media and the general secretary has appeared on radio programs, including the World Service of the BBC. The best coverage WARC has received in the past two years was around our response to the Vatican's reiteration of its thinking on what constitutes a church. It is an ongoing regret that we do not have the financial or staff resources to issue releases in all four languages. It is usually only in English.

The WARC's quarterly newsletter, *Update*, has been regularly published and continues to be well received.

A book, *Water—God's Gift for Life*, was published by the Communications Office in the early part of 2006. In addition, new WARC leaflets were created in the early part of 2006. Since first publication, the leaflets have been re-printed in German and English. Another, more modest, effort was the production of nine impact sheets on the major programming efforts of WARC that were produced, in English only, as another publicity/fund raising tool.

The Communications Office has been giving some thought to the challenge of communicating well before, during, and following any union between WARC and Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC). This could involve a total re-branding of all our communications and will require new resources, identification, and strategies. The office has already secured a temporary domain name.

#### K. *Finance and Fundraising Office*

##### 1. *Audited Accounts*

The final accounts results in both 2005 and 2006 were deficit situations. In 2005 the deficit was CHF8,640. In 2006 the final deficit was CHF4,167. We desperately need new sources of fund development in order to address this situation. The 2007 accounts are yet to be audited at the time of writing this report.

##### 2. *Expenditure*

Our executive secretary for finance and fundraising, Maureen O'Brien, has modified the format of the accounts to enable a better overview of our financial situation. Program expenditure changes from year to year, depending on what programs are carried out. Programs are normally only carried out if there are sufficient funds available to do so. The income for programs comes from special fundraising.

We are grateful to the member churches that grant us special funding designated for core expenditure. It has helped us very much in the last three years with the financial challenges we have been facing.

While at the time of writing this report, we have not completed the accounts for 2007, we do know that the CHF120,000 expenditure connected with the executive committee has increased our end of 2007 deficit greatly.

##### 3. *Fundraising*

Our short-term goals include building awareness among WARC member churches that their financial contributions are critical for WARC's existence. Therefore, there is need for all churches to be paying full membership fees. Those churches that can should try to pay more than that attributed to them.

We have been currently looking for sponsorship of our two publications, *Update* and *Reformed World*. The annual costs for producing these is CHF130,000. If we find sponsorship for them, this will reduce our core expenditure considerably.

We need additional help with determining within the churches whom to address concerning the possibilities of extra funding that may exist beyond their ecumenical funds. In addition we are negotiating with partners who give designated program funding to include a percentage for the coordination work carried out by the executive staff member.

The executive secretary for finance and fundraising worked together with the executive secretary for communications to implement the payment facility on our Website. We received our first transaction in May 2006. The majority of payments have been for subscriptions to *Reformed World* and *Update* and for the purchase of other publications.

For the long-term, we need to address the issue of how to raise funds for the 21st Century Reformation Fund and the WARC Endowment Fund that were established by the executive committee in October 2007. This includes establishing a marketing strategy for WARC, identifying potential donors from within and outside the Reformed family, and finding ways to include congregations which are able to help. We are coordinating with the Presbyterian Foundation in the U.S., which will be managing the endowment fund.

L. *Partnership Fund*

The Partnership Fund is a small development fund run by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Beneficiaries of this fund are member churches and area councils of WARC, which are located in the Southern Hemisphere and Eastern Europe.

The WARC works in close collaboration with the Fondation pour l'Aide au Protestantisme Réformé (FAP). The WARC receives many applications, both from member churches and churches. We can only respond to the applications from WARC member churches.

Twenty-seven projects were approved in 2006. Eight projects were approved in 2007. We have also responded to a number of our churches that faced major disasters in 2006 and 2007. The donations that we send, especially to churches in the global south facing such disasters, is a small part of our expression of solidarity.

The WARC is very grateful for the support it receives from funding agencies, churches, and individuals for the Partnership Fund.

M. *Reformation Sunday Resources*

The first of these resources came out in May 2006 and was distributed four months before the 2006 Reformation Day. It was developed by the Church Renewal, Justice and Partnership Office under the leadership of Pat Sheerattan-Bisnauth. The title is: *Renewing the Church—Resources for Celebrating Reformation Sunday*. By popular request we did not do a new one for 2007 because many requested that they use the 2006 publication again. There has been great appreciation for this resource book and after some reflection it was decided that the same book be used for Reformation Day 2007. It is available on the CRJP Web page on the WARC Website.

N. *WARC-Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) Relations*

A joint commission appointed by both WARC and REC to look at relationships between the two organizations met in Grand Rapids, Michigan, from January 30 to February 2, 2006. After in-depth deliberations, the result of this meeting was a proposal for the two organizations to unite. This was communicated to WARC member churches. The response was an overwhelming acceptance of the proposal. In 2007, both REC and WARC Executive Committees affirmed the proposal and put in place a process towards unity in 2010.

In August 2006, we jointly organized a meeting of all WARC and REC member churches in Nigeria. It was a meeting to which each of the six churches brought seven of their top leaders (including women and youth leaders). In addition to discussing the proposed uniting of the two bodies, we had in-depth workshops on Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth, Mission in a Pluralistic Society, HIV/AIDS, and Youth and Christian Education.

O. *WARC-DECC Relations*

The WARC and the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council (DECC) continue to enjoy good relations. We have begun to plan another meeting for July 2008. For more than a decade, the DECC is always represented at WARC Executive Committee. Dr. Newell Williams, is the current representative.

P. *United Nations Office*

We are very grateful to God for the recent appointment of Joel Hanisek to coordinate the PC(USA) United Nations Office. For several years, WARC has also used this office to strengthen its engagement in the United Nations. Joel Hanisek is committed to playing this role for WARC as well.

Q. *Area Councils*

We value the work that our area councils are engaged in. We continue to see new ways of working closer together. The oldest two of our areas have gone through some major changes.

THE CANAAC has been through a process of re-envisioning, which has brought into being a more focused area council with three meetings in-between WARC general councils. The CANAAC is organizing an assembly for February 2008.

The European Area Council went through a similar re-envisioning process in the last four years, and in September last year they held an assembly in which a new, more focused WARC Europe was born.



The Alliance of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches in Latin America (AIPRAL) seems to have the award for the best functioning area council in this era. It held its latest general assembly in Colombia in August 2006. It has done much good work in promoting the Accra Confession as well as other mandates of WARC. The 2006 general assembly also coincided with the 50th anniversary of AIPRAL.

The Northeast Asia Area Council (NEAAC) meetings in 2006 and 2007 provided space for theological discussions on current WARC themes relevant to the Northeast Asia.

The Alliance of Reformed Churches in Africa (ARCA) held a workshop on the Accra Confession for Central and West African member churches in Accra in May 2006. The ARCA continues to struggle financially.

#### R. *Calvin Jubilee*

The year 2009 marks 500 years after Calvin's birth (10 July 1509–10 July 2009). The WARC is working with the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, the Protestant Church in Geneva, the Faculty of Theology in Geneva, the John Knox Center, and the Reformation Museum to commemorate this jubilee. A consultation was held in April this year at the John Knox Center in Geneva to map out how the jubilee could create possibilities for learning from the legacy of Calvin in dialogue with current challenges. At that consultation, the Patronage Committee was launched to oversee the process of commemoration over the next two years. Our president, Clifton Kirkpatrick, is one of the three co-presidents of this committee. The WARC named several members of the committee. The Website for the jubilee is [www.calvin09.org](http://www.calvin09.org). A sermon competition and a theme song competition have been launched. In addition to the things we are planning to do in common, WARC will also be bringing together two study tours in connection with the jubilee in 2008 and 2009. The 2009 executive committee meeting has been brought forward to May in order for it to coincide with the main celebration in Geneva.

#### S. *Senior Pastors' Consultation*

In April 2007, thirty-four senior pastors of Reformed churches in different parts of the world gathered at Bossey, Ecumenical Centre, for a four-day consultation. This was an opportunity for them to learn from one another and to learn about WARC and some of the historic sites in Geneva. The discussions were very good. The feedback we received from the participants was very positive. A few have also indicated that they would like to do this again in the future bringing in some key lay leaders. It is hoped that as we develop this we will continue to build up friends of WARC in a manner that will also be a catalyst in our fundraising.

#### T. *Consultation of Heads of Theological Institutes*

Princeton Theological Seminary in the U.S.A. worked with us to host a Consultation for Heads of Theological Institutions Related to Reformed Churches. This was held in June 2007. We had about fifty-four in attendance. Participants felt this was long overdue. Among other things, participants looked at issues of relevance in the 21st century, curriculum development, cooperation between/among institutions, etc. They resolved to set up a small committee to look at follow-up activities—including the planning of another such consultation.

#### U. *Visits to Member Churches*

My colleagues and I visited a number of member churches during the years 2006 and 2007. Some of these visits coincided with general assemblies. These are opportunities to meet with leaders and cross sections of congregations, to preach in services, and hold discussions on WARC programs as related to the churches.

Since this is a report to the PC(USA), we note here that WARC's general secretary was the preacher at the ecumenical service during the 218th General Assembly (2006) in Birmingham, Alabama. This was the assembly shared with the Cumberland churches. The general secretary also visited the PC(USA) head office in September 2007, and met with several senior staff of both the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) offices. He also addressed the middle governing bodies of the PC(USA) and the Witherspoon Society.

#### V. *Relations with the World Council of Churches (WCC)*

We participated in the WCC 9th General Assembly in various ways. The church leaders from WARC member churches, several officers and executive committee members (including the president) were there as delegates. I was there and so were Odair Pedroso Mateus, Pat Sheerattan-Bisnauth, and Seong-Won Park. In addition to the different roles we held in the assembly, we also organized a very successful gathering of Reformed participants.

We welcome the suggestion coming from the WCC to work towards an ecumenical assembly next time around. This is in part a response to what WARC has been advocating for since the mid 1990s. We will continue to follow that process

through the joint WCC-CWC commission that was recently set up. This joint commission had its first meeting in Geneva in May 2007. At this meeting, the language that the WCC presented the ecumenical assembly in is “a WCC Assembly with expanded space for Christian World Communions and other ecumenical partners.” We continue to monitor how the WCC Central Committee deliberates on this proposal.

#### W. *Relations with the Vatican*

The WARC’s visit to Pope Benedict XVI in January 2006, led by the president, contributed significantly to the improvement of Catholic-Reformed relations at the international level. In addition to visiting the Pope, we also held discussions with Cardinal Kasper and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, as well as with the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

While the timing and contents of the document issued by the Vatican in July 2007 were unhelpful, to say the least, WARC remains committed to staying faithful to the achievements of our dialogues.

#### X. *South Africa*

In June 2006, a team visited South Africa in connection with the request by the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika (NHKA) for readmission. The team had several sessions with the leadership of the NHKA and also held discussions at their seminary and with some of their pastors. In addition, we also held discussions with the leaders of our other member churches. We came up with a document that provides some guidelines on what is left to be done in order to fulfil the conditions for readmission. Unfortunately the NHKA synod in September 2007 failed to take the necessary decisions that would have facilitated readmission. We continue to work with the NHKA and look forward to the day when such a readmission will be possible.

Since 2001 we have been working to bring healing to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, which was divided in 1991. The process is facing major challenges that we continue to monitor. In this process we have worked in collaboration with the Department Missionnaire (DM) in Lausanne, Switzerland.

We rejoice that the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa and the Dutch Reformed Church came to an agreement to move forward together in the reunification process.

#### Y. *Vision and Core Callings*

Everything we have done in these two years has sought to respond to the vision and core callings of the alliance. Our programs, visits and relationship building, team work, embracing new possibilities, and others, were aimed at facilitating how the member churches of the alliance express themselves as one family “called to be a communion of churches joined together in Christ, to promote the renewal and the unity of the church, and to participate in God’s transformation of the world.”

#### Z. *Staff Changes*

The years 2006 and 2007 saw a number of changes in the staff serving the alliance. The term of service of our colleague, Seong-Won Park, who has served the Cooperation and Witness Department faithfully for ten years and laid a good foundation for the Covenanting for Justice Project, came to an end in August 2006. Karin Wisniewski and Sally Redondo, two of our longest serving administrative assistants retired in January and March 2007, respectively. They both were faithful, efficient, and meticulous in carrying out their commitments in WARC.

Our colleague, Odair Pedroso Mateus, of the Office of Theology and Ecumenical Engagement, received a call to join the World Council of Churches’ Bossey Ecumenical Institute and Faith and Order. He therefore finished his work with the alliance on the 31st of May 2007. Odair Pedroso Mateus has embodied a deep understanding of Reformed theology and how it relates to life issues facing the human community today, a wonderful ecumenical memory, and a commitment to Christian unity that has really made a difference for WARC. We will miss him. We are glad to welcome Adolfo Ham of Cuba as interim executive secretary in this office. He will be with us until May 2008. Douwe Visser of the Protestant Church of the Netherlands has been appointed to take office on June 1, 2008.

Together, the new and not so new members of the staff team have begun building a new, strong community to serve the alliance better.

As a result of the staff changes and the possibilities created by the new structure, we have had to reorganize how we engage in what one could say is the most critical calling of the alliance today—covenanting for justice in the economy and the earth. We now have consultants in different regions as noted above.

*AA. Uniting General Council to be hosted by North American Churches*

In view of the decision to unite WARC and REC, we have begun preparing for a uniting general council under the theme “Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace” (Eph. 4:3). It will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, hosted by our North American churches. The dates are June 18 to 28, 2010. This is the opportunity for all congregations of our North American churches to get involved. Therefore, we are requesting the appropriate decision making bodies to facilitate this. Those congregations in and near Michigan can contribute very directly in making hosting the assembly possible. In addition to hosting, all U.S. congregations are being requested to contribute financially to the endowment fund and Reformation fund that will secure the birth of this united Reformed body financially.

*BB. Concluding Remarks*

President Clifton Kirkpatrick’s vision for the alliance, his knowledge and experience as an ecumenical leader, his understanding of the difference the alliance can make in the broken world of today, and his dedication to effective leadership are gifts we have benefited from tremendously over the past couple of years. We thank God for Cliff’s leadership and for the leadership of all our vice presidents who have spent much time working on various aspects of the vision, purpose, and structure that are before the executive committee. We are very grateful for the leadership provided by our officers. We are very grateful for the many ways in which all executive committee members have been working for the alliance.

I am very grateful to God for all WARC staff and their dedication to the work. Although we are so few, we are a good team together.

We are very grateful for the dedication of member churches to the alliance. While some have not contributed, there are indeed many member churches that have not only contributed financially but have also engaged in our common commitments at the general council in ways that have begun positioning their churches to be stronger agents of mediating life in fullness for all. For all these concentric cycles of teams, I am indeed very grateful.

Responding to the Lord Jesus who came so that we may have life in fullness and who invites us to drink of the water of life, let us rededicate ourselves and this alliance to the work of mediating fullness of life for all, so that out of our hearts as believers others will see rivers of living water flowing. Let our dedication to bringing about a more just world portray our response to God’s calling on us to, “let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”

**D. *World Council of Churches (WCC) Annual Review 2006–2007****A. Introduction: Living Out God’s Grace in the World—From the Reverend Dr Samuel Kobia, General Secretary, World Council of Churches*

The World Council of Churches’ 9th Assembly (February 2006), its first in the 21st century, was a time to mark how far churches have come over the past 100 years not just in ecumenical dialogue and action but in their impact on society at national and international levels.

The ecumenical movement has transformed relationships between churches in the north and south in development and diakonia. Groundbreaking work in theology and ecclesiology has brought greater recognition of each other’s baptism and sharing of the Eucharist. The international solidarity and practical nonviolent action coordinated in response to violence in the Middle East demonstrate new unity of purpose and practice for peace. When we look at the history of the ecumenical movement and the WCC, we see these and many other transformations in how churches understand each other and act together to make a difference in the world.

This transformative power continues to be needed by the world today. And the WCC, as the broadest and most inclusive Christian voice and catalyst for international action, works at the heart of such efforts for peace, justice, and life in all its fullness. Indeed, 2006 demonstrated to us the strength of ecumenical witness today and the opportunities for positive change in the future.

The year of the assembly is always one of major transition for the World Council of Churches. Preparations for the assembly and carrying out this inspiring event demanded much of us in early 2006. The months following were intensive times as existing work was completed, the reflection and guidance from the assembly was interpreted, and new work begun.

A number of important shifts occurred that point to new directions and learnings for ecumenism in the 21st century: At the assembly, the WCC member churches adopted a consensus style of decision-making, a recommendation of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC. That such a global, diverse fellowship of churches can visibly demon-

strate its unity, commitment to equal participation, and respect is itself an important witness by this fellowship of churches to a divided world.

Our partnerships are widening. The consultative process engaged in to interpret the mandate of the 9th Assembly was the broadest ever. In addition to WCC member churches and governing bodies, there was participation by specialized ministries for relief and development, regional and national councils of churches, and Christian World Communions. New rules and processes adopted by the assembly strengthen their participation in the WCC for greater cooperation and coherence.

Discussions that have led to the formation of “ACT Development” exemplify the role of the WCC and the new partnerships that are now possible. The common desire for greater ecumenical coordination in development had reached a contentious stage in defining how such cooperation could be possible. The WCC was able to be the facilitator that brought parties together and created new opportunities for ecumenical collaboration.

The escalating violence in the Middle East, particularly the conflict in Lebanon and northern Israel, triggered new thinking in the WCC and a refocusing of ecumenical work in the region. The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel and other initiatives have prepared the ground, but we are going a step further with the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum as a more concerted effort to find new ways to express solidarity and work for peace in a conflict that now has global dimensions.

The reflection process on “reconfiguring the ecumenical movement” has taught us to assess carefully the purpose and style of the structures we create for maximum effectiveness. While the changes in the program framework since the assembly have necessitated more discussion about staff structures and organizational relationships, we remain focused on the content of the ecumenical movement and the work ahead.

We are equipping the WCC for a dynamic, integrated, and deliberate engagement with the major challenges facing member churches and the world at the start of the 21st century. Six program areas were affirmed by the central committee in September, and the new structure was put into place in January 2007. The implementation of these programs will be carried out in an integrated and interactive manner, this being our new way of working.

Our reporting on 2006–2007 covers this shift in program. The following pages carry highlights of the work in 2006, and more detail is available on request.

The greatest challenge lies before us. Youth, in interpreting the mandate of the assembly, have asked, “What does it mean in my community to be part of the ecumenical movement?” The ecumenical movement in the 21st century must be characterized by “experiential ecumenism”—living out the ecumenical reality in each time and place.

Now as in the past our fellowship has transformed, in ways great and small, the societies in which we live as churches and as global citizens. With new energy, partnerships, and insights, we are moving into the future, empowered by our faith in God, following the ministry of Jesus Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit.

#### B. *Profile of the World Council of Churches*

The World Council of Churches promotes Christian unity in faith, witness, and service for a more just and peaceful world.

In a world increasingly torn by economic and social inequality, political conflict, religious tension, violence, and environmental destruction, the World Council of Churches commits itself in discipleship to Christ, heeding his call “that they may all be one” by serving as a voice and catalyst for unity in the church and for life in all its fullness in the world.

The WCC is a unique global “fellowship of churches”—347 churches representing some 580 million Christians in more than 140 countries. Member churches come from the Anglican, Reformed, Baptist, Orthodox, Old Catholic, Pentecostal, Uniting, and other church traditions. The WCC works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Church.

Through the WCC, member churches work together on a broad range of issues, from theological dialogue, education, and interfaith relations, to action for justice and peace. As members of the WCC, churches commit themselves to pray, to act, and to journey together in faith and witness.

The World Council of Churches was officially formed in 1948 by representatives of 147 churches gathered in its 1st Assembly in Amsterdam. In its formation and early history, the WCC brought together four pioneering movements, some dating back to the 19th century, in which churches had begun to cooperate across denominational boundaries in education, mission, faith and order, and international affairs and social ethics.

The assembly, which is held every seven or eight years, is the highest legislative body of the WCC, and elects a central committee that governs the WCC between assemblies. The central committee moderator, elected at the assembly in 2006, is the Reverend Dr. Walter Altmann of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil.

The WCC general secretary is the Reverend Dr. Samuel Kobia, from the Methodist Church in Kenya. The central offices are in Geneva, Switzerland, with staff also based in regional locations.

### C. 2006–2007 Highlights

#### 1. *Advocacy Week Focuses on UN Reform*

Theologians, church representatives, social scientists, and political thinkers gave input into the United Nations reform debate in January 2006 and in October 2006, and again in October 2007 the WCC's third and fourth advocacy weeks were organized in New York. Participants developed a statement on UN reform later adopted by the WCC's 9th Assembly at Porto Alegre, and also debated policies related to terrorism, counterterrorism and human rights, responsibility to protect, elimination of nuclear arms, and building interreligious harmony.

#### 2. *Assembly Meets in a Spirit of Consensus*

More than 4,000 people from churches throughout the world gathered in February in Porto Alegre, Brazil, for the 9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in February 2006. Inspired by the theme, "God in your grace, transform the world," the delegates approved a substantial change in WCC priorities and working style, bringing increased attention to spirituality, ecumenical formation, global justice, and prophetic witness. Demonstrating the unity that is possible in the midst of diverse traditions and cultures, decisions were reached by consensus.

#### 3. *Dialogue Begins on Code of Conduct on Conversion*

The WCC and the Roman Catholic Church organized two interreligious consultations as the first phase in developing a common code of conduct on conversion. Many differences remained at the end of the consultation, yet the report lays out common ground on religious freedom and the need to address conversion with candid dialogue between Christians and people of other faiths.

#### 4. *New Faith and Order Commission Outlines Future*

At its first meeting in June, the WCC's Standing Commission on Faith and Order outlined the major areas of study for the next period including ecclesiology, baptism and worship, ethical decision making, and questions of authority. The commission also called for continued work on the distinctive witness of united and uniting churches, inter-confessional dialogues, and cooperation and reflection on Christian self-understanding in a religiously pluralistic world.

#### 5. *Ecumenical Institute at Bossey Turns Sixty*

Founded in 1946 as a place of healing in war-torn Europe, the first courses at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey brought together concentration camp survivors, former soldiers, and members of resistance movements. From this focus on reconciliation, Bossey developed into a recognized academic institution with ties to the University of Geneva, attracting students from around the world. Among the long list of alumni are university professors, ecumenical officers, bishops, pastors, and priests, as well as political and civil society leaders from all continents—even a patriarch. More than 25,000 people from virtually all church families and regions of the world have participated in courses at Bossey over the past sixty years.

The first meeting of the newly constituted Commission on Education and Ecumenical Formation convened at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, 27–30 June 2007. The new commission brought together the concerns and mandates of the former EEF commission and of the former Bossey Board. All but six of the thirty commission members were present, together with consultants and staff. The commission was given clear direction on its role, which included focus on integrating what had been separate strands, ensuring that the work of ecumenical formation happens in a coherent manner, within a single strategic plan. It was to also see itself as providing advice on developing the educational and formative potential of all the programmes of the WCC, not only those in the six areas of work under its purview.

#### 6. *Delegation Visits Beirut and Jerusalem*

In response to the month-long war in Lebanon and northern Israel, the WCC collaborated with partners to organize an ecumenical delegation in August at short notice. The delegation visited Beirut to learn firsthand of the suffering, death, and destruction, and to show solidarity with the people, communities, and churches of Lebanon. In Jerusalem, the delegation also investigated the impact of the boycott of much of the elected Palestinian leadership by Western powers.

### 7. *Central Committee Streamlines Programs*

The new central committee began its first full meeting at the end of August in Geneva. It established a Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum to coordinate and energize church advocacy efforts for peace and justice that serve all peoples in the Middle East. The committee adopted a streamlined WCC program strategy for the next seven years, and spoke out on issues of Just Trade; a compassionate response to HIV and AIDS; the conflicts in Lebanon and northern Israel, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Kosovo; and children in conflicts. A twenty-five-member youth body was established to foster greater participation by and support for young ecumenical leaders in the WCC.

### 8. *A Presence for Peace in Israel and Palestine*

In October, twenty-five ecumenical companions from eight countries began working with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). This 19th group of companions included the first Hindu and the second Muslim to participate in the program. Ecumenical companions serve a minimum of three months. They work in various capacities with local churches, Palestinian and Israeli nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), as well as Palestinian communities, to try to reduce the brutality of the occupation and to improve the daily lives of both peoples.

### 9. *Delegation Visits China and Taiwan*

The WCC general secretary, the Reverend Dr. Samuel Kobia, led an ecumenical delegation to the People's Republic of China and Taiwan in November. In China, the delegation learned of the phenomenal growth of churches and other religious groups in China, the ministries and services provided through the China Christian Council (CCC) and the pressures placed on the CCC as a "post-denominational" church by the influx of foreign missions setting up denominational churches. The delegation's visit to Taiwan was an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and its rural and urban ministries among indigenous people.

### 10. *New Water Rights Network*

The aid agency Brot für die Welt gave a ship's wheel, symbol of its water campaign, to the WCC in December, thus handing responsibility for this concern to the WCC and a newly formed Ecumenical Water Network (EWN). The German campaign, launched in 2003, focused on the human right to water. A statement issued by the WCC's 9th Assembly committed the council to "foster cooperation of churches and ecumenical partners on water concerns."

## D. *A New Ecumenical Mandate for the 21st Century*

Many of the issues addressed by the WCC over the last seven years—and rising new concerns—were the focus of pre-meetings, ecumenical conversations, and Mutirão sessions at the assembly. Youth, women, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities had successful and energizing conferences before the assembly began. Ecumenical conversations were organized for sustained dialogue on different aspects of religious, cultural, and socioeconomic issues to inform the deliberations of delegates on the future programme of the WCC. Daily workshops offered through the Mutirão brought all assembly participants together to hear from people directly affected and involved in the critical issues of the day.

Assemblies of the World Council of Churches are major milestones in the ecumenical journey. Gathering thousands of Christians from churches all over the world, assemblies are times of joy, debate, and unity in prayer and action that express the strengths and needs churches bring from their communities and nations. Individuals and churches are in turn strengthened in their commitment to work and witness together in their local context.

Held every seven or eight years, WCC assemblies gather representatives of member churches to review the work and activities of the WCC since its last assembly and to set directions and priorities for the council's future programmatic work. The 9th Assembly was held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in February—the first assembly to take place in Latin America. More than 4,000 participants, including 691 delegates from the WCC member churches and representatives from other churches, ecumenical organizations, and movements, followed the thematic plenaries, explored the Mutirão—workshops, seminars, exhibits, and demonstrations highlighting critical issues—and prayed together daily, all under the theme, "God, in your grace, transform the world."

During the first week, delegates adopted a substantially revised constitution and rules that move the WCC to decision making based on consensus and that amend the criteria for membership. The revisions emerged from the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC and aim to strengthen participation of churches from diverse cultures and traditions.

### 1. *Church Unity*

A key text adopted by the assembly, “Called to Be the One Church,” urges the WCC and its member churches to give priority to questions of unity, catholicity, baptism, and prayer. The delegates called for renewed efforts to manifest a visible unity that would allow the ecumenical movement to offer to the world the “coherent, grace-filled spiritual message of Christianity.”

The assembly pointed to ways in which collaboration with the Roman Catholic Church and with Pentecostal churches could be reinforced in the coming years, and emphasized the need to improve “cooperation and coherence of message” among the various ecumenical bodies and organizations. The WCC will also explore the feasibility of linking future assemblies with the global meetings of other church bodies.

### 2. *Youth*

Bringing energy, vision, and enthusiasm, young adults appointed by the churches participated in all assembly committee work. Delegates urged the churches to strengthen the involvement of youth in the life and work of the council. The assembly endorsed proposals to create a special body to represent young adults in the decision-making and leadership of the council.

Ecumenical formation of young people and facilitation of their contribution to the ecumenical movement has been at the heart of the activities in 2007: an ecumenical youth delegation to the World Social Forum in January in Nairobi/Kenya; cooperation with the World Student Christian Federation in a seminar on migration with some of the participants also attending the global platform on theology meeting; facilitation of the World Youth Programme and a meeting of REO youth representatives/staff together with those responsible for the work on women in cooperation with P106; a successful group of three interns; the accompaniment of ECHOS, the youth body that met in conjunction with the Ecumenical Officers Network; and participation in organizing the Taizé youth gathering in Geneva with 30,000 young people from all over Europe; World Youth Programme that continues to be an excellent platform for intentional co-operation between REOs and WCC.

### 3. *Program Priorities*

Rapidly evolving church and social contexts, effective use of financial resources, and establishing a clearer public profile motivated the assembly to focus WCC work on core issues.

“The WCC should do less, do it well, in an integrated, collaborative and interactive approach,” said the Reverend Dr. Walter Altmann, moderator of the programme guidelines committee that formulated the proposals. Calling for a strengthened theological basis for all areas of activity, the delegates also pointed to the need for comprehensive planning and communication strategies “to build engagement and ownership by the churches.”

The programme priorities fall within four areas of engagement: unity, spirituality, and mission; ecumenical formation focusing on youth in particular; global justice; and bringing a credible voice and prophetic witness to the world. The assembly affirmed that the WCC should expand its work on alternatives to economic globalization, deepening the theological and analytical grounding of this work, and sharing “practical, positive approaches from the churches” in this area.

### 4. *Public Issues*

The assembly took action on several issues of international concern. Delegates approved statements on the humanitarian protection of vulnerable populations; terrorism, counterterrorism, and human rights; nuclear disarmament; the Latin American region; water for life; the humanitarian crisis in northern Uganda; and the reform of the UN. The assembly voiced its concern for mutual respect, responsibility, and dialogue with people of other faiths. The executive committee and the central committee have continued to speak out on situations of conflict and on issues for global advocacy (on the Horn of Africa, on the International Criminal Court, on Climate Change, on Sri Lanka etc.).

## E. *Strengthening the Ecumenical Movement*

Churches in the ecumenical movement are inspired by the gospel mandate to be unified in Christ. The ecumenical movement itself is manifested and supported by structures that bring together churches and ecumenical organizations for sharing and analysis, focusing collective action, and ensuring good stewardship of the human and financial resources entrusted to ecumenical work.

The World Council of Churches is the unique international body that connects and coordinates these networks and organizations, within and beyond the WCC fellowship of churches.

### 1. *Deepening the Ecumenical Movement*

Relationships with member churches are nurtured most personally through visits by the WCC general secretary. The Reverend Dr. Samuel Kobia made official visits to churches and partners in Switzerland, China, and Taiwan in 2006, spoke at the World Methodist Conference in Korea, and met with other member churches there. Such visits enable the general secretary and representatives of other churches accompanying him to understand the opportunities and challenges faced by churches in their own contexts, express international ecumenical solidarity, and, at times, enable new dialogue to begin among churches, interfaith partners, or governments on matters of particular concern.

The WCC receives many requests for membership, which the WCC screens based on the new criteria adopted by the assembly, visits applicants, and prepares recommendations to the governing bodies. Following this process, two churches were received at the central committee meeting and can become members in 2008.

Meetings of governing bodies are opportunities for wide interaction with ecumenical partners that help assess ongoing and new concerns, ensure collaboration, and avoid duplication. The WCC organized meetings of the secretaries of national councils of churches (NCCs) during the assembly, and the secretaries of regional and national councils of churches met during the central committee meeting. A small NCC liaison group has been established to monitor programmatic and relational aspects of cooperation. According to the new rules on membership, NCCs can become associate councils—currently there are sixty-four associate councils in the WCC. The WCC facilitates a network of ecumenical officers from member churches. More than eighty officers are now linked electronically; in addition, they gather at central committee meetings to share information with each other and consult on major ecumenical issues.

The Common Heritage Fund encourages the participation of Orthodox clergy and laity, particularly women and youth, in ecumenical learning. Through the fund, key ecumenical texts and reflections, particularly from Orthodox theologians, are translated and disseminated, and young Orthodox theologians and laity are supported to study at the Graduate School of Bossey or receive other training.

### 2. *Widening the Ecumenical Movement*

The WCC builds intentional relationships with churches outside of the WCC. In addition to informal contacts, long-term consultative processes are set up to ensure growth in trust and understanding, such as the Joint Consultative Group between the WCC and Pentecostal churches. In 2006, these formal consultative bodies reported to the assembly, and new members were appointed by the central committee in September.

The Joint Working Group (JWG) between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC has more than forty years of experience in building relationships and participation in different facets of the work between the two bodies. The JWG is setting the agenda for its next phase based on the assembly and the JWG's eighth report.

The assembly endorsed a recommendation to strengthen the relationship between the WCC and Christian World Communions (CWCs)—international organizations of the same tradition or confession, such as the Anglican Communion, the Baptist World Alliance, and the Salvation Army. A Joint Consultative Commission between Christian World Communions and the WCC has been formed and met in October 2006 to begin discussions about the role of CWCs in relation to the council. The broadest consultative process is the Global Christian Forum, which was conceived by the WCC to help churches outside the WCC and the ecumenical movement understand and engage ecumenism. The WCC supports this process through a WCC representative on the continuation committee, which held a major meeting in Nairobi in 2007 that brought together some 200 representatives from a wide range of church families. A regional consultation was held in Europe in June, attended by more than fifty participants from diverse Christian traditions including diaspora and migrant communities.

As an international platform bringing together churches and organizations within and outside the ecumenical movement, the WCC has special responsibility for the coherence and effectiveness of the ecumenical movement. United Christian work and vision is challenged by the proliferation of new churches and ecumenical bodies, and there is concern over diminishing financial resources at the international level. In response, the WCC initiated a process for “reconfiguring the ecumenical movement,” which has engaged the full range of churches and related organizations. The process is continuing with a stronger theological emphasis through the Continuation Committee on “Ecumenism in the 21st Century.”

In 2006–2007, the WCC secretariat hosted more than 3,000 visitors from across the world at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. The number of young people—confirmation classes, university students, and young school children—continues to increase, leading one staff member to observe that “the ecumenical movement is alive, and also will be in the future.”

### F. *Unity, Mission, and Evangelism*

Dialogue and theological reflection on Christian beliefs and practices aid the cause of church unity by helping participants from diverse traditions overcome obstacles preventing them from finding in one another the marks of the One Church.



Part of that commitment to unity is expressed in mission and evangelism, in which the WCC promotes a common witness to Jesus Christ in all realms of life.

Two new, complementary tools for tackling fundamental issues in church unity are the WCC's study document, "The Nature and Mission of the Church", and "Called to Be the One Church," a text adopted by the 9th Assembly as a basis for renewed ecumenical commitment and further dialogue. The WCC member churches have committed themselves to respond to these texts.

A series of regional meetings on the two documents began in 2006–2007 with gatherings in Cairo organized with the Middle East Council of Churches, and in North America (Dallas and Boston) with ecumenical seminary federations. Other groups are broadening the process dramatically, including the ecclesiological study group of the American Academy of Religion and a study group from the International Council of Christians and Jews.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, probably the most widely observed annual ecumenical event, was again prepared jointly with the Roman Catholic Church. Preparations for the 100th anniversary in 2008 are underway.

Convened by the WCC, representatives of Christian World Communions, Pentecostal networks, mission societies and ecumenical organizations are preparing for another important anniversary—the centennial of the Edinburgh 1910 world mission conference in 2010. In 2007, a secretariat has been set up in Edinburgh, initiated by the WCC with participation of mission partners. A study on mission—one hundred years after Edinburgh 1910—is being coordinated by the WCC.

The WCC's Commission for World Mission and Evangelism helped to organize and gave leadership to the third conference of European missiological associations held in Paris in August and to a study that has been initiated by the French language association for mission studies. More than 100 participants from all parts of Western, Central, and Eastern Europe addressed the challenge of mission in a post-Enlightenment European context.

The WCC's Urban and Rural Mission (URM) organized, together with Frontier Internship in Mission, a consultation in Cuba entitled "Empire and Kingdom of God: Challenges to Christian Mission" in December 2006. The consultation provided further understanding of mission in solidarity with the poor and reflected on the necessary reconfiguration of the URM network as it becomes autonomous.

A seminar on "Mission as Proclamation of the Gospel—Towards a New Ecumenical Agenda for Evangelism in the 21st Century" was held at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey in June 2006. More than thirty participants from WCC member and nonmember churches re-emphasized the need for ecumenical cooperation in evangelism and developed several dynamic proposals for future WCC mission and evangelism events.

#### *Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa*

The early leadership of mission societies in providing "medical missions" and holistic health care for those without access to institutional medical care has made health and healing one of the most tangible missions of the church. In many countries in Africa, for example, the majority of health care services are provided by Christian organizations.

The churches' work in this field, especially with the poor and marginalized, emphasizes the need not only to provide the best medical facilities possible in often dire situations, but also to address the root causes that make people vulnerable to illness and prevent spiritual, mental, and physical healing.

Because of such concerns, the World Council of Churches has led efforts for a compassionate response to the AIDS pandemic since the 1980s, and now is engaged in making churches "HIV competent" through the Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA). The EHAIA was set up in 2002 as a joint undertaking of African and northern churches and agencies and the World Council of Churches. The EHAIA enables churches in Africa to gain access to the information, training, networks, and funding they need to help deal with HIV and AIDS in their communities.

Facilitated through five regional offices, EHAIA in 2006 and 2007 had major involvement in approximately 100 workshops, meetings, and conferences to help church leaders and their congregations speak honestly and accurately about HIV and AIDS, formulate relevant liturgy and theology, and act practically in response.

In March 2006, a workshop in the Central African Republic brought together fifty-five chaplains who work in state and church schools, colleges, and universities to develop a better understanding of the complexity of HIV and AIDS in the country, identify the root causes of stigma and discrimination in the school environment, and recognize the factors making young people—especially women and girls—vulnerable. A Zimbabwean pastor, from EHAIA's "training the trainer" program, led a September workshop that brought together twenty-eight pastors, women and youth leaders, home-based care workers, and village leaders. The discussion focused on sensitizing local church leadership to appropriate, accurate, up-to-date information

from a holistic Christian perspective in order to challenge and counter stigma. Participants followed up with seminars for youth at secondary schools, meetings with local chiefs, as well as women-to-women and men-to-men meetings.

Through efforts such as these, the church is seen as the source of strength, hope, and leadership to communities ravaged by this disease.

#### G. *The Church's Public Voice*

In situations of intense conflict and severe human rights violations, which have global implications for international peace and security, the WCC speaks out and coordinates the response of the international fellowship of churches.

Advocacy in 2006 and 2007 included intense efforts on global security issues and international conflict resolution mechanisms.

A five-year deadlock in disarmament was weakened at the United Nations when more than 150 states voted to begin work on an arms trade treaty for conventional arms. The breakthrough was supported by active lobbying from the civil society sector, including the WCC, the Holy See (Roman Catholic Church), and members of the International Action Network on Small Arms, which the WCC helped to found. The Ecumenical Network on Small Arms, which the WCC convenes, continued to expand, drawing interest from Muslim and Buddhist-related organizations as well as Christians.

A major achievement of advocacy work over several years was the adoption, by the recently created Human Rights Council, of the International Convention on Enforced Disappearance. The WCC staff participated in the Working Group that drafted the convention and supported the participation of affected persons at the sessions of the Working Group, Commission and Human Rights Council. As part of the process, a WCC paper on "Enhancing Victims' Rights" gave a theological reflection on the momentum of victims' rights on the international agenda.

The WCC also assisted development of a manual addressed to African faith-based communities on "Advancing Justice and Reconciliation in Relation to the International Criminal Court".

The WCC closely monitored country and regional situations. Deteriorating conditions in the Horn of Africa were a particular concern in 2006 and 2007. While international attention focused on Darfur, churches were also concerned about the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between North and South Sudan. The WCC, together with the Sudan Ecumenical Forum, organized meetings to ensure the implementation of the agreement.

Staff and ecumenical delegations were also engaged in consultations and visits to Eritrea and Ethiopia to follow up earlier work between the representatives of the religious communities to promote peace and harmony between the two countries. As a result of a sudden eruption of conflict in Somalia, the WCC, together with the All Africa Conference of Churches and other ecumenical partners, organized a major consultation on the Somali Peace Process. The consultation determined ways and means to defuse tension and conflict in the country.

The situations in Colombia and Haiti, the focus of a WCC statement adopted by the 9th Assembly, were followed closely during the year. The WCC organized activities both in Geneva and New York to raise the concern of the churches in these countries and request further UN actions. A pilot initiative held in March 2006, the International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel, coordinated advocacy and awareness-raising events in thirteen countries. Churches and church-related organizations, plus two international networks, took part in vigils, worship services, lobbying, planting of olive trees, and public and university seminars using a common ecumenical identity and message. Several events had interfaith participation. The initiative was anchored by partners in the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel.

The four organizations that sponsored an ecumenical delegation to Beirut and Jerusalem in August 2006—the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches—issued a statement calling for an end to violence in the Middle East.

The delegation's findings also set the stage for the call to establish a Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum to help galvanize and coordinate international church efforts to end forty years of occupation and escalating conflict. A strategic framework has been prepared, and the forum will be launched at an international conference on the Middle East that was held in 2007.

#### 1. *Decade to Overcome Violence—Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace (2001–2010)*

The annual focus of the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) in 2006 was on Latin America. Under the theme "And still we are searching for peace," Latin American churches and networks engaged in a significant range of activities from the campaign "Homes of Peace" to addressing small arms, juvenile crime, and theological issues. The WCC staff contributed to

the organization of the First Ecumenical Conference for Peace in Guatemala in August 2006, which analyzed the ten-year-old peace process there.

The DOV focus for 2007 was Europe under the theme, “Make me an instrument of your peace.” Several national or regional churches used the DOV to highlight issues they work on, such as peace education, domestic violence, or racism. The International Day of Prayer for Peace (IDPP) carried the Europe theme and found considerable observation around the world. The brochure was downloaded more than 4,000 times and on 21 September alone about 500 visitors from 44 countries looked for information on the DOV web site. The IDPP moves alongside of the International Day of Peace and the International Day of Peace Vigil. Networking efforts were undertaken in the conjunction with the WHO’s Violence Prevention Alliance, the Global Priorities Campaign, and TakingITGlobal, a Web-based youth network addressing global issues.

International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC): A leaflet and Web page were developed over the year to promote the IEPC and its themes: Peace Theology, Peace at Heart, Peace at Home, Peace in the Virtual World, Peace to the Streets, Peace with the Earth, Peace in the Market Places, Make Peace, Not War.

Three mutually reinforcing activities facilitate the consultative process towards the Peace Convocation:

Expert Consultations: Five consultations in Europe and Africa, addressing several of the eight proposed thematic areas of the IEPC.

Peace Declarations: Some 300 letters in various languages were sent to seminaries, Bible study centers, and universities, inviting students together with their professors to write their peace declarations. The invitation is also posted on the Web site, encouraging groups and individuals at the local level to write their peace declaration. The aim is to provoke a wide process of conscientiousness raising around the issues of peace at all levels of the churches’ life.

Living Letters: Two pilot team visits went to Sri Lanka and the U.S. Fifteen such visits are envisioned for each year up to 2010. They are Living Letters, facilitating exchange between the WCC’s peace agenda and the peace experiences of the churches, thus giving a human face to peace making.

## 2. *Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel*

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) provides a tangible sign of ecumenical solidarity for peace and justice for all the peoples in Israel and Palestine. Since EAPPI was established in 2002, 346 ecumenical accompaniers have participated from more than 30 churches and ecumenical partners in 15 countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Kenya, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

In 2006, the EAPPI hosted six groups of accompaniers, who stay for a minimum of three months. Through their presence in villages and refugee camps, at checkpoints and agricultural gates in the separation barrier, and by accompanying school children and mobile clinics, they reduced incidences of violence and abuse and supported nonviolent action against the occupation.

Accompaniers worked with local churches and Palestinian and Israeli peace and human rights groups in Yanoun, Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Jayyous, Tulkarem, and Jerusalem. Support for the nonviolent, antiwar movement within Israeli society became increasingly important after the outbreak of new violence between Israel and Hezbollah and the ongoing military operations in Gaza. These conflicts, plus the Danish cartoon crisis and the Jericho prison raid, placed special demands on the program to ensure the security of accompaniers and assist in reducing tensions between communities.

Accompaniers provided data for pending court cases and for organizations, including the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Committee of the Red Cross, who submitted reports to the Israeli authorities based on this data.

The EAPPI engaged heavily in advocacy and awareness-raising events with church and interfaith groups visiting the region, through presentations at meetings and conferences outside of the region, and by the reports and publications produced by the accompaniers and the coordinating office. Accompaniers are encouraged and equipped to interpret their experiences when they return home.

## H. *Interreligious Dialogue and Action*

For thirty-five years, the World Council of Churches has been engaged in interreligious dialogue and cooperation, and its efforts and experience now make the WCC one of the most respected and experienced partners in international interfaith initiatives. Religious faith and practice in many parts of the world constitute a major force in society and politics. Recognizing

this makes efforts at dialogue and cooperation all the more critical to promote understanding and tolerance and provide effective alternatives to tension and conflict.

The issue of religious identity has become so critical that for the first time, a plenary at the WCC Assembly was devoted to identity and religious plurality, and a number of ecumenical conversations and workshops focused on interreligious relations. The interest shown by the participants underlined the growing importance of deepening the discourse among religions on key dividing issues and promoting practical actions to enhance tolerance and cooperation.

The interreligious think-tank, “Thinking Together,” convened by the WCC and active since 1997 met in October 2006 in Coimbatore, India. The group, composed of people of the major world religions, has addressed issues that may be a challenge for religion and pose a particular problem in the interrelationship of modernity and religion. All are in need of rethinking religion in our time. Thinking together has addressed issues such as “religion in a religiously plural world,” “violence and religion,” or “the role of the other.” The theme chosen this time as a topic for the group was “conversion.” Conversion is sought by some and feared by others. To be able to convert someone is high up on the priority list for some; for others it is a day of grief when someone converts. The thrust of the meeting suggested a focus on an interfaith commentary on the Declaration of Human Rights, an exploration of sharing faith in a religiously plural world, and an attempt to put into words some interreligious considerations on conversion. The Thinking Together group met again at Bossey Institute in June 2007 on the theme of conversion. The three areas of interest stated above were penetrated in-depth. The group divided among themselves chapters to be written for a publication towards a final meeting on the topic, in 2008.

Young adults and interreligious relations and dialogue: Taking seriously the yearning for spirituality among many young people, sometimes disconnected from institutionalized religion and dogmas, rites, and religious practices, the project organized together with the Fireflies Ashram in Bangalore and the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for Human Progress (FPH) a subcontinental, multifaith youth meeting at the Fireflies Ashram, June–July 2007. The project provided the space for young adults from different countries, religions, and cultures to discuss religious identity, and its meaning in pluralist societies. It was a two-part activity, with one week of exposure to the activities of the ashram on sustainable development in relation to children’s rights, women’s empowerment, Dalit human rights, and environmental issues. The second week focussed on ways to understand religious traditions towards a relevant religious life in the various contexts represented at the meeting. There were fifteen participants from India and ten participants from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. A Web-posting of the material used in this meeting is underway.

An interfaith Youth Live-in seminar in Bossey, 2–29 July 2007, organized by the Bossey, Ecumenical Institute with the participation of staff from Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation, brought together some twenty-five young Muslims, Jews, and Christians. During the month the young adults from the U.S., Holland, Israel, Palestine, Tanzania, Peru, Romania, Russia, and Iran had the opportunity to become acquainted with one another, with each others’ religious traditions as well as discussing particular challenges young Muslims, Christians, and Jews face today. Local Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities enabled participants to get to know the local scene and facilitated encounters with the different communities. This was the first venture of this kind, planned and organised together with the Bossey Institute.

Women and interreligious relations and dialogue: Women have often challenged the ways religion is used to legitimize violence against them, and have been able to step over religious divides to work for peace, particularly in conflict situations. The project “Moving towards peace through religion: Muslim and Christian women in Dialogue” was organized in November 2007 in Tehran. This meeting was organized in collaboration with the Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue in Tehran. The participants were Muslim and Christian women from Iran and other parts of the world from professions including education, health, journalism, media, and politics. Discussions focussed on these areas and on how women could influence peace-making through religion and in their own professions. Plans were developed to make a documentary video about the group’s experience in dialogue and cooperation and about Muslim and Christian women’s stories in making peace. There is a plan to link global initiatives with local experiences. Plans were formulated for the next event to be held in Sweden.

The WCC response to the letter of 138 Muslim scholars and leaders: In October 2007 the World Council of Churches received a copy of an Open Letter addressed to Christian leaders, including the WCC general secretary. The letter was signed by 138 Muslim scholars, clerics, and leaders, entitled “A Common Word Between Us and You” (drawing upon an invitation to conversation in common between Christians and Muslims that appears in the Qur’an). The letter sets out key dimensions of belief and action that followers of the two faiths hold in common, and invites them to a common action for peace in the world. Since then the WCC established a multistranded process of coordinated response on behalf of the fellowship of the member churches.

After referring the letter to member churches for consideration and response, and based on initial responses of member churches, the program on interreligious dialogue and cooperation invited a selected group of fourteen scholars, experts in Christian-Muslim relations together with representatives of member churches to a meeting in Geneva, 17–19 January 2008, in order to explore and discuss the process for a common response.

The outcome of the discussion is presented in a document entitled “Learning to Explore Love Together” to be sent to the churches as a proper, scholarly Christian response that communicates with the Muslim letter in substance. This document clarifies some of the theological key issues in the letter concerning the love of God and the love of neighbour from Christian perspective and encourages the churches to consider this new opportunity for dialogue and cooperation with their Muslim fellows.

Steps toward a common response will also include (a) establishing a process of reflection on the contents of the letter and the implications contained in it by Christian and Muslim scholars and interreligious specialists, with the purpose of framing theological and ethical recommendations, and (b) exploring jointly with Muslim partners the feasibility of together organizing a conference of Muslim and Christian leaders, practitioners, and specialists, which will reflect on points of mutual understanding that emerge from the consideration by the churches and reflection by scholars, and will establish means of exploring further in both matters of faith and life.

Jewish-Christian explorations for intra-Christian theology: Many attempts have been made to capitalize on fifty years of Jewish-Christian dialogue for an intra-Christian theological reflection. An encounter co-hosted with the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) took place at the Evangelical Academy in Boldern, Switzerland, in December 2006. Here Jewish resource persons and Christian participants engage in the work of Jewish-Christian dialogue as well as in the work of Faith and Order ways in which Jewish-Christian dialogue has a bearing on intra-Christian theological explorations. The meeting responded to the question: are the learnings from the Jewish-Christian dialogue possible stepping stones in an ecumenical effort to articulate “The Nature and Mission of the Church”? The meeting was received well by both the Jewish participants and the representatives of the Faith and Order constituency. In spite of the regular contacts with Jewish bodies and with organizations for Jewish-Christian understanding, the perceived bias of the WCC against Israel, has strained relations with some of these partners.

There is a growing interest today in multifaith approaches to issues of common concern, e.g. to support the work of the UN from an interreligious perspective. There are attempts to establish institutions, similar to the UN, where representatives of world religions address conflicts where religious sentiments are involved.

In April 2007, a preparatory meeting was held between the WCC and the Conference of NGOs in consultative relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) through its Committee on Spirituality, Values, and Global Concerns (CSVGC-Geneva) on the possibility to promote the declaration of a United Nation’s “Decade of Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace.” A consultation that included several UN member states, UN agencies, international interfaith organizations, and religious communities was co-hosted by the WCC from 8–11 January 2008, at the Bossey Institute. A working committee was formed to finalize a draft proposal for presentation to a member state, which will agree to take this proposal to the UN General Assembly this September 2008.

Conversion and intra-Christian considerations: A theological consultation entitled: “Towards an ethical approach to conversion—Christian witness to a multi-religious world” took place at the Institut de Science et de Théologie des Religions in Toulouse, France, in August 2007. This was the second consultation in a three-phase project with the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue (PCID) and the program on Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation in collaboration with the program on Unity and Mission. The first consultation in 2006 brought participants from different faiths to a hearing on conversion. At this consultation, PCID invited Roman Catholics and the WCC invited from its network Evangelicals, Pentecostals as well as Christians from the WCC constituency. A preparation meeting for this consultation took place in January in Geneva with Evangelicals and Pentecostals. The edited group reports are to be compiled into a report to be used for the last phase of the project. Some particular headings to be spelled out for the final Code of Conduct on Conversion were defined:

- Family and Community
- Respect, Transparency and Honesty
- Economy, Marketing and Competition
- Violence, Politics, Coercion and Manipulation

Christian self-understanding and religious plurality: A document, the result of a unique collaboration among WCC’s staff on Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation, Mission and Evangelism, and Faith and Order, and their respective commissions or advisory bodies, was produced in 2002 addressing difficult and controversial issues related to Christian self-understanding in a religiously plural world. The document featured as a background paper for the Ninth Assembly and was again picked up in August 2006 in Toulouse to find a way to continue an intra-Christian reflection on religious plurality for the life and mission of the Church. The meeting brainstormed on the way ahead for this project and the document. A preliminary report has been produced and staff from Unity and Mission together with Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation will continue to work on it.

A new WCC initiative on “Accompanying Churches in Situations of Conflict” was launched in December 2007. A brainstorming meeting took place in Geneva from 8–10 December and brought together twenty-five church leaders from ar-

eas of conflict, experts in interreligious relations and faith-based diplomacy, together with ecumenical partners and agencies representatives. The group included archbishops of Baghdad and Tehran, as well as bishops from Pakistan and church leaders from Sudan, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The aim was to listen to church leaders describing the reality of conflict in their contexts, analyze common themes, and identify priorities. The participants explored political and economic causes of conflict that are often attributed to religion, but also affirmed that sometimes religion itself instigates conflict. They explored theological bases for accompaniment, underscoring several important themes such as the meaning of solidarity, reconciliation, and consolation. Sharing stories of conflict and reconciliation from Pakistan, Indonesia, and Sudan as well from Iraq, Iran, and Palestine led to deeper reflection on the theological and political/economic questions, and acknowledged that the meeting itself was the first act of accompaniment.

While noting the complexity of the questions, the participants identified themes to be explored in terms of the purpose, process, and action, steps that will lead to effective action and that will be put into the future work of the WCC.

Current Dialogue, published in June and December each year, explores the interreligious issues undertaken by the WCC and is available on-line through the WCC Website.

### I. *Globalization, Environment, and Solidarity*

Through the WCC, churches act together against injustice as part of their faithful response to the Gospel. Yet the WCC is also a platform where Christians themselves are challenged for their own complicity in perpetuating inequality and violence and called to be self-critical in the stewardship of wealth.

The WCC's work on alternatives to globalization exemplifies this tension. Responses to the AGAPE (Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth) call at the assembly highlighted the unity of the churches in challenging economic globalization as the source of the growing gap between rich and poor within and among nations. Yet it also raised differences in approach to the complex factors that support globalization and emphasized the need to continue to bring diverse people together for reflection and action.

The widely read AGAPE background document and the AGAPE call have been distributed to stimulate further discussion and response. In September 2006, a consultation on the AGAPE process was held to assess the reactions and guidance from the assembly and suggest new programmatic directions for the WCC in this area. Churches and ecumenical organizations are encouraged to contribute their reflection on the AGAPE process to further inform and guide the WCC fellowship.

When the 2006 central committee commemorated the 1966 WCC World Conference on Church and Society, it was clear that differences over the AGAPE process have had a long history in the WCC and that participation in debates on social and economic issues remains as relevant and necessary in the 21st century as it was forty years ago.

Work on "ecological debt" demonstrates the link the WCC makes between economics and the environment. A publication with four case studies, "Ecological Debt: The Peoples of the South Are the Creditors," is raising awareness and encouraging churches to connect their advocacy on Third World debt, trade, and the environment in preparation for a global campaign.

The WCC represented civil society at the UN Financing for Development General Assembly review meeting in New York, 22–25 October 2007, where they were asked to speak on the issue of trade in financing for development. The meeting's purposes were to review the Monterrey Consensus commitments on financing for development and to prepare the road to Doha for a review conference.

Organized by the WCC in cooperation with ecumenical partners from 5–9 November 2007 in Dar Es Salaam, the African AGAPE consultation on "Linking Poverty, Wealth and Ecology (PWE): African Ecumenical Perspectives" was attended by sixty-five church representatives; youth, women, men, and theologians predominantly from the continent of Africa although with participation also from Asia, Latin America, Europe, and North America. The aim of the consultation was to share experiences from churches, women, youth, and theologians on PWE and also to discuss the research findings of the PWE study in Africa (the framework paper on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology has since been completed and sent for publication). Statements and a network in Africa were prepared.

P306 attended the review conference on The Helsinki Process on Globalization and Democracy—initiated by the governments of Finland and Tanzania in 2003 to find and improve common rules regarding the governance of globalization and to promote democracy in its governance—was held in Dar es Salaam, 27–29 November 2007. The conference was attended by more than 168 participants from all over the world. It was composed of an opening panel and five substantial sessions on: Peace and Security, Poverty and Development, Human Rights, Governance, and Environment.

Key contributions of women in addressing economic injustice were published in 2006 through the Journal of the Asia Women's Resource Centre. Case studies exploring the links between trafficking in women and economic globalization in Asia and Latin America were also published through Migrante International and the Latin America Gender and Trade Network.

Although the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women ended more than eight years ago, its impact continues to be felt. Some of the fruits of the decade are reflected in statistics at the 9th Assembly: 36 percent of official church delegations and more than 50 percent of all leadership and resource persons were women. In the central committee elected at the assembly, 45 percent of the members and three of the eight presidents were women—the highest number ever.

The WCC ensures that women's leadership and participation are integrated throughout its programs. Small travel grants or scholarships for participation in meetings or training workshops were offered to build the capacity for women's leadership and strengthen women's initiatives in the churches.

The WCC has challenged churches to address violence against women, and the publication, *Streams of Grace*, brought together some of the "good practices" of churches and other ecumenical networks around the world in dealing with and overcoming violence against women in recent years.

A WCC collection of more than 1,600 resource materials relating to overcoming violence against women is now available through the WCC library.

Youth have been able to contribute their skills and energy, and learn about the ecumenical movement, through serving as stewards at the WCC Assembly and central committee. An internship program also brings a select number of young ecumenical leaders to the WCC for a year's intensive work experience. But the assembly called for more dynamic integration of youth—defined by the WCC as those under thirty—in the leadership and work of the ecumenical movement. The central committee established a special youth body to increase the presence and support for young ecumenical leaders in the life and work of the WCC.

The Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) was very active in United Nations processes that led, in December 2006, to the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and an optional protocol that is now open for signature by all states.

The WCC's work on climate change was given renewed emphasis by the assembly, which supported the creation of the Ecumenical Water Network and called for continuing work on faith, science, and technology by the WCC. Increasing involvement of specialized ministries, evangelical churches, ecumenical partners, and member churches in these areas is partly due to five years of WCC work on solidarity with victims of climate change and water scarcity.

These new partners were involved in the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in November and participation at the World Social Forum held in January 2007 in Nairobi.

A new platform has been formed with churches and ecumenical partners for work on faith, science and technology. A preparatory meeting for a Global Consultation in 2007 was hosted in Toronto by the Canadian Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. in May. In December 2007, an international consultation was held in South Africa on the topic bringing together the concerns of the churches globally on the challenges of new technologies.

### *Serving Human Need*

Diakonia—serving human need—is central to the mission of the church. The WCC's unique contribution is its emphasis on building relationships through diaconal work, hosting multilateral platforms for analysis and resource sharing, and building the capacity of churches and ecumenical organizations so that they can better fulfil their service.

Efforts are carried out on a regional basis, with a number of WCC offices—in Eastern Europe, Middle East, Pacific, and the United States—based in the regions themselves.

The WCC works with more than fifty roundtables and other forums in all the regions that bring together national, regional, and international church and ecumenical partners to agree on needs, activities, and resources. Roundtables, regional groups, and other networks have also contributed national and regional church perspectives on international ecumenical issues, such as the formation of ACT Development, collaboration with regional ecumenical organizations, and engagement with the assembly.

Through organizing and supporting training, the WCC strengthened the capacities of churches and ecumenical partners to use up-to-date, comprehensive, and long-term methodologies in management and finance. This included training and implementation of a holistic approach to development that integrates relief, rehabilitation, development, and reconciliation.

The WCC's work with uprooted people engaged the United Nations high commissioner for refugees and other international bodies. The Global Ecumenical Network on Uprooted People met before the UNHCR annual meeting to bring a common ecumenical voice to the table.

The practical administration of diaconal projects involved preparing and receiving proposals for funding, preparing, and circulating a listing of projects to potential funders, monitoring and transferring funds, and reporting, as well as responding to specific requests for more information.

#### *J. Developing New Ecumenical Leadership*

Ecumenical formation broadens thinking beyond particular cultures and traditions. The WCC is in a unique position to encourage and enable global reflection and practical experience among the churches.

The assembly typified a concentrated experience of ecumenical formation, with specific opportunities for Mutirão participants to attend ecumenical education sessions. A Mission and Ecumenical Congress was held alongside the assembly for theological students from Latin America and other continents. The WCC journals addressing ecumenical education and theological training, EEFNET, and Ministerial Formation, carried reflections on the learning experiences from the assembly.

The WCC also concentrates on activities that enable ecumenical education within people's own contexts, whether as members of churches, in theological education, as staff of ecumenical bodies or agencies, or as participants in ecumenical networks.

Through the Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) programme, an HIV and AIDS theological curriculum was introduced to theological colleges in India and Southeast Asia. The ETE, in collaboration with EDAN, organized workshops in India and the Pacific introducing disability studies to help prepare ministers for work with persons with disabilities and facilitate the inclusion of persons with disabilities in theological training. The ETE also worked on incorporating peace concerns into theological curriculum in South Asia.

In Africa, Theological Education by Extension (TEE) curriculum modules on HIV and AIDS were introduced and tested at the formation of an All Africa TEE association. Churches in Nairobi were part of an international campaign against gender violence through organizing various activities and biblical reflection.

The ETE engaged in critical discourse on contextual ecumenical education in Colombia and Peru as well as the evaluation of teaching methodologies in the Latin American region. In Central and Eastern Europe, ETE worked on introducing ecumenical theology. The ETE also provided small grants—fifty projects in 2006—for theological institutions and associations.

The WCC Interfaith Education Project, based in Hartford Seminary in the United States, documented practices in interfaith education in forty-five countries. Most programs were created to introduce or strengthen interreligious understanding and conflict transformation. Resource material and training for facilitators were identified as needs.

The WCC scholarships program helps churches and related organizations equip their staff and members to fulfil their roles and mission. Churches or ecumenical organizations are encouraged to assess the need for new knowledge and skills to improve their work, and then identify an individual or group to nominate for a scholarship. The scholarships program then provides an opportunity for ecumenical learning through exposure to other cultures and faith traditions, in addition to appropriate academic study and practical experience.

In 2006, eighty-four scholarships were awarded for theological and non-theological training, seventy-four to individuals and ten to groups.

Groundwork was done for a new integration of programs on education and ecumenical formation in 2007, incorporating the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Ecumenical Theological Education, lay formation and faith nurture, scholarships, the library and archives.

#### *Bossey: Laboratory for Ecumenical Learning*

For six decades the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey has prepared ecumenical leaders for service in parishes, classrooms, and ecumenical centers around the world. Through study in residential programs, participation in seminars, and involvement



in common worship, Bossey provides a safe space and an academic platform where some of the most acute and contemporary challenges confronting the churches today, often considered taboo topics even by society at large, are debated and analyzed in an attempt to find common responses, actions, and witness.

For its academic programs, the Ecumenical Institute carefully selects students from a large pool of applicants and aims to train scholars—lay and ordained, women and men, from all regions of the world and Christian confessions—to the highest academic standards.

Bossey's Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies facilitates research, enhances knowledge, contributes new ideas to ecumenical dialogue, and offers theological and scientific knowledge to lay and ordained students. The 57th session of the Graduate School, which ran from October 2005 through February 2006, explored the themes of grace, healing, and transformation in parallel to the preparations and deliberations of the WCC Assembly. Twenty-four students attended from twenty countries and twenty denominations. The 58th session began in October 2006. In it, twenty-one international students from nineteen denominations focused on ecumenical spirituality.

A number of students are also pursuing a master's degree or Ph.D. in Ecumenical Studies through the Ecumenical Institute.

A new program of visiting professors brought five experienced ecumenists during 2006 who taught social ethics, ecumenical theology, and missiology.

The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey is academically attached to the University of Geneva.

The picturesque Château de Bossey, overlooking Lake Geneva, also has become an ideal setting for conferences and meetings—even weddings—for a wide range of organizations and people in the Geneva area.



## Item 08-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 08-01. See pp. 22, 23.]

*On Reinstating the Annual Mission Season Offering—From the Presbytery of Shenandoah.*

The Presbytery of Shenandoah overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to reinstate the annual Missions Season Offering during mission season as a continuing offering to support salaries and expenses for our mission personnel, both American and worldwide, all funds to be used to subsidize general mission shortfalls in missionary support and to stem the tide of a shrinking missionary force around the world.

### *Rationale*

While Presbyterians have a long and proud history of involvement in worldwide mission, the reorganization of our General Assembly due to budget shortfalls is hindering our Presbyterian global outreach. Despite this trend, new mission endeavors such as Presbytery Partnerships and Church-to-Church Partnerships are expanding our mission outreach. This new day in missions involves expanding the involvement of members, churches, presbyteries, and the General Assembly in international mission to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and his love to all the world. It is an age for seeing world mission outreach as a way of expanding and not contracting our world mission outreach. (It is not an either/or proposition but a both/and process.)

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**Concurrence to Item 08-01 from the Presbytery of Abingdon.**

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### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-01

*Comment on Item 08-01—From the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

The General Assembly Council recognizes a new movement in the church—one that calls on all Presbyterians to become involved in the renewal of our denomination as a mission-sending church. Specifically, the General Assembly Council affirms the care and support that this overture demonstrates to our mission personnel and thanks the Presbytery of Shenandoah and the Presbytery of Abingdon for their commitment.

The General Assembly Council, along with the other participants in the Dallas Consultation on World Mission, has committed “to expand Presbyterian funding for mission personnel,” and is bringing a budget to the 218th General Assembly (2008), which addresses this call by reversing a fifty-year trend of declining numbers of mission personnel.

With respect to special offerings, the General Assembly provides for review and evaluation of the causes supported by churchwide special offerings on a four-year cycle, and considers new causes in light of established criteria. The General Assembly Council appointed a task force to conduct this review in September of 2006. The task force examined the issues and sought feedback for seventeen months, before bringing their recommendations to the General Assembly Council for approval in February 2008. These recommendations are being presented to the 218th General Assembly (2008) for approval.

The General Assembly Council advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to consider Item 08-01 in the context of the report of the Special Offerings Task Force.

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## Item 08-02

[The assembly approved Item 08-02. See p. 22, 23.]

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following Institutional Standards for Participating in the Christmas Joy Offering:**

### **“Institutional Standards for Participating in the Christmas Joy Offering**

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors have a long history of support for minority education. That support continues through the distribution of funds collected annually through the Christmas Joy Offering, one-half of which is designated for support of Historic Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPREI).<sup>1</sup> In order to be a good steward of these funds and accountable to those who contribute to the offering, the church establishes the following formula for the dissemination monies from the Christmas Joy Offering designated for racial ethnic education.

**“I. BASE GRANTS**

“One half of the funds distributed shall be earmarked for Base Grants to institutions that meet the following criteria:

**“A. Mission.** An institution must show evidence of commitment to the stated mission of its governing board and to the mission goals of the General Assembly Council (GAC) of the PC(USA). Those goals include:

- “1. Leadership and Vocation
- “2. Spirituality and Discipleship
- “3. Justice and Compassion
- “4. Evangelism and Witness

“The evidence must demonstrate that an institution’s mission is understood and supported by all of its constituent groups and must include a covenant between the institution and one or more church governing bodies and published statements in the institution’s catalogue, promotional materials, and other public documents.

**“B. Audit.** By November 1 each year, an institution must provide to the church an independent audit by a certified public accountant of the institution’s financial condition during the previous fiscal year.

**“C. Strategic Plan.** An institution must provide a current three- to five-year strategic plan for the institution’s continued operation.

**“D. Accreditation.**

- “1. Degree granting institutions must be accredited by a U.S. Department of Education-approved accrediting association. Institutions that are not accredited will have a three-year period in which to achieve accreditation.
- “2. Non-degree granting institutions must have an alternative educational model that is consistent with their mission to educate racial ethnic students and has been approved by the General Assembly Council in lieu of accreditation.
- “3. Institutions must demonstrate how they provide financial support for students.

**“E. Racial Ethnic Student Enrollment.** Enrollment of racial ethnic students must be demonstrated by an institution’s mission and substantiated by the demographics of its student body.

**“II. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Of funds not earmarked for Base Grants:

**“A. Mission Validity.**

“Twenty percent (20%) will be available to institutions that demonstrate mission validity by meeting the following criteria. For each criteria that is met, an institution will receive one-sixth (1/6) of the total amount for which it is eligible based on mission validity.

**“1. Evidence of Racial Ethnic Mission**

- “a. An institution must demonstrate a racial ethnic composition within its student enrollment of at least fifty percent (50%).
- “b. An institution must demonstrate that at least seventy-five percent (75%) of its students are financial disadvantaged and eligible for need-based aid.

**“2. Evidence of Successful Educational Program**

- “a. An institution must show evidence of having a qualified faculty to serve the enrolled student body.
- “b. An institution must demonstrate a retention rate of at least seventy percent (70%) of its students from the first to the second year for colleges or from year to year for secondary schools.

**“3. Evidence of Achievement**

- “a. An institution must demonstrate a six-year persistence to graduation rate of at least forty percent (40%).
- “b. An institution must have in place a systematic outcomes assessment program.

**“B. Institutional Viability.**

“Twenty percent (20%) will be available to institutions that demonstrate institutional viability by meeting the following criteria. Accreditation without sanction by the appropriate regional accrediting association is a prerequisite to receiving Institutional Viability funds. For each of the other criteria met, an institution shall receive one-seventh (1/7) of the amount for which it is eligible.

**“1. Evidence of Financial Integrity**

- “a. An institution must show evidence of a balanced budget within constraints approved by its governing board.
- “b. An institution must be able to produce an unqualified independent audit of financial operations for the previous fiscal year.

**“2. Evidence of Long-Range Strength**

- “a. An institution must show evidence of a systematic plan for raising funds to support the institution beyond what is received through tuition and financial aid.
- “b. An institution must show a debt-to-net-worth ratio within the recommended limits of the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO).

**“3. Strength of Governing Board**

- “a. An institution’s governing board must broadly represent constituencies served by the institution and the public.
- “b. An institution’s governing board must demonstrate through financial support an active participation in the work of the board.
- “c. An institution’s governing board must demonstrate its responsibility for policy determination, oversight of the institution, and respect for the boundaries of its responsibility.

**“C. Contingency Funds.**

“Ten percent (10%) will be available for institutions faced with emergency costs that have no other means of covering those costs.

**“III. SITE VISITS**

“In order to ensure compliance with these standards, educational institutions that receive money from the Christmas Joy Offering will be reviewed every four years by a team that includes:

- “1. The president of a comparable institution
- “2. A person knowledgeable about the higher education evaluation process
- “3. A member of the General Assembly Council
- “4. The GAC associate for Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges (ex officio)”

***Rationale***

This recommendation is in response to the *2006 Referral: Item 12-13. Report: Racial Ethnic Education Support Work Group. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Reaffirm the Church’s Mission of Racial Ethnic Educational Support and Its Commitment to the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPRI); That a Special Group Be Formed to Develop Educational Guidelines and Standards and a Method of Applying Them in Order to Ensure That the Christmas Joy Offering Supports Institutions That Can Most Effectively Serve Populations for Whom Access to Educational Opportunities Would Be Difficult and That the Educational Guidelines, Standards, and the Method for Applying Them Should Be Completed, Enacted, and Reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008); That Until Guidelines and Standards Are Established, the Christmas Joy Offering Continue to Be Used Exclusively for the HPREI’s with Whom the GAC Has Traditionally Covenanted; and that the GAC Consider Establishing a Special Fund and Case Statement to Help Meet the Unique Needs of the HPREI’s—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1081–82).*

The referral asked that a special group be formed to develop educational guidelines and standards and a method of applying them in order to ensure that the Christmas Joy Offering supports institutions that can most effectively serve populations for whom access to educational opportunities would be difficult and that the educational guidelines, standards, and the method for applying them should be completed, enacted, and reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008); that until guidelines and standards are established, the Christmas Joy Offering continue to be used exclusively for the HPREI’s with whom the GAC has traditionally covenanted; and that the GAC consider establishing a special fund and case statement to help meet the unique needs of the HPREI’s.

## Endnote

1. These institutions include Barber Scotia College, Cook School for Christian Leadership, Johnson C. Smith University, Knoxville College, Sheldon Jackson College, Stillman College, Menaul School, and Presbyterian Pan American School.

## Item 08-03

[The assembly approved Item 08-03 with amendment. See pp. 22, 23.]

The General Assembly Council, upon recommendation of the Special Offerings Task Force, recommends that the 208th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Approve the following pattern for churchwide special offerings for 2010–2013: (Please note that the lodgment of all programs given is prescribed relative to the structure as it now stands.)

a. **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING**, interpreted and received during the Advent season in gratitude for God's gift of Jesus Christ. Causes:

(1) Assistance programs to meet identified and emerging needs for professional church workers and spouses through the Board of Pensions, 50 percent;

(2) Racial ethnic education through Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries, 50 percent.

b. **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**, interpreted and received during Lent and on Easter Sunday in response to Christ's call to us to feed the hungry, house the homeless, minister to the suffering, and empower the poor and oppressed. Causes administered through the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministry. Causes:

(1) Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, 32 percent;

(2) Presbyterian Hunger Program, 36 percent;

(3) Self-Development of People, 32 percent.

c. **PENTECOST OFFERING**, interpreted and received in relation to Pentecost Sunday in support of ministry with youth and young adults and in response to the needs of children-at-risk. Causes:

(1) Fifty percent will be used for Youth and Young Adult Ministries and divided as follows:

(a) Theology, Worship, and Education, 25 percent (for youth & young adult ministries);

(b) World Mission, 12.5 percent (for national volunteers in shared ministry);

(c) World Mission, 12.5 percent (for international volunteers in shared ministry).

(2) Ten percent will be used for its Children-at-Risk programs through the Child Advocacy Office in the Peace and Justice Ministry.

(3) Retained by Congregations, 40 percent. Congregations are encouraged to use this 40 percent for campus ministry and/or camps and conference centers in their region in addition to Children-at-Risk ministries. Such purposes are in keeping with the goal of keeping youth and young adult ministries at camps and college campus settings supported and vibrant.

d. **PEACEMAKING OFFERING**, interpreted and received in relation to World Communion Sunday, recognizing the call to bring Christ's peace to all creation. Causes:

Holistic peacemaking programs sensitive to the restoration of God's creation and including peacemaking in individuals, families, congregations, communities, the international arena, and the environment through:

(1) General Assembly Council, [~~Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministry~~] [Presbyterian Peacemaking], 50 percent.

(2) Synods and Presbyteries, 25 percent;

**(3) Congregations, 25 percent;**

2. Divide the current Criteria for Participation in Special Offerings into two sections, the first section to maintain the title Criteria for Participation in Special Offerings and the second to be called Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings. [See Appendix A.]

3. Because of the untapped hope and promise of special offerings, we recommend that the traditional practice of naming a Special Offerings Review Task Force be refashioned into an Advisory Task Force for Special Offerings that will be commissioned immediately by the General Assembly Council, pending action of the 218th General Assembly (2008), to serve for the next four years, to review the possible role and functions of special offerings. This group will make an annual report to the General Assembly Council, an interim report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), and final recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012) that takes place four years after its creation. Its functions will include:

- examining the role of Special Offerings within the larger communication and funds development contexts of the denomination,
- encouraging and expanding the role of the Special Offerings as a connective tissue of the church,
- identifying what Special Offerings can do best and what steps need to be taken in order to enable them to do that well,
- clarifying and simplifying the process for considering programs and causes to be included in Special Offerings and,
- working with Mission Interpretation staff on an ongoing basis in promotion and implementation of the findings of this group.

Ideally the task force should comprise [~~nine~~] [seven] individuals representing a diversity of age, racial/ethnic origin, and geography, with a balance of elders and pastors. It should include at least one General Assembly Council member as well as representation from middle governing bodies and congregations, with a majority of the members being new to special offerings discussions.

4. Mission Interpretation staff charged with managing each special offering should be encouraged to entertain a variety of new modes of strengthening the interpretation of that offering. This involves recognizing and highlighting the offerings' strengths, some of which may be taken for granted while others may be less evident. It should be clear that the special offerings offer a chance to participate in mission that goes well beyond ourselves, and permit us to accomplish things as a larger church that may be beyond the reach of smaller entities. They give us a chance to do something together with other members of the church with whom we may disagree about many other things. They allow us to feel proud of our identity as Presbyterians. They help us learn and teach one another about mission, about stewardship, and about discipleship.

Other examples of ways to strengthen the interpretive resources of the offerings include:

- a. Studying the demographic groups most likely to respond to different aspects of each offering and designing the interpretive materials both to appeal to these groups and to engage them actively in interpreting the offering themselves.
- b. Emphasizing the Five for Five program as a mode of engaging congregations in participation in all four churchwide special offerings as well as basic mission support.
- c. Organizing Special Offerings Days at PC(USA)-related seminaries to give potential pastors training in how special offerings can help them in their call.

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$220; (2009): \$21,715; (2010): \$6,715; (2011): \$48,110; (2012): \$13,110 (Per Capita-GAC)]

### *Rationale*

#### *Overview*

In the summer of 2006, the present task force was named and began its quadrennial review of the Special Offerings. As in previous reviews, this task force considered the organization, timing, content, and appropriations related to each Special

Offering. In Recommendation 1, the task force has recommended an organizational plan for these four offerings for the 2010–2013 quadrennium.

In the course of our work we discovered that the often-redacted “Criteria for Special Offerings” had grown into a rather unruly set of criteria, operating procedures, and observations concerning the practices associated with administering Special Offerings. In the interest of clarity, as Recommendation 2, we have rewritten some portion of these materials and reorganized them into “Criteria” and “Operating Guidelines.” As two independent documents, we believe these insights will better assist those who administer and evaluate the Special Offerings.

In the course of our work, we found ourselves confounded by some of the complications related to the Special Offerings. It is not clear how and by what standards new programs can be considered for inclusion in the Special Offerings; nor is it clear how successfully congregational and middle governing levels make use of the opportunity to use a portion of the offering; In the changing structures of the GAC, it is not always clear how best to apportion the funds, in part because there is currently no clear means of reporting. At the same time, we found ourselves newly energized about the place Special Offerings might come to play in the life of the church. As a task force, we gave free rein to this process of discernment, and several of our recommendations grew out of these reflections.

In examining Special Offerings closely, we came to recognize within this form of stewardship several attractive characteristics well suited to our post-modern, post-denominational era. These characteristics include:

1. Special Offerings constitute a form of designated giving from the perspective of the donor and therefore, ought to be an attractive form of giving within today’s patterns of benevolent contributions.
2. Special Offerings are clearly focused on missional goals and programs rather than institutional maintenance issues and structures, and therefore have greater donor appeal.
3. Special Offerings respectively appeal to specific subsets of Presbyterians. These demographic groups can variously be identified, such as youth and young adults with Pentecost, those concerned with aid and development with One Great Hour of Sharing, etc. As such, each offering has a capacity to serve as a rallying point for these respective interest groups within the church.
4. Special Offerings can be a means of the GAC placing a financial development tool in the hands of middle governing bodies to enable joint development of financial resources. Both Peacemaking and the Pentecost offerings leave a portion of the funds with congregations and/or middle governing bodies. This capacity of sharing financial development tools with middle governing bodies should be further encouraged and developed.

Despite these four rather outstanding characteristics, the Special Offerings seem to some degree to be languishing. We came to believe that these offerings could come to fill their bright promise with some updating and re-envisioning. Special Offerings, we believe, are more than stewardship opportunities or tools for financial development. With their contemporary user-friendly characteristics, we think Special Offerings could indeed provide some of the important sinew or connective tissue within the fabric of our church. They might well provide sources of energy, interpretation, opportunities for stewardship activity while engaging Presbyterians in scattered presbyteries and congregations in focused, unifying mission. In short, we believe they have an important role to play in defining what it means to be a Presbyterian in the 21st century.

To enable Special Offerings to come to play such a significant role will require considerable adjustment in how the offerings are organized, interpreted, promoted, and perceived throughout the church. For this reason, while Recommendations 1 and 2 discharge the traditional work of this task force, Recommendations 3 and 4 are offered here in order to enable the special offerings to fulfill the broader role we foresee for them in providing not only a means of stewardship but some of the connective tissue of our church.

The Charge and Process section outlines the process and procedures we utilized in carrying out our review, and the various ways in which we consulted with constituency and staff. Appendix A lists the criteria and guidelines for special offerings referred to in Recommendation 2. Appendix B shows the pattern of giving to special offerings since 2000, while Appendix C looks at the pattern of designation to the Christmas Joy Offering during that time. Appendices D, E, and F are summaries of the research executed for the task force by Research Services.

We have been honored by the opportunity to serve the church through this review. Our own excitement about the way Special Offerings might bear both financial and spiritual fruit leads us to commend this report and recommendations with both gratitude and enthusiasm.

*Rationale for Recommendation 1:*

1.a.: The task force is concerned that the Christmas Joy Offering is not living up to its potential but affirms its confidence that it can be strengthened. At the same time, given the danger of undermining current support for the offering, the task force



has decided to refrain from making any changes without further study and instead commends the offering to the attention of the Advisory Task Force for Special Offerings.

1.b.: No change is seen as necessary at this time.

The task force affirms the strength of the offering and the work of the three programs it supports. All three programs are finding creative ways to meet their challenges. Self-Development of People has been able to spend down its reserves while still living within its funding criteria, the Presbyterian Hunger Program's Joining Hands against Hunger is a creative way of partnering with presbyteries and international partners to help engage them in addressing some of the justice issues that underlie hunger and poverty, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has increasingly blazed new trails in ways to communicate with and engage the membership of the denomination.

1.c.: In its ten years of existence, the Pentecost Offering has grown every year, both in total receipts and in numbers of congregations participating.

1.d.: No change is seen as necessary at this time.

*Rationale for Recommendation 2:*

The current list of criteria was divided into two separate lists because the task force perceived that many of the items currently called "criteria" are better described as operating guidelines or practices. While these guidelines are not considered criteria for receiving special offerings, failure to comply with them may be considered a reason for discontinuing a program's participation in special offering funding.

The word "churchwide" was added wherever special offerings were not so described in order to be clear that the special offerings referred to here are only the four churchwide special offerings. The phrase "overall funds development and communications strategy of the whole church" was added to Criterion 1 to emphasize the need for integration of the special offerings into an overall funds development and communications strategy.

The last two sentences of Operating Guideline 1 were added in order to lodge responsibility for accountability. While previous task force reports had invoked the need for accountability, the lack of specific lodgment of responsibility for it meant that the need was never fulfilled.

The words "within the comprehensive mission funding strategy" were deleted from Guideline 2, as they tended to obscure the central focus of that guideline; as mentioned before, similar language was added to Criterion 1.

The phrase in Guideline 8 concerning reports from congregations and middle governing bodies was added to ensure that responsibility for accountability was extended to all bodies receiving funds from churchwide special offerings.

Guideline 9 was added because the task force believes it is the responsibility of any program benefiting from special offering funding to do all it can to enable the success of the special offerings.

Guideline 10 was added because the task force believes that special offerings, as a nexus for communications, funds development, Christian education, mission interpretation, and stewardship and discipleship training, must bring integrity and creativity to all these aspects of congregational life.

Former Criterion P was deleted, as the task force believes it to be violated to some degree by all programs currently receiving funds from churchwide special offerings.

*Rationale for Recommendation 3:*

This task force believes that a review of this sort is beyond its own purview or timelines and is urgently needed to undergird the work of its successor in order to give it a wider breadth of possible responses to ensure that special offerings can develop so as best to play the role to which they are best suited to in tomorrow's church.

*Rationale for Recommendation 4:*

For the special offerings to fulfill their potential and to meet the emerging challenges of a changing church, they need to be constantly looking for creative new ways to connect with givers.

*Charge and Process*1. *Charge*

In affirming the report of the previous Special Offering Review Task Force, the 216th General Assembly (2004) decided that “On a four-year cycle, the General Assembly will provide for review and evaluation of the causes supported by church-wide special offerings, and will consider new causes in light of established criteria.” This task force was consequently appointed by the General Assembly Council in September of 2006, and charged to bring a report to the General Assembly Council in February 2008.

2. *Membership of the Special Offerings Review Task Force*

The Reverend Dr. Eileen W. Lindner, chair, Tenafly, New Jersey; Elder Barbara Campbell Davis, Rocky Mount, North Carolina; the Reverend Warner R. Durnell, Huntsville, Alabama; Elder Patricia Massey, Laurinburg, North Carolina; the Reverend Mary Robinson-Mohr, Bellingham, Washington; Elder Conrad M. Rocha, Albuquerque, New Mexico, GAC member, and chair of its Mission Funding Task Force; and the Reverend Allison K. Seed, Independence, Missouri, and GAC chair; Staff support was provided by Alan Krome (Mission Interpretation), Margaret Hall Boone (recorder, Mission Interpretation), Keith Wulff (Research Services) and Jack Marcum (Research Services).

3. *Process*

In developing recommendations for the special offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for years 2006–2009, the Special Offerings Review Task Force (SORTF) completed the following process:

- Approached the task with intentional time for prayer and Bible study, seeking to discern God’s will.
- Held face-to-face meetings in October 2006 (Louisville), February 2007 (Louisville), April 2007 (Louisville), September 2007 (Seattle), and January 2008 (Louisville), held conference calls in November 2006 and November 2007 and conducted work through electronic means.
- Publicized the work of the SORTF through the Presbyterian News Service and banners and features on the PC(USA) Web site, inviting the input of presbyteries and Presbyterians through an e-mail address.
- Received correspondence from individuals with a wide variety of perspectives on the special offerings in general and on specific offerings, programs, and causes.
- Utilized the Presbyterian Panel to explore attitudes about and interest in special offerings and reviewed results with Research Services staff.
- Utilized the Research Services staff to conduct a survey of 800 Presbyterian congregations during the spring and summer of 2007.
- Conferred with members of the Mission Funding Task Force and the Study Committee on an Independent Entity as they were developing their reports regarding issues of mutual concern
- Corresponded with the planning team for the Mission Challenge 2007 as they planned their communications and funds development strategy to assess potential synergies or conflicts between special offerings and this new kind of funds development initiative.
- Reviewed reports and met with the staff representing programs currently funded by special offerings in February and April 2007.
- Developed and presented the report and recommendations to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee and to the General Assembly Council in February 2008.

**Appendix A:****Criteria and Guidelines for Special Offerings****Criteria for Participation in Special Offerings**

The special offerings operate within the PC(USA) as a distinct but integrated part of the church’s overall, coordinated funds development and communication strategy. As they provide important sinew for the connectional church, they are too valuable a resource to be squandered on emphases of passing interest to church members. The following criteria attempt to outline ways of discerning whether a particular focus is eligible to be considered for funding by one of these special offerings.

1. Churchwide special offerings will provide valuable mission interpretation opportunities within the overall funds development and communications strategy of the whole church.
2. Churchwide special offerings will enable the church to meet historical and ongoing needs in relationship to the total mission priorities of the church, always proclaiming the name of Jesus.
3. Causes included in a churchwide special offering will have demonstrated potential for churchwide donor support.
4. Causes included in a churchwide special offering will specifically define the needs to be met; plans will be provided for funds' allocation, program implementation, and accountability.
5. Causes grouped within the same churchwide special offering will have a focused, coherent mission purpose.

### **Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings**

In order to fulfill the promise of special offerings, the following principles and practices are necessary to guide the churchwide special offerings of the PC(USA):

1. On a four-year cycle, the General Assembly will provide for review and evaluation of the causes supported by churchwide special offerings, and will consider new causes in light of established criteria. Between reviews, the task force created for this evaluation will continue to review performance, accountability, and accumulation of reserves on an annual basis and will forward its findings to the GAC. Finally, this task force will send its findings and active questions to the successor task force.
2. Churchwide special offering promotions will occur in a central promotions office rather than within programmatic entities.
3. Costs of promoting and receiving each churchwide special offering will be paid from receipts of the offering. After deducting each offering's costs from total receipts, restricted and unrestricted, of that offering, all receipts will then be considered permanently restricted, and will be used only for the purposes for which they were given. Each offering's costs will be determined by the GAC through its regular budgeting process.
4. Start-up costs for new or significantly revised churchwide special offerings will be advanced from existing GAC funds and amortized over the succeeding five years.
5. Promotion materials for a churchwide special offering will relate to the liturgical season in which the offering is received.
6. Any change in the pattern of distribution of a churchwide special offering will require an eighteen-month time period before becoming effective to allow adequate time for development and distribution of promotion materials.
7. There will be no more than four churchwide special offerings in any calendar year. The General Assembly will identify times for the promotion and receipt of offerings.
8. The agencies receiving churchwide special offering funds will prepare an annual report concerning the receipt and distribution of those special offering funds for review by the General Assembly Council. This report, which shall include a compilation of reports from congregations and middle-governing bodies where portions of the offering have remained summarizing their use, will be made available to churches and other governing bodies. All programs receiving funds from churchwide special offerings will work with mission interpretation staff to identify and develop networks of potential interpreters throughout the church.
9. All programs receiving funds from churchwide special offerings will work with mission interpretation staff to identify and develop networks of potential interpreters throughout the church.
10. All churchwide special offerings will develop interpretive materials that are well grounded in Reformed theology and appropriate to the offering's recommended liturgical season.

**Appendix B**  
**Special Offerings Receipts**

	<i>OGHS</i>	<i>PENTECOST*</i>	<i>PEACEMAKING*</i>	<i>CHRISTMAS JOY</i>	<i>WITNESS</i>	<i>TOTAL SPECIAL OFFERINGS</i>
2000	\$10,755,457	\$608,000	\$1,082,325	\$5,683,054	\$60,812	<b>\$18,189,648</b>
2001	\$10,216,646	\$625,629	\$1,230,677	\$5,780,407	\$65,260	<b>\$17,918,619</b>
2002	\$9,968,371	\$650,870	\$1,040,537	\$5,472,085	\$62,574	<b>\$17,194,437</b>
2003	\$9,431,654	\$653,393	\$1,148,525	\$5,485,578	\$40,320	<b>\$16,759,470</b>
2004	\$9,532,254	\$685,178	\$1,089,004	\$5,409,520	\$43,397	<b>\$16,759,353</b>
2005	\$9,326,914	\$788,147	\$1,040,997	\$5,240,914	\$45,139	<b>\$16,442,111</b>
2006	\$9,465,261	\$799,561	\$1,108,097	\$4,927,405	\$29,652	<b>\$16,329,976</b>
<i>TOTALS</i>	<i>\$68,696,557</i>	<i>\$4,810,778</i>	<i>\$7,740,162</i>	<i>\$37,998,963</i>	<i>\$347,154</i>	<i>\$119,593,614</i>

\*Please note that the amounts shown for the Peacemaking and Pentecost Offerings only reflect the amounts sent to the General Assembly Council.

## Appendix C

**Effects of Designation on Receipts of Each Beneficiary Program  
of the Christmas Joy Offering, 2000-2006**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total CJO Receipts</b>	<b>50% Share*</b>	<b>BOP Designation</b>	<b>% Designation</b>	<b>RE Schools Designation</b>	<b>% Designation</b>
2000	\$5,683,054	\$2,669,776	\$101,876	01.8%	\$4,255	00.1%
2001	5,780,407	2,744,929	82,815	01.4	7,239	00.1
2002	5,472,085	2,579,044	126,609	02.3	1,196	00.0
2003	5,485,578** (5,319,724)	2,521,577 2,521,577	230,528** 64,673	04.2 (01.2)	7,773 7,773	00.1 00.1
2004	5,409,520	2,580,699	57,346	01.1	7,507	00.1
2005	5,240,914	2,356,709	78,753	01.5	2,976	00.1
2006	4,927,495	2,214,480	73,429	01.5	3,732	00.0

\* This 50% share includes half the undesignated funds remaining after the administrative and promotional expenses have been taken out.

\*\* In 2003, the Christmas Joy Offering received a bequest identified for ministerial relief in the amount of \$165,854. The first line includes this amount; the second, in parentheses, includes only the amounts given to the offering by live offering givers.

In most years, the difference that designation made to the amounts received by the different offering beneficiaries was plus or minus one percent or less. That is, the Board of Pensions received approximately one percent more via designation than they would have if the same total offering amount had been split 50/50, while the Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges received about one percent less than they would have.

Appendix D



# The Presbyterian Panel

## Churchwide Special Offerings

### The May 2007 Survey

#### DATA APPENDIX

	Members	Elders	Ministers
Number of questionnaires mailed.....	1,029	1,108	1,423
Number of questionnaires returned .....	340	481	696
Percent returned.....	33%	43%	48%
‡ 480 pastors; 216 specialized clergy			

The term *churchwide special offerings* refers to offerings approved by the General Assembly for annual promotion throughout the PC(USA). The General Assembly Council provides resources to congregations that choose to participate, inviting individual Presbyterians to donate to these offerings through their congregations.

Q1. How would each characteristic listed below affect your likelihood of making a donation to a churchwide special offering? Would it make you more likely to give, less likely to give, or would it have no effect?

The offering . . .	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. Is a tradition at our church				
Much more likely to give.....	20%	19%	27%	32%
More likely to give.....	51%	52%	53%	41%
No effect/not sure .....	28%	26%	18%	23%
Less likely to give.....	1%	3%	2%	2%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	*	1%	1%
b. Lets our church keep a share of the donations and decide where to allocate them				
Much more likely to give.....	22%	22%	17%	10%
More likely to give.....	46%	46%	39%	38%
No effect/not sure .....	28%	28%	42%	43%
Less likely to give.....	3%	4%	2%	7%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	1%	*	2%
c. Helps me connect with other Christians concerned about the same ministry				
Much more likely to give.....	11%	8%	11%	25%
More likely to give.....	41%	45%	57%	50%
No effect/not sure .....	44%	45%	30%	22%
Less likely to give.....	4%	2%	2%	2%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	*	*	1%
d. Has a clearly defined focus				
Much more likely to give.....	34%	30%	38%	46%
More likely to give.....	54%	60%	56%	44%
No effect/not sure .....	10%	9%	5%	9%
Less likely to give.....	1%	1%	*	1%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	—	—	—

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q1. How would each characteristic listed below affect your likelihood of making a donation to a churchwide special offering? Would it make you more likely to give, less likely to give, or would it have no effect? (cont.)				
e. Shows clearly how my gift helps specific people				
Much more likely to give.....	36%	33%	41%	42%
More likely to give.....	51%	56%	50%	44%
No effect/not sure .....	11%	10%	9%	12%
Less likely to give.....	1%	1%	*	1%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	*	—	—
f. Helps me relate to a specific ministry				
Much more likely to give.....	22%	21%	26%	36%
More likely to give.....	51%	52%	58%	46%
No effect/not sure .....	24%	25%	15%	16%
Less likely to give.....	2%	2%	*	1%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	*	*	—
g. Helps address systemic issues (“root causes”)				
Much more likely to give.....	15%	17%	26%	40%
More likely to give.....	40%	38%	43%	35%
No effect/not sure .....	40%	41%	27%	19%
Less likely to give.....	3%	4%	3%	5%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	*	1%	1%
h. Primarily serves people outside the church				
Much more likely to give.....	6%	5%	8%	8%
More likely to give.....	23%	19%	26%	26%
No effect/not sure .....	54%	61%	58%	60%
Less likely to give.....	15%	12%	7%	5%
Much less likely to give.....	2%	2%	1%	1%
i. Serves ministries located overseas				
Much more likely to give.....	4%	5%	7%	10%
More likely to give.....	26%	21%	29%	29%
No effect/not sure .....	56%	61%	60%	57%
Less likely to give.....	12%	11%	4%	3%
Much less likely to give.....	2%	1%	—	1%
j. Serves ministries located in the United States				
Much more likely to give.....	11%	10%	6%	8%
More likely to give.....	46%	42%	35%	28%
No effect/not sure .....	40%	45%	58%	60%
Less likely to give.....	2%	2%	2%	4%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	*	—	1%
k. Serves ministries in my local area				
Much more likely to give.....	26%	28%	17%	8%
More likely to give.....	52%	48%	45%	42%
No effect/not sure .....	20%	23%	37%	46%
Less likely to give.....	1%	1%	1%	4%
Much less likely to give.....	1%	*	—	1%
l. Has rigorous financial accountability				
Much more likely to give.....	39%	36%	39%	51%
More likely to give.....	42%	46%	46%	35%
No effect/not sure .....	18%	17%	14%	13%
Less likely to give.....	*	1%	*	1%
Much less likely to give.....	*	—	*	1%
o. Is ecumenical in history and design				
Much more likely to give.....	10%	10%	10%	20%
More likely to give.....	31%	34%	27%	30%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

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	No effect/not sure .....	55%	50%	52%	41%
	Less likely to give .....	3%	4%	10%	8%
	Much less likely to give .....	1%	2%	2%	1%
p.	Addresses public policy issues				
	Much more likely to give .....	4%	5%	8%	19%
	More likely to give .....	18%	18%	21%	31%
	No effect/not sure .....	57%	48%	42%	30%
	Less likely to give .....	15%	21%	20%	16%
	Much less likely to give .....	6%	8%	9%	4%
q.	Gets help where it is needed efficiently and without delay				
	Much more likely to give .....	36%	38%	47%	52%
	More likely to give .....	53%	51%	45%	43%
	No effect/not sure .....	11%	11%	7%	5%
	Less likely to give .....	*	*	*	—
	Much less likely to give .....	*	—	*	—
r.	Remains faithful to deserving causes even when they recede from widespread public attention				
	Much more likely to give .....	21%	18%	28%	38%
	More likely to give .....	49%	51%	48%	46%
	No effect/not sure .....	28%	29%	23%	15%
	Less likely to give .....	2%	2%	1%	—
	Much less likely to give .....	*	*	—	1%
s.	Shifts emphases often to reflect emerging needs and ministries				
	Much more likely to give .....	9%	8%	10%	17%
	More likely to give .....	36%	35%	34%	31%
	No effect/not sure .....	45%	44%	40%	38%
	Less likely to give .....	9%	11%	14%	12%
	Much less likely to give .....	1%	2%	1%	1%

Q1a. From the characteristics listed in Q1, which **one** would you say is the **most important** to you personally for a churchwide special offering to have? (On the line below, write the letter corresponding to your choice.)

a.	Is a tradition at our church .....	6%	6%	7%	2%
b.	Lets our church keep a share of the donations and decide where to allocate them .....	12%	13%	4%	4%
c.	Helps me connect with other Christians concerned about the same ministry .....	3%	5%	4%	4%
d.	Has a clearly defined focus .....	18%	18%	19%	21%
e.	Shows clearly how my gift helps specific people .....	14%	13%	14%	12%
f.	Helps me relate to a specific ministry .....	2%	4%	4%	4%
g.	Helps address systemic issues (“root causes”) .....	4%	4%	12%	14%
h.	Primarily serves people outside the church .....	3%	2%	1%	2%
i.	Serves ministries located overseas .....	1%	1%	2%	1%
j.	Serves ministries located in the United States .....	2%	2%	*	1%
k.	Serves ministries in my local area .....	8%	7%	3%	—
l.	Has rigorous financial accountability .....	10%	4%	4%	6%
m.	Is ecumenical in history and design .....	1%	1%	*	2%
n.	Addresses public policy issues .....	1%	—	*	1%
o.	Gets help where it is needed efficiently and without delay .....	14%	20%	20%	20%
p.	Remains faithful to deserving causes even when they recede from widespread public attention .....	3%	2%	3%	4%
q.	Shifts emphases often to reflect emerging needs and ministries .....	*	1%	1%	2%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

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◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



Q1b. Which two characteristics from the list in Q1 would you choose as your *second* and your *third most-important* ones for a churchwide special offering to have? (On the lines below, write the letters corresponding to your choice.)

**Second most-important characteristic:**

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. Is a tradition at our church.....	4%	3%	6%	4%
b. Lets our church keep a share of the donations and decide where to allocate them .....	6%	9%	7%	2%
c. Helps me connect with other Christians concerned about the same ministry .....	3%	3%	4%	7%
d. Has a clearly defined focus .....	16%	17%	22%	14%
e. Shows clearly how my gift helps specific people .....	13%	14%	14%	8%
f. Helps me relate to a specific ministry .....	4%	4%	4%	5%
g. Helps address systemic issues (“root causes”).....	5%	4%	6%	11%
h. Primarily serves people outside the church.....	1%	1%	1%	1%
i. Serves ministries located overseas .....	1%	2%	2%	3%
j. Serves ministries located in the United States.....	6%	4%	2%	1%
k. Serves ministries in my local area.....	7%	9%	2%	2%
l. Has rigorous financial accountability .....	10%	11%	7%	10%
m. Is ecumenical in history and design .....	2%	2%	2%	6%
n. Addresses public policy issues.....	2%	1%	2%	4%
o. Gets help where it is needed efficiently and without delay .....	13%	11%	14%	12%
p. Remains faithful to deserving causes even when they recede from widespread public attention .....	6%	5%	5%	7%
q. Shifts emphases often to reflect emerging needs and ministries .....	2%	1%	1%	4%

**Third most-important characteristic:**

a. Is a tradition at our church.....	3%	3%	4%	5%
b. Lets our church keep a share of the donations and decide where to allocate them.....	7%	4%	5%	3%
c. Helps me connect with other Christians concerned about the same ministry.....	4%	3%	5%	4%
d. Has a clearly defined focus .....	8%	11%	9%	12%
e. Shows clearly how my gift helps specific people .....	11%	12%	13%	6%
f. Helps me relate to a specific ministry .....	8%	4%	6%	6%
g. Helps address systemic issues (“root causes”).....	3%	6%	7%	9%
h. Primarily serves people outside the church.....	1%	1%	3%	1%
i. Serves ministries located overseas .....	2%	2%	2%	2%
j. Serves ministries located in the United States.....	4%	4%	1%	1%
k. Serves ministries in my local area.....	10%	9%	3%	1%
l. Has rigorous financial accountability.....	8%	13%	13%	14%
m. Is ecumenical in history and design .....	2%	2%	3%	5%
n. Addresses public policy issues.....	1%	1%	2%	5%
o. Gets help where it is needed efficiently and without delay .....	16%	15%	14%	14%
p. Remains faithful to deserving causes even when they recede from widespread public attention .....	7%	6%	8%	9%
q. Shifts emphases often to reflect emerging needs and ministries .....	3%	3%	3%	3%

Q2. Below is an alphabetical list of possible causes and issues that churchwide special offerings might support. For each one, indicate how likely you, personally, would be to contribute money to a special offering dedicated to that issue.

**I, personally, would contribute to a churchwide special offering to:**

a. Address environmental issues				
Yes, definitely.....	9%	10%	16%	26%
Yes, probably.....	26%	24%	33%	35%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	30%	32%	24%	22%
	No, probably not .....	26%	23%	20%	14%
	No, definitely not .....	9%	10%	6%	3%
	No opinion .....	1%	2%	1%	1%
b.	Address the root causes of hunger				
	Yes, definitely .....	26%	26%	39%	49%
	Yes, probably .....	46%	47%	41%	36%
	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	21%	19%	13%	11%
	No, probably not .....	6%	4%	4%	4%
	No, definitely not .....	1%	2%	1%	1%
	No opinion .....	*	2%	2%	1%
c.	Establish new Presbyterian congregations in the United States (“new church development”)				
	Yes, definitely .....	7%	6%	16%	13%
	Yes, probably .....	28%	31%	38%	31%
	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	43%	38%	33%	37%
	No, probably not .....	19%	20%	10%	15%
	No, definitely not .....	1%	3%	2%	4%
	No opinion .....	1%	3%	1%	1%
d.	Foster spiritual growth of individual Presbyterians				
	Yes, definitely .....	8%	8%	12%	8%
	Yes, probably .....	30%	33%	32%	23%
	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	43%	38%	34%	41%
	No, probably not .....	15%	16%	18%	23%
	No, definitely not .....	2%	3%	3%	4%
	No opinion .....	2%	2%	1%	1%
e.	Give people basic necessities (food, shelter, health care)				
	Yes, definitely .....	39%	37%	41%	43%
	Yes, probably .....	49%	47%	46%	44%
	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	10%	14%	11%	11%
	No, probably not .....	2%	2%	2%	1%
	No, definitely not .....	*	1%	*	1%
	No opinion .....	*	1%	1%	—
f.	Help children				
	Yes, definitely .....	42%	42%	37%	40%
	Yes, probably .....	44%	43%	47%	43%
	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	12%	13%	14%	12%
	No, probably not .....	1%	2%	2%	2%
	No, definitely not .....	—	*	*	1%
	No opinion .....	—	1%	*	2%
g.	Help disadvantaged people who have already taken steps to improve their communities				
	Yes, definitely .....	25%	23%	25%	32%
	Yes, probably .....	56%	52%	53%	48%
	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	17%	21%	18%	17%
	No, probably not .....	2%	2%	3%	1%
	No, definitely not .....	*	*	*	1%
	No opinion .....	*	2%	1%	1%
h.	Help retired ministers and missionaries who have health needs or low incomes				
	Yes, definitely .....	19%	13%	23%	28%
	Yes, probably .....	46%	51%	50%	39%
	Maybe yes, maybe no .....	30%	27%	21%	26%
	No, probably not .....	4%	7%	6%	4%
	No, definitely not .....	*	1%	1%	2%
	No opinion .....	*	1%	1%	1%
i.	Help struggling rural congregations				
	Yes, definitely .....	10%	7%	11%	11%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Yes, probably.....	38%	36%	33%	35%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	40%	45%	37%	39%
No, probably not.....	10%	10%	15%	12%
No, definitely not.....	1%	1%	2%	2%
No opinion.....	1%	1%	2%	1%
<b>j. Promote peacemaking and conflict resolution</b>				
Yes, definitely.....	12%	11%	16%	23%
Yes, probably.....	28%	26%	30%	38%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	39%	37%	27%	24%
No, probably not.....	15%	17%	18%	13%
No, definitely not.....	4%	6%	7%	2%
No opinion.....	2%	3%	1%	1%
<b>k. Provide emergency relief following disasters (famine, war, flood, earthquake)</b>				
Yes, definitely.....	45%	45%	60%	54%
Yes, probably.....	42%	42%	33%	40%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	12%	11%	6%	4%
No, probably not.....	1%	1%	1%	1%
No, definitely not.....	*	*	*	1%
No opinion.....	—	1%	1%	1%
<b>l. Provide food for the hungry</b>				
Yes, definitely.....	40%	37%	43%	48%
Yes, probably.....	46%	46%	44%	40%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	13%	14%	10%	11%
No, probably not.....	1%	2%	2%	1%
No, definitely not.....	*	*	*	1%
No opinion.....	—	1%	*	—
<b>m. Provide money for the General Assembly Council to decide how to allocate</b>				
Yes, definitely.....	3%	1%	2%	4%
Yes, probably.....	7%	8%	12%	15%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	35%	39%	26%	29%
No, probably not.....	32%	31%	29%	30%
No, definitely not.....	21%	19%	29%	21%
No opinion.....	2%	2%	2%	—
<b>n. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of the United States</b>				
Yes, definitely.....	13%	14%	12%	21%
Yes, probably.....	46%	39%	49%	47%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	33%	35%	29%	26%
No, probably not.....	6%	8%	9%	4%
No, definitely not.....	1%	2%	1%	1%
No opinion.....	2%	2%	1%	1%
<b>o. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of other countries</b>				
Yes, definitely.....	10%	9%	15%	24%
Yes, probably.....	34%	38%	54%	46%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	43%	37%	24%	26%
No, probably not.....	8%	11%	6%	2%
No, definitely not.....	3%	2%	1%	2%
No opinion.....	2%	2%	1%	1%
<b>p. Support inner-city ministries</b>				
Yes, definitely.....	10%	8%	13%	17%
Yes, probably.....	40%	40%	40%	43%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	39%	40%	36%	33%
No, probably not.....	8%	9%	8%	5%
No, definitely not.....	1%	1%	1%	2%
No opinion.....	2%	2%	1%	—

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

q. Support social justice ministries				
Yes, definitely.....	8%	5%	13%	26%
Yes, probably.....	21%	23%	29%	35%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	44%	42%	29%	25%
No, probably not.....	17%	18%	19%	11%
No, definitely not.....	7%	8%	8%	3%
No opinion.....	2%	3%	2%	1%
r. Support PC(USA)-affiliated minority racial-ethnic schools and colleges				
Yes, definitely.....	6%	4%	8%	14%
Yes, probably.....	22%	24%	34%	32%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	46%	40%	34%	39%
No, probably not.....	18%	20%	19%	10%
No, definitely not.....	6%	8%	4%	4%
No opinion.....	2%	3%	1%	1%
s. Support the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches				
Yes, definitely.....	4%	2%	5%	10%
Yes, probably.....	14%	12%	16%	25%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	40%	37%	30%	29%
No, probably not.....	27%	28%	22%	16%
No, definitely not.....	14%	17%	26%	18%
No opinion.....	2%	3%	2%	2%
t. Support youth and young adult ministries				
Yes, definitely.....	16%	12%	13%	14%
Yes, probably.....	47%	43%	42%	30%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	33%	36%	33%	46%
No, probably not.....	3%	6%	9%	8%
No, definitely not.....	1%	1%	1%	2%
No opinion.....	1%	1%	1%	1%

Q2a. From the options listed in Q2, which *cause/purpose* would you personally *most favor* to receive funds raised through a churchwide special offering? (On the line below, write the letter corresponding to your choice.)

a. Address environmental issues.....	2%	3%	4%	6%
b. Address the root causes of hunger.....	8%	9%	11%	15%
c. Establish new Presbyterian congregations in the United States (“new church development”).....	3%	4%	11%	7%
d. Foster spiritual growth of individual Presbyterians.....	3%	3%	3%	4%
e. Give people basic necessities (food, shelter, health care).....	26%	24%	18%	17%
f. Help children.....	13%	16%	7%	7%
g. Help disadvantaged people who have already taken steps to improve their communities.....	6%	5%	2%	5%
h. Help retired ministers and missionaries who have health needs or low incomes.....	4%	3%	2%	3%
i. Help struggling rural congregations.....	1%	1%	1%	1%
j. Promote peacemaking and conflict resolution.....	2%	2%	2%	5%
k. Provide emergency relief following disasters (famine, war, flood, earthquake).....	18%	20%	28%	17%
l. Provide food for the hungry.....	6%	4%	4%	2%
m. Provide money for the General Assembly Council to decide how to allocate.....	1%	—	*	1%
n. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of the United States.....	2%	2%	1%	1%
o. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of other countries.....	*	*	1%	1%
p. Support inner-city ministries.....	—	1%	1%	2%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
q. Support social justice ministries.....	2%	*	2%	5%
r. Support PC(USA)-affiliated minority racial-ethnic schools and colleges .....	1%	1%	*	2%
s. Support the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches .....	—	—	*	—
t. Support youth and young adult ministries.....	4%	3%	1%	1%

Q2b. Which cause/issues from the list in Q2 would you choose as your *second* and *third most-favored causes/issues* to receive special offering funds?

**Second most-favored cause/issue:**

a. Address environmental issues .....	3%	3%	4%	6%
b. Address the root causes of hunger.....	6%	8%	12%	14%
c. Establish new Presbyterian congregations in the United States (“new church development”).....	2%	2%	4%	4%
d. Foster spiritual growth of individual Presbyterians.....	3%	2%	5%	2%
e. Give people basic necessities (food, shelter, health care) .....	16%	14%	17%	11%
f. Help children.....	17%	16%	9%	7%
g. Help disadvantaged people who have already taken steps to improve their communities.....	6%	6%	6%	3%
h. Help retired ministers and missionaries who have health needs or low incomes.....	6%	6%	4%	6%
i. Help struggling rural congregations .....	2%	2%	3%	1%
j. Promote peacemaking and conflict resolution .....	3%	4%	3%	6%
k. Provide emergency relief following disasters (famine, war, flood, earthquake).....	18%	18%	18%	15%
l. Provide food for the hungry .....	8%	7%	6%	6%
m. Provide money for the General Assembly Council to decide how to allocate .....	—	*	—	1%
n. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of the United States.....	2%	3%	2%	2%
o. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of other countries .....	1%	2%	4%	4%
p. Support inner-city ministries .....	2%	1%	1%	2%
q. Support social justice ministries.....	1%	1%	2%	4%
r. Support PC(USA)-affiliated minority racial-ethnic schools and colleges .....	1%	*	1%	2%
s. Support the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches .....	—	—	*	1%
t. Support youth and young adult ministries.....	4%	4%	2%	2%

**Third most-favored cause/issue:**

a. Address environmental issues .....	2%	1%	4%	5%
b. Address the root causes of hunger.....	5%	5%	7%	8%
c. Establish new Presbyterian congregations in the United States (“new church development”).....	3%	4%	5%	3%
d. Foster spiritual growth of individual Presbyterians.....	2%	3%	4%	1%
e. Give people basic necessities (food, shelter, health care) .....	9%	10%	8%	4%
f. Help children.....	14%	14%	9%	6%
g. Help disadvantaged people who have already taken steps to improve their communities .....	10%	7%	8%	7%
h. Help retired ministers and missionaries who have health needs or low incomes.....	6%	5%	8%	10%
i. Help struggling rural congregations .....	2%	5%	3%	3%
j. Promote peacemaking and conflict resolution .....	3%	2%	4%	9%
k. Provide emergency relief following disasters (famine, war, flood, earthquake).....	14%	13%	11%	15%

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l. Provide food for the hungry .....	11%	14%	13%	8%
m. Provide money for the General Assembly Council to decide how to allocate .....	1%	1%	1%	1%
n. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of the United States.....	5%	4%	3%	4%
o. Support health ministries in impoverished parts of other countries .....	2%	2%	3%	4%
p. Support inner-city ministries.....	3%	2%	1%	2%
q. Support social justice ministries.....	1%	2%	4%	4%
r. Support PC(USA)-affiliated minority racial-ethnic schools and colleges .....	1%	1%	*	1%
s. Support the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches .....	—	1%	1%	4%
t. Support youth and young adult ministries.....	6%	6%	2%	3%

**Currently there are four churchwide special offerings in the PC(USA):**

- 1. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) Offering**, received in Lent or on Easter (March/April)  
Supports three national/international PC(USA) programs: Hunger (36%); Self-Development of People (32%); and Disaster Assistance (32%)
- 2. The Pentecost Offering**, received on or around the Day of Pentecost (May/June)  
Supports national-level PC(USA) ministries with youth and young adults (50%); national PC(USA) advocacy for children at risk (10%); and children-at-risk ministries that congregations choose (40%)
- 3. The Peacemaking Offering**, received on or around World Communion Sunday (first Sunday in October)  
Supports the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program (50%); presbytery and synod peacemaking efforts (25%); and other peacemaking-related programs of the congregation’s choice (25%)
- 4. The Christmas Joy Offering**, received in Advent or on Christmas (December)  
Supports needy retired ministers and missionaries (50%) and PC(USA) racial-ethnic schools (50%)

Q3. Please indicate which churchwide special offerings your congregation has received in the past year, and whether you have made a contribution to each of those.

a. Did your congregation receive this churchwide special offering?

**OGHS**

Yes .....	83%	90%	90%	84%
No .....	4%	4%	9%	6%
Don’t know .....	13%	6%	1%	10%

**Pentecost**

Yes .....	41%	48%	40%	38%
No .....	24%	30%	58%	36%
Don’t know .....	36%	22%	2%	26%

**Peacemaking**

Yes .....	48%	53%	53%	57%
No .....	18%	24%	46%	27%
Don’t know .....	35%	24%	2%	16%

**Christmas Joy**

Yes .....	76%	80%	78%	72%
No .....	6%	10%	20%	16%
Don’t know .....	18%	10%	2%	12%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
b. If “yes,” did you or any member of your household contribute?				
<b>OGHS</b>	n=272	n=427	n=427	n=175
Yes.....	78%	82%	86%	86%
No.....	16%	13%	11%	11%
Don’t know.....	5%	5%	3%	4%
<b>Pentecost</b>	n=125	n=216	n=186	n=77
Yes.....	64%	65%	72%	70%
No.....	26%	26%	22%	19%
Don’t know.....	9%	9%	6%	11%
<b>Peacemaking</b>	n=148	n=239	n=246	n=117
Yes.....	59%	68%	72%	66%
No.....	29%	22%	22%	24%
Don’t know.....	12%	9%	6%	10%
<b>Christmas Joy</b>	n=237	n=372	n=366	n=150
Yes.....	77%	75%	78%	78%
No.....	15%	18%	19%	15%
Don’t know.....	8%	7%	3%	6%
c. If “yes,” approximately how many dollars did you/your household contribute?				
	n=211	n=341	n=361	n=145
<b>OGHS</b>	+	+	+	
\$10 or less.....	26%	19%	9%	6%
\$11 - \$20.....	17%	21%	12%	8%
\$21 - \$30.....	25%	19%	22%	19%
\$31 - \$50.....	13%	19%	29%	22%
\$51 - \$99.....	1%	2%	3%	4%
\$100 or more.....	18%	20%	26%	41%
Mean.....	\$47	\$55	\$79	\$101
Median.....	\$25	\$25	\$50	\$50
	n=78	n=128	n=130	n=52
<b>Pentecost</b>	+	+	+	+
\$10 or less.....	32%	22%	12%	7%
\$11 - \$20.....	12%	18%	18%	9%
\$21 - \$30.....	33%	27%	35%	27%
\$31 - \$50.....	12%	14%	20%	29%
\$51 - \$99.....	—	1%	2%	—
\$100 or more.....	10%	18%	12%	29%
Mean.....	\$32	\$44	\$45	\$55
Median.....	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$50
	n=82	n=149	n=172	n=72
<b>Peacemaking</b>	+	+		+
\$10 or less.....	28%	21%	14%	5%
\$11 - \$20.....	10%	22%	16%	5%
\$21 - \$30.....	34%	30%	30%	25%
\$31 - \$50.....	15%	15%	23%	28%
\$51 - \$99.....	—	1%	4%	2%
\$100 or more.....	12%	12%	14%	36%
Mean.....	\$34	\$35	\$51	\$84
Median.....	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$50

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	n=173	n=259	n=275	n=112
<b>Christmas Joy</b>	+	+	+	+
\$10 or less.....	25%	18%	11%	3%
\$11 - \$20.....	12%	24%	13%	8%
\$21 - \$30.....	26%	22%	25%	18%
\$31 - \$50.....	17%	17%	32%	32%
\$51 - \$99.....	1%	2%	2%	2%
\$100 or more.....	19%	16%	15%	36%
Mean.....	\$44	\$44	\$64	\$93
Median.....	\$25	\$25	\$39	\$50

Q4. *If you contributed to either the Pentecost or Peacemaking Offering in the last year:* Both of these offerings allow congregations to decide where a portion of the funds will go. Which statement best describes how this “local option” feature influenced your decision(s) to contribute? (Check **one box** in each column.)

a. Pentecost (congregation allocates 40%):

	n=78	n=126	n=130	n=52
I gave but didn’t know about this feature .....	18%	13%	2%	8%
I gave primarily/entirely because of this feature.....	9%	18%	10%	2%
I gave partly because of this feature .....	32%	28%	28%	16%
I likely would have contributed even without this feature.....	27%	28%	37%	42%
I definitely would have contributed even without this feature.....	13%	14%	23%	32%

b. Peacemaking (congregation allocates 25%):

	n=82	n=149	n=172	n=72
I gave but didn’t know about this feature .....	22%	16%	1%	8%
I gave primarily/entirely because of this feature.....	12%	8%	7%	4%
I gave partly because of this feature .....	21%	28%	29%	11%
I likely would have contributed even without this feature.....	27%	32%	34%	38%
I definitely would have contributed even without this feature.....	18%	16%	29%	38%

Q5. Were any of the churchwide special offerings received (collected) by your congregation in the last 12 months taken at a **different time of the year** than is typical or is usually suggested by the PC(USA)?

Yes .....	3%	4%	6%	3%
No.....	51%	73%	90%	74%
Don’t know.....	45%	22%	2%	20%
Did not receive any churchwide special offerings.....	1%	2%	2%	3%

Q5a. Please indicate which offering(s), when it (they) was received, and why the timing was different:  
[Tabulated separately]

Q6. Are four churchwide special offerings . . .

Too many?.....	19%	25%	31%	16%
The right number? .....	40%	44%	50%	56%
Too few?.....	2%	1%	1%	3%
Not sure .....	39%	30%	18%	24%

Q7. What is the **minimum** number of weeks that you think should separate each churchwide special offering and the next?

Write the number on the line. \_\_\_\_\_ weeks (Check here  if you have no opinion.)

Less than 4 weeks.....	2%	1%	1%	2%
4 - 7 weeks .....	6%	7%	9%	7%
8 - 11 weeks .....	16%	18%	28%	23%

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08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
12 - 15 weeks.....	25%	26%	24%	29%
16 - 19 weeks.....	2%	3%	4%	3%
20 - 24 weeks.....	1%	2%	4%	1%
25 - 29 weeks.....	4%	5%	3%	3%
30 weeks or more.....	1%	2%	2%	1%
No opinion.....	44%	37%	24%	32%
Mean.....	13	12	14	10
Median.....	12	12	12	12

- Q8. In general, do you think the interval between each churchwide special offering and the next is too long, too short, or about the right amount of time?
- Between OGHS (Lent/Easter) and Pentecost (May/June)
 

Too long.....	1%	*	*	—
Too short.....	25%	28%	43%	33%
Right interval.....	47%	41%	39%	48%
Not sure.....	27%	32%	17%	19%
  - Between Pentecost (May/June) and Peacemaking (early October)
 

Too long.....	8%	6%	7%	13%
Too short.....	4%	7%	9%	4%
Right interval.....	53%	56%	59%	60%
Not sure.....	36%	32%	26%	22%
  - Between Peacemaking (early October) and Christmas Joy (Advent/Christmas)
 

Too long.....	1%	—	1%	—
Too short.....	17%	16%	24%	20%
Right interval.....	52%	55%	55%	62%
Not sure.....	31%	29%	21%	18%
  - Between Christmas Joy (Advent/Christmas) and OGHS (Lent/Easter)
 

Too long.....	4%	2%	3%	2%
Too short.....	4%	6%	7%	5%
Right interval.....	68%	66%	73%	74%
Not sure.....	25%	27%	17%	19%
- Q9. How appropriate is the match between each churchwide special offering (including the causes it supports) and the time in the church (liturgical) year when it is typically received?
- OGHS, Lent/Easter:  
hunger, disaster assistance, self-development of people
 

Very appropriate.....	28%	33%	47%	47%
Appropriate.....	46%	43%	32%	32%
Somewhat appropriate.....	6%	7%	9%	8%
Not too appropriate.....	2%	*	3%	2%
Not sure.....	17%	17%	9%	11%
  - Pentecost, Pentecost:  
youth and young adults, children at risk
 

Very appropriate.....	14%	13%	18%	22%
Appropriate.....	41%	41%	27%	31%
Somewhat appropriate.....	10%	12%	18%	17%
Not too appropriate.....	5%	4%	16%	12%
Not sure.....	31%	30%	22%	19%
  - Peacemaking, World Communion Sunday, October:  
peacemaking ministries
 

Very appropriate.....	17%	21%	35%	39%
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Appropriate.....	42%	38%	33%	33%
Somewhat appropriate.....	11%	11%	10%	10%
Not too appropriate.....	2%	4%	6%	5%
Not sure.....	28%	26%	16%	13%

d. Christmas Joy, Advent/Christmas:

needy retired ministers, racial-ethnic schools

Very appropriate.....	27%	28%	31%	29%
Appropriate.....	38%	37%	34%	30%
Somewhat appropriate.....	9%	12%	14%	17%
Not too appropriate.....	7%	5%	10%	11%
Not sure.....	19%	20%	11%	13%

Q10. Would you like the PC(USA) to have a churchwide special offering to support overseas mission personnel, either as a new (fifth) churchwide special offering, or as a replacement for all or part of an existing churchwide special offering? (Check **only one** box.)

No.....	31%	31%	24%	28%
Maybe yes, maybe no.....	28%	25%	16%	18%
Yes, but not sure whether it should be a new offering or a replacement for a current offering.....	18%	18%	15%	16%
Yes, as a new (fifth) offering.....	7%	10%	9%	14%
Yes, as a replacement for all or part of one churchwide special offering.....	16%	17%	35%	24%

Q10a. If you checked “yes, as a replacement,” indicate which offering or part of an offering you would replace: (Check **only one** box.)

	n=52	n=79	n=166	n=51
All or part of OGHS.....	4%	4%	1%	—
All or part of Pentecost.....	18%	13%	36%	42%
All or part of Peacemaking.....	43%	62%	53%	38%
All or part of Christmas Joy.....	18%	17%	6%	14%
Not sure which one to replace.....	16%	5%	4%	4%
All or part of all the offerings [volunteered].....	2%	—	1%	2%

Q11. Would your opinion on a special offering for international mission change if you knew that the PC(USA) would be eliminating many overseas missionary positions unless a new source of funding is found?

Yes, I'd be <b>more</b> in favor of a special offering for international mission.....	45%	45%	57%	60%
Yes, I'd be <b>less</b> in favor of a special offering for international mission.....	2%	3%	1%	1%
No, my opinion would stay the same.....	32%	32%	34%	28%
Not sure.....	20%	19%	8%	10%

Q12. Please use the space below or another sheet for additional comments.

[Not tabulated]

Response form:

Web.....	13%	13%	23%	20%
Paper.....	87%	87%	77%	80%

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Appendix E

# Churchwide Special Offerings

CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY



SPRING 2007

Data Appendix

Number of surveys mailed.....	800
Number of surveys returned as undeliverable/ineligible .....	1
Number of surveys returned .....	475
Response rate.....	59%

Q1. How often has your congregation received (collected) each of the four churchwide special offerings over the last four or five years?

	Every Year	Most Years	One or Two Years	Not at All	Not Sure
a. One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (Lent/Easter) .....	89%	3%	2%	6%	*
b. Pentecost Offering (Pentecost).....	33%	5%	8%	51%	2%
c. Peacemaking Offering (World Communion Sunday— first Sunday in October).....	49%	6%	6%	37%	3%
d. Christmas Joy Offering (Advent/Christmas) .....	74%	6%	3%	17%	1%

For each churchwide special offering that your congregation received (collected) in the last 12 months, please answer Q2 through Q6: (If none were received in the last 12 months, skip to Q7.)

Q2. In the months and weeks prior to each churchwide special offering, what office(s) contacted your congregation to encourage or remind it to take that offering? (Check *all* that apply for each offering received.)

	Special Offerings Office of PC(USA)	Other National Office of PC(USA)	Synod	Presbytery	Other	No One That I Know of	Did Not Receive Offering	
a. OGHS (n=444).....	70%	8%	1%	17%	2%	22%	1%	◆
b. Pentecost (n=220) .....	71%	4%	1%	13%	2%	20%	4%	◆
c. Peacemaking (n=284) .....	72%	7%	2%	15%	1%	18%	2%	◆
d. Christmas Joy (n=387).....	70%	6%	1%	14%	2%	21%	2%	◆

Q2a. If you checked “other” for any of the churchwide special offerings, please specify here:

[Tabulated separately]

Q3. Did your congregation set a financial goal for contributions to each churchwide special offering?

	Yes	No	Not Sure	Did Not Receive
a. OGHS (n=444).....	14%	83%	2%	1%
b. Pentecost (n=220) .....	8%	87%	3%	3%
c. Peacemaking (n=284) .....	7%	88%	2%	2%
d. Christmas Joy (n=387).....	8%	88%	2%	2%

Q4. Did your congregation meet or exceed that goal?

	Yes	No	Not Sure	Did Not Receive/ No Goal	
a. OGHS (n=444).....	15%	6%	4%	75%	+
b. Pentecost (n=220).....	8%	8%	4%	81%	+
c. Peacemaking (n=284).....	7%	8%	4%	81%	+
d. Christmas Joy (n=387).....	10%	5%	4%	82%	+

Q5. How much, approximately, did your congregation receive in contributions to each offering in the last 12 months?

a. OGHS ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or  Did not receive/don't know

	n=444
Left blank .....	7%
Did not receive/don't know .....	16%
Amount reported .....	76%
	n=339
Less than \$250.....	7%
\$250 - \$499 .....	9%
\$500 - \$999 .....	14%
\$1,000 - \$1,499.....	14%
\$1,500 - \$1,999.....	11%
\$2,000 - \$2,999.....	14%
\$3,000 - \$4,999.....	16%
\$5,000 - \$9,999.....	11%
\$10,000 or more .....	6%

b. Pentecost..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or  Did not receive/don't know

	n=220
Left blank .....	10%
Did not receive/don't know .....	27%
Amount reported .....	63%
	n=138
	+
Less than \$250.....	20%
\$250 - \$499 .....	18%
\$500 - \$999 .....	27%
\$1,000 - \$1,499.....	12%
\$1,500 - \$1,999.....	10%
\$2,000 - \$2,999.....	7%
\$3,000 - \$4,999.....	4%
\$5,000 - \$9,999.....	2%
\$10,000 or more .....	1%

c. Peacemaking..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or  Did not receive/don't know

	n=284
Left blank .....	10%
Did not receive/don't know .....	24%
Amount reported .....	66%
	n=188
	+
Less than \$250.....	14%
\$250 - \$499 .....	18%
\$500 - \$999 .....	24%
\$1,000 - \$1,499.....	16%
\$1,500 - \$1,999.....	10%
\$2,000 - \$2,999.....	7%
\$3,000 - \$4,999.....	7%
\$5,000 - \$9,999.....	3%
\$10,000 or more .....	1%

d. Christmas Joy ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or  Did not receive/don't know

	n=387
Left blank .....	9%
Did not receive/don't know .....	19%
Amount reported .....	72%
	n=279
	+
Less than \$250 .....	8%
\$250 - \$499 .....	12%
\$500 - \$999 .....	16%
\$1,000 - \$1,499 .....	15%
\$1,500 - \$1,999 .....	10%
\$2,000 - \$2,999 .....	16%
\$3,000 - \$4,999 .....	11%
\$5,000 - \$9,999 .....	7%
\$10,000 or more .....	3%

Q6. How have the total dollar amounts contributed by your congregation to each churchwide special offering changed *in the last four or five years*?

	Increased Greatly	Increased a Little	Stayed About the Same	Decreased a Little	Decreased a Lot	Not Applicable/ Not Sure
a. OGHS (n=444).....	9%	30%	36%	9%	6%	10%
b. Pentecost (n=220).....	6%	27%	33%	11%	4%	20% +
c. Peacemaking (n=284).....	4%	25%	36%	12%	3%	20%
d. Christmas Joy (n=387).....	4%	28%	40%	12%	3%	13%

Q7. Were any of the churchwide special offerings received by your congregation *in the last four or five years* taken at a different time of the year than what is typically suggested by the PC(USA)?

Yes .....	6%
No.....	90%
Did not receive any churchwide special offerings.....	4%

Q7a. [If "Yes,"] Please indicate which offering(s), what time of year it (they) was received, and why the timing was different:

[Tabulated separately]

Q8. Were you aware that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) permits congregations to receive any of the churchwide special offerings at whatever time of year works best, regardless of the time typically suggested for each?

Yes .....	64%
No.....	36%

Q9. In the last five years, has your congregation started receiving a churchwide special offering that it had not been receiving for the previous two (or more) years?

Yes .....	8%
No → Skip to Q12 .....	92%

Q9a. If yes, which offering(s) did your congregation start receiving? (Check *all* that apply.)

	+, ♦
	n=39
OGHS .....	3%
Pentecost.....	76%
Peacemaking.....	41%
Christmas Joy .....	3%

Q10. In what year did your congregation most recently start receiving a churchwide special offering that it had not been previously receiving? (If the congregation started receiving more than one special offering in the last five years, check here  and respond for the more/most recent one.) \_\_\_\_\_ (Check here  if you “don’t know.”)

	n=39
Started receiving more than one special offering in the last five years .....	26%
Don’t know.....	13%
	n=34
	+
2002.....	4%
2003.....	19%
2004.....	12%
2005.....	27%
2006.....	15%
2007.....	23%

Q11. How important was each of these reasons in your church’s decision to start receiving this special offering? [n=39]

III.	Very Important	Generally Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at All Important	Don’t Know
a. The cause(s) it supports.....	44%	36%	8%	—	—	11%
b. The pastor wanted us to start receiving it.....	20%	20%	11%	20%	9%	20% +
c. Someone else in the congregation wanted us to start receiving it.....	11%	17%	29%	11%	14%	17% +
d. Someone in our presbytery asked us to start receiving it.....	—	9%	6%	23%	37%	26% +
e. Someone in the national offices of the PC(USA) asked us to start receiving it.....	3%	6%	6%	26%	37%	23% +
f. We wanted to strengthen our ties to the PC(USA).....	18%	21%	18%	6%	18%	18% +
g. The fact that we could decide where to send a portion of the funds received.....	11%	29%	29%	—	14%	17% +
h. Someone in our congregation had a connection with a place or person helped by offering funds.....	9%	12%	12%	12%	29%	26% +
i. Other (specify): _____	9%	—	—	—	18%	73% +

For each churchwide special offering that your congregation did **not** receive *in the last 12 months*, please tell us how important each of the factors listed was in the decision not to receive that offering by answering Q12-Q15: (If all four were received in the last year, skip to Q16.)

Q12. **OGHS (Lent/Easter—supports hunger, disaster assistance, self-development of people):** How important was each factor below in your church’s decision **not to receive** the OGHS Offering in 2007? (If you received the offering in 2007, skip to Q13.) [n=28]

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Don’t Know
a. We were not aware of this offering.....	5%	5%	84%	5% +
b. Habit or custom.....	16%	26%	53%	5% +
c. Our congregation is not interested in churchwide special offerings.....	30%	44%	26%	— +
d. The cause(s) funded are not priorities for the congregation.....	15%	45%	35%	5% +
e. No one <i>outside</i> the congregation asked us to take the offering.....	5%	10%	74%	10% +
f. No one inside the congregation expressed any interest in this offering.....	15%	40%	40%	5% +
g. There are too many churchwide special offerings.....	5%	32%	53%	10% +
h. This offering conflicted with another (local, regional, etc.) special offering.....	16%	16%	53%	16% +
i. This offering did not otherwise fit with our schedule.....	—	5%	90%	5% +
j. Our members could not afford another special offering.....	—	16%	79%	5% +
k. The pastor did not want to receive this offering.....	—	47%	47%	5% +

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l.	No one was available to promote the offering in the congregation .....	—	10%	79%	10%	+
m.	We did not receive all of our offering materials on time .....	—	—	89%	11%	+
n.	Other (specify): _____	50%	—	25%	25%	+

Q13. **Pentecost (Pentecost—supports youth and young adults, children at risk):** How important was each factor below in your church’s decision **not to receive** the Pentecost Offering in 2006? (If you received the offering in 2006, skip to Q14.) [n=228]

	Important	Very Important	Not Important	Don't Know		
a.	We were not aware of this offering .....	6%	9%	72%	13%	+
b.	Habit or custom .....	28%	42%	24%	6%	+
c.	Our congregation is not interested in churchwide special offerings .....	7%	12%	69%	12%	+
d.	The cause(s) funded are not priorities for the congregation .....	9%	14%	62%	15%	+
e.	No one <b>outside</b> the congregation asked us to take the offering .....	3%	10%	73%	13%	+
f.	No one <b>inside</b> the congregation expressed any interest in this offering .....	26%	24%	40%	10%	+
g.	There are too many churchwide special offerings .....	28%	33%	28%	12%	+
h.	This offering conflicted with another (local, regional, etc.) special Offering .....	21%	16%	50%	13%	+
i.	This offering did not otherwise fit with our schedule .....	11%	21%	56%	12%	+
j.	Our members could not afford another special offering .....	10%	23%	53%	14%	+
k.	The pastor did not want to receive this offering.....	7%	17%	62%	14%	+
l.	No one was available to promote the offering in the congregation.....	5%	14%	68%	12%	+
m.	We did not receive all of our offering materials on time .....	1%	2%	80%	17%	+
n.	Other (specify): _____	26%	2%	43%	29%	+

Q14. **Peacemaking (World Communion Sunday, October—supports peacemaking ministries):** How important was each factor below in your church’s decision **not to receive** the Peacemaking Offering in 2006? (If you received the offering in 2006, skip to Q15.) [n=167]

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Don't Know		
a.	We were not aware of this offering.....	4%	10%	80%	7%	+
b.	Habit or custom.....	27%	43%	26%	4%	+
c.	Our congregation is not interested in churchwide special offerings .....	9%	20%	61%	10%	+
d.	The cause(s) funded are not priorities for the congregation.....	28%	25%	38%	9%	+
e.	No one <b>outside</b> the congregation asked us to take the offering .....	5%	14%	71%	9%	+
f.	No one <b>inside</b> the congregation expressed any interest in this offering.....	20%	30%	42%	9%	+
g.	There are too many churchwide special offerings .....	22%	35%	33%	11%	+
h.	This offering conflicted with another (local, regional, etc.) special offering .....	19%	16%	53%	11%	+
i.	This offering did not otherwise fit with our schedule .....	11%	12%	66%	11%	+
j.	Our members could not afford another special offering .....	10%	21%	58%	11%	+
k.	The pastor did not want to receive this offering.....	11%	22%	55%	12%	+
l.	No one was available to promote the offering in the congregation.....	4%	17%	71%	8%	+
m.	We did not receive all of our offering materials on time .....	1%	2%	82%	16%	+
n.	Other (specify): _____	20%	3%	54%	23%	+

Q15. **Christmas Joy (Advent/Christmas—supports needy retired ministers and missionaries, racial-ethnic schools):**  
 How important was each factor below in your church’s decision *not to receive* the Christmas Joy Offering in 2006? (If you received the offering in 2006, skip to Q16.) [n=78]

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Don't Know
a. We were not aware of this offering.....	6%	6%	78%	10% +
b. Habit or custom.....	31%	38%	22%	9% +
c. Our congregation is not interested in churchwide special offerings .....	15%	26%	46%	13% +
d. The cause(s) funded are not priorities for the congregation.....	8%	21%	57%	15% +
e. No one <i>outside</i> the congregation asked us to take the offering.....	4%	4%	75%	17% +
f. No one <i>inside</i> the congregation expressed any interest in this offering.....	19%	21%	42%	17% +
g. There are too many churchwide special offerings .....	11%	30%	44%	15% +
h. This offering conflicted with another (local, regional, etc.) special offering .....	25%	12%	48%	15% +
i. This offering did not otherwise fit with our schedule .....	14%	14%	56%	16% +
j. Our members could not afford another special offering .....	10%	18%	57%	16% +
k. The pastor did not want to receive this offering.....	4%	21%	62%	14% +
l. No one was available to promote the offering in the congregation.....	6%	15%	68%	11% +
m. We did not receive all of our offering materials on time .....	2%	—	84%	14% +
n. Other (specify):.....	23%	—	46%	32% +

Q16. Please specify the person or persons mainly responsible for the promotion of each PC(USA) churchwide special offering that was received *in the last year* by your congregation. (In each column, check the box(es) that corresponds with who is responsible for the promotion of the special offering. Check *all* that apply in each column; if you do not receive an offering, check the last box in that column.).....

*1 = One Great Hour of Sharing; 2 = Pentecost; ..3 = Peacemaking; 4 = Christmas Joy*

	1	2	3	4
	◆	+, ◆	+, ◆	+, ◆
a. Pastor, associate pastor, interim pastor, other pastor.....	56%	35%	42%	51%
b. Other church staff (e.g., secretary, educator, financial manager).....	28%	18%	20%	26%
c. Clerk of session.....	7%	4%	4%	5%
d. Mission committee chair/member.....	60%	42%	50%	54%
e. Stewardship committee chair/member.....	13%	8%	9%	11%
f. Other committee chair/member.....	6%	2%	6%	5%
g. Other church member.....	6%	2%	3%	5%
h. Don't know .....	1%	1%	1%	1%
i. Don't receive.....	4%	37%	26%	13%

**For the most recent churchwide special offering received by your congregation in 2007 or 2006, respond to Q17 through Q22.** (If you did not receive a churchwide special offering in 2007 or 2006, skip to Q23.)

Q17. Which offering did your congregation receive most recently?

OGHS.....	72%
Pentecost .....	25%
Peacemaking.....	*
Christmas Joy.....	3%



Q18. How many weeks before your congregation started receiving (collecting) this churchwide special offering did your congregation begin promoting it within the congregation? \_\_\_\_\_ weeks (approximately)

	+
1 week .....	3%
2 weeks.....	19%
3 weeks.....	20%
4 weeks.....	37%
5 weeks.....	6%
6 weeks.....	11%
7 – 9 weeks.....	3%

Q19. For how many Sundays did your congregation receive (collect) this offering? (If you “don’t know,” check here .)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sundays

1 Sunday .....	42%
2 Sundays .....	31%
3 Sundays .....	7%
4 Sundays .....	8%
5 Sundays .....	3%
6 Sundays .....	1%
7 – 9 Sundays .....	2%
Don’t know.....	5%

Q20. In promoting this offering, did your congregation:	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
a. Use materials provided by the Special Offerings Office of the PC(USA)? .....	95%	3%	2%
b. Use materials you or others in your congregation created? .....	29%	69%	2% +
c. Promote one of the causes supported by this offering more than the others (if applicable)?....	23%	70%	7% +
d. Highlight the ways the offering was supporting projects or persons in your locality? .....	44%	52%	4% +

Q21. Of PC(USA)-produced promotional materials you used for this offering, what portion did you download or print from the Internet?

All.....	2%
Most .....	2%
Some.....	22%
Hardly any.....	16%
None .....	51%
Don’t know/did not use PC(USA) materials .....	6%

Q22. Did your congregation promote this churchwide special offering in each of the following ways?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
a. Bulletin inserts .....	94%	5%	1%	—
b. Newsletter articles.....	78%	19%	2%	1% +
c. Announcements/presentations in church school .....	60%	35%	4%	1% +
d. Minutes for mission during worship .....	72%	26%	3%	* +
e. Other announcements/presentations during worship .....	56%	41%	2%	1% +
f. Posters/other displays in the church building(s) .....	87%	11%	2%	* +
g. Individual letters sent to church members or households .....	15%	83%	1%	* +
h. Other (specify): _____ .....	17%	68%	4%	11% +

Q23. In addition to the four churchwide special offerings, many Presbyterian congregations, synods, and presbyteries also sponsor other special appeals for funds for causes beyond the congregation. ***In the last 12 months***, has your congregation participated in any other special offering, that is, has it collected funds as part of a special appeal, whether PC(USA) or non-PC(USA), for specified causes in the community, the region, the nation, or the world?

Yes .....	79%
No ( <i>Skip to Q-26</i> ) .....	21%
Don’t know ( <i>Skip to Q-26</i> ).....	1%

Q23a. If “yes,” indicate what type(s) of other special offerings your congregation participated in over the last year. (Check **all** that apply.)

	n=371
	◆
Special offering for local cause (e.g., food pantry, homeless shelter, ecumenical community ministry).....	89%
Presbytery-sponsored special offering (e.g., for a new church development, camp or retreat center).....	35%
Special offering for other PC(USA) program (e.g., retirement or children’s home, PW Thank Offering).....	51%
Special offering for national or international <b>non</b> -Presbyterian causes (e.g., World Vision, UNICEF, Habitat for Humanity).....	58%
Other (specify): _____	
International project.....	6%
Disaster relief.....	11%
Mission trips.....	4%
Souper Bowl of Caring.....	3%
Local or U.S. project.....	4%
All others.....	5%
Selected but blank.....	*

Q24. Who initiated receiving other special offerings in your church over the last year? (Please check **all** that apply.)

	n=371
Pastor, associate pastor, interim, other pastor.....	62%
Other church staff.....	20%
Clerk of session.....	8%
Mission committee chair/member.....	70%
Stewardship committee chair/member.....	14%
Other committee chair/member.....	14%
Other church member.....	13%
Presbyterian Women.....	31%
Don’t know.....	2%
Other (specify): _____	2%

Q25. Do you know approximately how much your congregation received in the last 12 months from **all** of these other (**non-churchwide**) special offerings combined?

	n=371
Yes.....	54%
No, don’t know the amount.....	46%
[If “Yes, ”] What was the approximate amount? \$ _____	n=186
Less than \$1,000.....	11%
\$1,000 - \$1,999.....	9%
\$2,000 - \$2,999.....	14%
\$3,000 - \$4,999.....	10%
\$5,000 - \$5,999.....	15%
\$10,000 - \$19,999.....	16%
\$20,000 - \$49,999.....	17%
\$50,000 or more.....	8%

    [If “No, ”] Would you estimate this amount was more, less, or about the same as the amount received for all churchwide special offerings over the same period?

	n=156
Much less.....	10%
Somewhat less.....	18%
About the same.....	23%
Somewhat more.....	21%
Much more.....	11%
Don’t know.....	15%
No churchwide special offerings received.....	3%

Q26. In the last 12 months, did your congregation:

a. Distribute to an appropriate program or agency the local share (40%) of the Pentecost Offering that you received?

Yes ..... 38%  
 No → → If “no,” please provide details: ..... 11%  
 Don’t know/Not applicable ..... 51%

b. Distribute to an appropriate program or agency the local share (25%) of the Peacemaking Offering that you received?

Yes ..... 48%  
 No → → If “no,” please provide details: ..... 8%  
 Don’t know/Not applicable ..... 44%

c. Remit to the presbytery (or the central PC(USA) receiving office in Louisville) all of the receipts from a particular special offering due to it?

Yes ..... 82%  
 No → → If “no,” please provide details: ..... 2%  
 Don’t know/Not applicable ..... 16%

d. Send some or all of the money received from a churchwide special offering to a different program or organization than the ones specified by the General Assembly?

Yes → → If “yes,” please provide details: ..... 11%  
 No ..... 69%  
 Don’t know/Not applicable ..... 20%

Q27. What roles do you have in your congregation? ◆

Pastor (including associate, interim, etc.) ..... 70%  
 Other church staff ..... 18%  
 Clerk of session ..... 17%  
 Mission committee chair/member ..... 17%  
 Stewardship committee chair/member ..... 10%  
 Other committee chair/member ..... 8%  
 Other church member ..... 5%  
 Other (specify): ..... 6%

Q28. Please use this space for additional comments on churchwide special offerings.

[Tabulated separately]

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**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-03**

*Comment on Item 08-03—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).*

Due to financial implications (not considered in the report), the Office of the General Assembly advises that the number of members be amended from nine to seven and the meeting schedule be amended as follows:

- 2008: administrative costs and two conference calls
- 2009: one meeting, two conference calls
- 2010: one meeting, two conference calls
- 2011: two meetings, three conference calls, research undertaken
- 2012: two meetings, three conference calls

## Item 08-04

[The assembly approved Item 08-04. See pp. 22, 23.]

*On Adding to the General Assembly Council a Representative from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc.—From the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia.*

**The Presbytery of Eastern Virginia overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to follow the requirements of “Full Participation and Representation” as listed in the *Book of Order* and approve this overture that guarantees the men of the church full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church by adding to the General Assembly Council a representative from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc., with voice and vote.**

### *Rationale*

The *Book of Order*, under G-4.0403, Full Participation, states “... Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities ... shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church. (G-9.0104a)”

The *Book of Order*, under G-9.0104a, Participation and Representation, states “Governing bodies of the church shall be responsible for implementing the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and participation as stated in G-4.0403. ...”

There are approximately one million male members of the church without representation on the General Assembly Council.

The reorganization of the General Assembly Council presented, and approved, at the 217th General Assembly (2006), meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, failed to include a representative of Presbyterian Men.

The present General Assembly Council does not include a representative of Presbyterian Men.

This overture is submitted in keeping with the *Book of Order* requirements for equal representation on all committees. The General Assembly Council does not have a representative for the approximately one million Presbyterian Men. In this regard, The National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc., feels so strongly that the needs of men in the church be addressed as they cope with persistent life situations, that they are willing to pay the cost for its representative to attend two meetings a year. The Presbyterian Men have assisted and will continue to assist pastors, especially women pastors, who seek assistance in ministering to the needs of the men in their congregations. A representative of the Presbyterian Men on the council would enhance this much needed effort. Over the years the Presbyterian Men’s ministry has been heavily involved in working with both men and women pastors with the goal of bringing men, women, and children to Jesus Christ by getting more men involved in the church as deacons, elders, teachers, mentors, and other activities involved in keeping the more than 11,000 churches open each week for Sunday worship and other activities.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 08-04

*Advice on Item 08-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 08-04 with the following comment:

Provisions governing the membership and composition of the General Assembly Council were removed from G-13.0202a–c by amendment at the 217th General Assembly (2006) and placed in the General Assembly Council Manual of Operations. At the same assembly, a similar proposal from the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia was defeated, on the grounds that inclusion in the Constitution of a specific requirement for GAC membership would be inconsistent with the proposed removal of such requirements (see *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp.36–37, Item 08-03). If the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the intent of this item is appropriate, it may instruct the General Assembly Council for potential inclusion in their Manual of Operations or it may refer this matter to the General Assembly Council for its consideration.

**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-04**

*Comment on Item 08-04—From the General Assembly Council.*

While the General Assembly Council appreciates and is thankful for the ministry of Presbyterian Men, it nevertheless recommends disapproval of Item 08-40, an overture from the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, which asks that representative from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc., be added to the General Assembly Council, with voice and vote. This change would require a change in the *Manual of Operations* of the General Assembly Council, a change that would need approval by a vote of the General Assembly (G-13.0203).

The rationale for this action cites the *Book of Order* requirements for equal representation on all committees and notes that the General Assembly Council does not have a designated representative for male members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The General Assembly Council asks commissioners to note that the makeup of the General Assembly Council is mandated by G-13.0202b: “In the nominating process, the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall consult with the General Assembly Council to identify needed skills and shall provide for diversity and inclusiveness in accordance with G-4.0403. It will maintain a goal of at least twenty percent racial ethnic membership for the General Assembly Council. It will also follow the provisions of G-9.0104, G-9.0105, and G-13.0111 and shall ensure that, exclusive of the Moderator and predecessor Moderator(s), one third of the members are ministers of the Word and Sacrament (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen.”

Thus there is no need to add a representative of Presbyterian Men in order to guarantee the men of the church full access and representation in the decision-making of the church as they are already present, making up more than half the current council.

Further, Presbyterian Men, like a number of organizations, has a covenant relationship with the General Assembly Council and volunteers with Presbyterian Men work out of office space in the Presbyterian Center.

**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 08-04**

*Comment on Item 08-04—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) reviewed Item 08-04 during its meeting in March 2008. The GACOR advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve the overture.

*Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) desires to recognize the diversity and representation and believes that providing adequate opportunities for women and men as well as diversity of age, race, and disability in accordance with G-4.0403 is both crucial and beneficial to the work of the church.

While we recognize that historically the leadership of our governing bodies have been composed of male members, and that bringing women’s voices to the table is of great importance, we feel it equally important to encourage men to have their voices heard and provide this opportunity when necessary.

**Item 08-05**

[The assembly approved Item 08–05. See pp. 22, 23.]

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve a name change for the General Assembly Council and the enabling changes to the *Book of Order, Organization for Mission*, and the *GAC Manual of Operations*, contingent upon approval by the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), so that the new name will be “General Assembly Mission Council.”**

*Rationale*

In March of 2007, following a General Assembly Council (GAC) meeting, members of the GAC began a conversation regarding the identity of the General Assembly Council. The key question from that conversation was, “Shouldn’t our name be a better indicator of what we are about?” The conversation was productive and rich.

The email began a time of discernment among General Assembly Council members. Discernment was followed by work on a General Assembly Council communication strategy, and the beginnings of the work of the General Assembly Committee on Review of the General Assembly Council. These activities confirmed a common discernment regarding a potential name change.

In July of 2007, the General Assembly Council Executive Committee voted to request the General Assembly Council to change its name. In September of 2007, the General Assembly Council concurred with this request, and initiated a process to select the appropriate name.

The General Assembly Committee on Review of the General Assembly Council, in its report, strongly encourages the General Assembly Council to change its name to clearly identify the role of the GAC in coordinating the mission work of the General Assembly, using the following rationale:

Names of organizations are important in conveying a clear and unambiguous sense to others of the organization's primary purpose. While the GAC engages in activities that support other church agencies and middle governing bodies, its primary purpose is to coordinate the church's mission programs. With this in mind we felt that the present name does not clearly communicate the primary role of the GAC within the church.

Based on this advice, in February 2008, the General Assembly Council voted to change its name to a clear statement of its role within the church: General Assembly Mission Council.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 08-05

*Advice on Item 08-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that if it agrees with the goal of Item 08-05, there is no constitutional impediment. The language is clear and consistent with the stated intent of the proposal.

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## Item 08-06

*On Amending Section 2(d)(3) of the Deliverance of the 198th General Assembly (1986) of the PC(USA)—From the Synod of the Southwest.*

**[WITHDRAWN, June 3, 2008.]**

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## Item 08-07

**[The assembly approved Item 08-07. See pp. 22, 24.]**

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following revised *General Assembly Council Manual of Operations* (see overview following the revised *Manual*):**

### **Revised *GAC Manual of Operations***

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. The General Assembly Council, as an agency of the General Assembly, implements policies established by the General Assembly, coordinates the work of the General Assembly Ministries in light of General Assembly mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities; works in partnership with synods and presbyteries; and develops and proposes a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly. Members of the council are elected by the General Assembly and are representatives of synods, presbyteries, and the church at-large. [See *Book of Order*, G-13.0201, and *Organization for Mission*, Section I., History of the *Structure for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*.]

The *Book of Order* also provides that “each governing body above the session shall, in consultation with the governing body above and below it, develop a manual of administrative operations” (G-9.0405 and G-13.0203).

The *Manual of Operations* shall be in compliance with the *Book of Order*, the General Assembly Deliverances, the *Organization for Mission*, and the *Standing Rules of the General Assembly*.

The General Assembly Council may change those appendixes to the *Manual of Operations* that are within its purview following a first reading, which may be electronic, and adoption at a subsequent plenary session. First reading and action may take place during the same session of the General Assembly Council. The General Assembly Council Executive Committee shall submit a written report of changes to the appendixes to the next General Assembly (See Appendix 13 for the Process and Procedure for Submitting Changes to the *GAC Manual of Operations*.)

B. *Use of Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)*

The meetings of the General Assembly Council, and related bodies are held in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order*. As specified in G-9.0302, “. . . the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* . . .” is used.

## II. Composition of the Council

The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the *Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council*. (*Book of Order*, G.13.0202 Membership)

A. *Membership:*

The General Assembly Council is currently composed of 56 members (39 voting and 17 non-voting):

1. Voting Members

a. Elected Membership (36)

- 6 General Assembly commissioners (2 from current assembly, 2 from the two immediate past assemblies)
- 4 young adults (ages 18-35)
- 3 ordained presbytery staff
- 2 ordained synod staff
- 21 from recommendations of presbyteries

b. Ex-officio Members (3)

- Current Moderator of the General Assembly
- Immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly
- The current Moderator of the Churchwide coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women

2. Non Voting Members—with voice:

a. Corresponding Members (15)

- Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
- Executive Director of the General Assembly Council
- Representative from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA)
- Chair of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)
- Chair of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)
- Chair of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)
- Representative from the Committee on Theological Education (COTE)
- Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. President
- Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Chair or designee
- Presbyterian Foundation President
- Presbyterian Foundation Chair or designee
- Presbyterian Publishing Corporation President
- Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Chair or designee'
- Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. President
- Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Chair or designee

b. Ecumenical Advisory Members (2)

3. GAC Committee At-large members

The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates for General Assembly election 2 persons to serve on the Audit Committee and 2 persons to serve on Stewardship Committee. These members are nominated from the church at-large for their special expertise in each of these areas. While they are not members of the General Assembly Council, they are granted the privilege of the floor during General Assembly Council plenary sessions on matters related to their special expertise.

B. *Inclusiveness and Diversity:*

General Assembly policies ensure that elected bodies represent the wealth of diverse gifts found in the church and provide a means to share responsibilities and decision-making. The General Assembly Nominating Committee provides for diversity and inclusiveness in the council's membership. The General Assembly Committee on Representation monitors their work as well as the appointment of committees and task forces by the council.

It is the policy of the General Assembly Council to use expansive language when referring to God and inclusive language when referring to God's people.

C. *Areas of Service:*

The General Assembly Council may change the names, number, and structure of GAC committees in order to carry out the goals and objectives of the Mission Work Plan using the process delineated in Appendix 13. The work of the General Assembly Council is carried out by elected members who may serve in the following areas:

- General Assembly Council Executive Committee
- Evangelism Mission Committee
- Justice Mission Committee
- Vocation Mission Committee
- Discipleship Mission Committee
- Stewardship Committee
- Audit Committee
- General Assembly Council Nominating Committee
- Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy
- Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns
- Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns
- Committee on the Office of the General Assembly
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation
- Presbyterian Publishing Corporation
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.
- Committee on Theological Education

### III. PC(USA) Constitutional Mandate and Role of the General Assembly Council

According to *Book of Order* G-13.0201, the General Assembly Council shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. To cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church.
- B. To provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities.
- C. To develop and propose for GA approval, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the GAC, doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for GA approval, an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the GAC.
- D. To act in those specific matters assigned to the General Assembly Council by the General Assembly or this Constitution, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions.



- E. To perform such additional responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the General Assembly.

The General Assembly Council, in consultation with appropriate individuals and groups, establishes such committees, task forces, and work groups as are necessary to conduct its business. Current committees are recorded in Appendix 1 of this manual.

The Executive Director reports to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee and the Council itself. The Executive Director shall provide direction, leadership, and coordination for the total mission program and shared services including review and evaluation.

#### IV. Citation of Major Documents

The following documents guide the work of the General Assembly Council and are maintained in offices engaged in work related to their subject matter. Unless appended, these documents are available on the General Assembly Council's Website ([www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac)), with printed copies available by request.

- A. *Mission Policy Guide*: Text of policies is available in the *Minutes* of prior General Assemblies. The guide is prepared by the General Assembly Council.
- B. *Churchwide Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Plan*: Approved by General Assembly. The plan is available from the GAC Office of Human Resources.
- C. "*Policies Regarding Public Statements by the Council*" approved by the General Assembly Council (Appendix 4).
- D. Current Mission Work Plan
- E. General Assembly Council Reorganization proposal [Governance Task Force report approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006)]. (Appendix 3)
- F. *Organization for Mission*.
- G. *Seeking to Be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement*.

#### V. General Assembly Council Staffing

- A. The GAC fulfils its work, in part through staff led by the Executive Director. The Executive Director carries out responsibilities with staff in the following ministries: Mission, Communications and Funds Development, Shared Services; and the Office of the Executive Director. For GAC staff organization refer to Appendix 2.
- B. Between meetings of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, upon recommendation of the Executive Director, is authorized to restructure the staff organization, always in alignment with the mission direction of the General Assembly. Any such organizational changes will be reported to the next General Assembly.

#### VI. Election and Confirmation of the GAC Executive Director

The Executive Director of the General Assembly Council shall be elected by the General Assembly Council to a four-year term subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. (See *Book of Order* G-9.0703.) Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly (*Organization for Mission*, Section V.G.).

#### *Rationale*

The *General Assembly Council Manual of Operations* has been revised to incorporate the new General Assembly Council Governance Structure as approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006).

#### Overview of Major Changes to the *GAC Manual of Operations*

- A. *Section II. Composition of Council*

Changed membership as indicated by the General Assembly approved GAC Governance Structure.

- Upon recommendation of the Executive Committee of the GAC, added eight additional corresponding members of the GAC. The heads of each agency and the chair or designee of each agency's board of directors were added for agency collaboration. This makes total membership for GAC 56 (39 voting members and 17 non-voting members [15 corresponding and 2 Ecumenical Advisory members]).

- Added #3. reflecting the role of GAC Committee at-large members as follows:

*The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates for General Assembly election 2 persons to serve on the Audit Committee and 2 persons to serve on the Stewardship Committee. These members are nominated from the church at-large for their special expertise in each of these areas. While they are not members of the General Assembly Council, they are granted privilege of the floor during General Assembly Council plenary sessions on matters related to their special expertise.*

B. *Section III. Constitutional Mandate and Role of the General Assembly Council*

The responsibilities were modified to reflect changes to the *Book of Order* approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and subsequently approved by the presbyteries.

C. *Section V. General Assembly Council Staffing*

Added a statement to permit restructure of the staff organization in alignment with the mission direction of the General Assembly with changes to be reported to the next General Assembly.

## Item 08-08

[The assembly approved Item 08-08. See pp. 22, 24.]

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the revised *Organization for Mission* as attached.**

### *Rationale*

The *Organization for Mission* has been revised to reflect the new General Assembly Council Governance Structure approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 636ff). Following is an overview of major changes.

- Overall Organization for Mission—Deleted all references to the old GAC division structure.
- I. History of Structure for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)—Added language to bring the history up-to-date with the new structure approved in 2006.
- II. Statement of Vision and Goals for Mission—Deleted the second paragraph and in its place, added the Mission Statement of the 2009–2012 GAC Mission Work Plan. Also, deleted the specific goals and added a statement, that “Goals give shape and direction to our mission as a denomination.
- V. The General Assembly Council, Narrative section—deleted references to congregational, national, and worldwide in the first paragraph. In the first bullet, changed the words “permeable boundaries between Ministries Divisions and among areas” to “coordination among the Ministries.” In the third bullet, deleted the word “priority” in front of “goals.”

The *Book of Order* quotation has been changed to reflect the changes approved by the General Assembly and presbyteries.

- V.F. Elected Leadership—Amended section F.1. to delete old structure language and replace with language for the new structure.

Replaced section F.2.Membership, F.3. Term of Service, and F.4. Officers, with a new F.2: “*The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council. (Book of Order, G.13.0202 Membership).*”

- V.G. Staff Leadership, 1. Executive Director—several changes here to change the term “Ministries Divisions” to “Ministries.”

- V.G. Staff Leadership, 2. Ministries Division Directors—Changed heading from “Ministries Division Directors” to “*Deputy Executive Directors*”; deleted most verbiage in this section and replaced it with new language, so that it reads:

*“Deputy Executive Directors are hired by the General Assembly Council Executive Director subject to confirmation by the General Assembly Council.*

*“Responsibilities—The Deputy Executive Directors are responsible for the healthy functioning of their Ministries in the fulfillment of their responsibilities, as well as for the support of the wider organizational health of the General Assembly Council and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*

*“For detailed staff organization, refer to the GAC Manual of Operations.”*

- VI. General Assembly Council and Its Ministries Divisions—This title has been changed to “General Assembly Council Relationships.” Most of section VI. has been deleted as it defined the old structure. The first two paragraphs in the narrative section referring to Ministries Divisions have been deleted.

General Assembly Council relationships to other committees are included here (1) Advocacy and Advisory Committees and (2) Committee on Theological Education.

Old structure descriptions for Mission Support Services, Congregational Ministries Division, National Ministries Division, Worldwide Ministries Division, Sections C. Planning and Budget Responsibilities, D. Personnel Responsibilities of the Ministries Divisions, have been deleted.

- VII. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation—This section has been updated with correct titles for Shared Services personnel.

- Appendix A—This appendix has been deleted and will have a new appendix inserted following the action of the General Assembly on the report of the Mission Funding Task Force.

- Appendices B–J—These appendices (regarding various agency deliverances and relationships) have been removed and a list of them have been provided with a reference to the GAC website.

## ORGANIZATION FOR MISSION

### Introduction

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love. (Eph. 4:11–16<sup>1</sup>)

The nature of Presbyterian order is such that it shares power and responsibility. The system of governing bodies, whether they have authority over one or many churches, sustains such mutual relationships within the structures as to express the unity of the church. (*Book of Order*, G-4.0302)

### I. History of the Structure for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The two denominations that came together in 1983 had similar ecclesiastical polity and theological beliefs. They were leaders in the ecumenical movement and in commitment to the unity of the church. Each had been faithful in ministering in Christ’s name. Each had been intentional in revising mission policy and program in response to the leading of the Holy Spirit and a changing world context. Within the previous two decades, each had a major reorganization of General Assembly agencies as it attempted to be more effective in mission.

These two denominations also had developed some differences in their styles, structures, and expectations of the various governing bodies. Though they were engaged in similar mission programs, the agency structures they formed did not easily fit together.

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<sup>1</sup>All Scripture references in this document are from the *New Revised Standard Version*.

The uniting General Assembly in 1983 directed that consultations be held to discern the church's understanding of mission before preparing a mission design. "Today Into Tomorrow: A Year of Consultations" was the process followed, and it challenged all parts of the church to examine their understanding of what God required of the church. The result of this process was the "Life and Mission Statement," which was adopted by the 197th General Assembly (1985).

The biblical image of the church as the body of Christ was a major theme in the "Life and Mission Statement" and provided the pattern for the church's life and work. This pattern was marked by interdependence and sensitivity to the needs, experiences, and gifts others brought; by honest communication and courage to risk, and by a global vision of both the church and the world. It called for working in partnerships characterized by enduring commitment, equality, humility, openness, sensitivity, flexibility, and love.

A number of basic principles were significant in the drafting of the *Structural Design for Mission*, which was approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986), and prescribed the organization for mission from 1986–93. These principles are based on the Reformed interpretation of Scripture represented in *The Book of Confessions*.

The year 1992–93 was devoted to the theme: "Discerning the Spirit, Envisioning Our Future." A convocation on this theme manifested a deep sense of the Spirit's stirring among us, creating an excitement and passion for the future ministry of the church. One theme was the resounding emphasis on the importance of the ministries of congregations as they are resources for mission. Another was the yearning for church wide organizational forms that are flexible and innovative, with the ability to let agreed-upon priorities lead our work and so restore confidence in our connectedness. The convocation contributed to a continuing process of discernment and envisioning that reflected a sense of the future mission direction of the denomination.

A new organizational structure for mission was approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993). Several of the specific elements of the new structure derive from the Report of the General Assembly Committee on Review, which reported to the 204th General Assembly (1992). A simpler design called for fewer ministry units and related bodies, fewer priority goals, and a balanced budget that reflects the mission priorities.

Beginning in the year 2002, the General Assembly Council (GAC) engaged in a Strategic Planning process including a comprehensive self-assessment. The self-assessment used instruments developed by BoardSource, Incorporated and a BoardSource consultant guided GAC in the process completed in January 2003.

The self-assessment revealed the need for GAC to be closer to congregations, presbyteries and synods and to find ways to better communicate with them. The self-assessment also indicated the large size of GAC was a concern and that GAC needed to look at its size and the relationship between GAC-elected and GAC-staff roles and relationships.

As a result of the learnings from the self-assessment, the GAC appointed a 2005–2006 Mission Work Plan Task Force. The 2005–2006 Mission Work Plan was approved by GAC in February 2004 and by the 216th General Assembly (2004). Following the 216th General Assembly (2004), the GAC turned its attention to a specific objective under the 2005–2006 Mission Work Plan's GAC Role/Identify Goal which was: "Evaluate, develop and propose a structure of the GAC (elected and national staff) that will strengthen connectedness with presbyteries and synods." (Refer to 2004 General Assembly *Minutes*, Item 07-03, General Assembly Council 2005–2006 Mission Work Plan, B.5.c.; p. 479.)

In the summer of 2004 the GAC appointed a Governance Task Force to carry out the objective above involving the structure of GAC. The Governance Task Force submitted a proposal for a new GAC-Elected Structure to the 2006 spring meeting of the GAC. The GAC elected structure was approved by the GAC and subsequently by the 217th General Assembly (2006). Following the 217th General Assembly (2006), the GAC appointed an Implementation Work Group to work with the GAC Executive Director to smoothly and efficiently transition the GAC into the new structure.

The new structure is reflected in the *General Assembly Council Manual of Operations* and throughout this document.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to working in partnership with other churches in this nation and around the world. Such a mutual ministry is consistent with the denomination's self-image as one part of the body of Christ, as a servant community willing to be poured out on behalf of all people.

The church's mission finds its center in the gospel of Jesus Christ and in witnessing to that gospel. Beneath the variety and complexity of its forms of witness, the church's mission is one—from the congregation to the General Assembly. To share fully in that mission is the task of every Presbyterian and every governing body. As the most inclusive governing body, the General Assembly represents the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Among its other responsibilities, the General Assembly has the power to set policies, objectives, and priori-

ties for mission, to provide the agencies appropriate for that mission, and to superintend their work (*Book of Order*, G-13.0103).

According to the *Book of Order* (G-13.0201), the General Assembly Council, as agent of the General Assembly, implements policies established by the General Assembly; coordinates the work of the divisions and other General Assembly agencies in light of General Assembly mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities; works in partnership with synods and presbyteries; and develops and proposes a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly. Members of the General Assembly Council are elected by the General Assembly and are representative of synods, presbyteries, and the church at large.

The General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, the synods, the presbyteries, and the sessions work together in partnership on behalf of the mission of the church. The *Organization for Mission* places emphasis on the congregation as an instrument of mission and on the governing bodies working together to provide resources and services to the congregations.

#### A. *The Unity of the Church*

The unity of the church, with Christ as the Head of the body, is a fundamental principle that affirms the church is called to demonstrate unity, both within a given denomination as well as ecumenically and internationally. Perhaps the strongest image of this unity is the apostolic vision of the body of Christ, in which the many members, though different, work together for mutual health and upbuilding. Recognition of the unity of the whole church carries with it a series of implications for the internal structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and for the denomination's ecumenical commitment.

Clear communication is needed among the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. These relationships and coordination of program, policy implementation, and support functions give visible expression to unity within the denomination.

While the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to be the church in and of itself, there is an important sense in which this denomination recognizes that it is one part of the church of Christ. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) undertakes its ministry with a full awareness of the global and ecumenical dimensions of Christ's call, and provides a means to share mutual mission, decision making, and resources with partner churches in this nation and around the world.

#### B. *Commitment to Mission*

The church, as the body of Christ, exists to share the love of Christ with the world. The *Book of Order* states the great ends of the church in terms of the call to mission through proclamation, nurture, worship, preservation of truth, promotion of social righteousness, and exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world (*Book of Order*, G-1.0200). The vitality of the life and mission of the congregation is central to the calling of the church as a whole. As has been noted, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to be the church, yet is itself a member of the worldwide body of Christ. Each congregation, too, is called to be the church of Jesus Christ in its own time and place. Furthermore, the responsibilities of the session include: "to lead the congregation in participation in the mission of the whole church in the world, in accordance with G-3.0000" (*Book of Order*, G-10.0102b).

#### C. *Diversity and Inclusiveness*

Within the denomination, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has affirmed the strength of a unity characterized by mutual interdependence in which diversity contributes to wholeness. Various members of this body enrich the whole through the particular qualities they bring

- as racial ethnic people of multicultural constituencies that make visible our rich diversity and offer varied histories and traditions;
- as persons with a variety of physical and mental abilities and disabilities;
- from diverse geographical areas and socio-economic backgrounds;
- as male and female of all ages;
- with a variety of theological perspectives within our Reformed tradition;
- with many differing gifts;
- with a long history and tradition within the Reformed family of churches.

Patterns are established to ensure that elected bodies represent the wealth of diverse gifts found in the church and to provide a means to share power and decision making. Similarly, churchwide personnel procedures promote equal employment opportunity.

#### D. *Tradition and Flexibility*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) professes a Reformed theology that is solidly grounded in Scripture as the rule of faith and practice. The *Book of Order* affirms: “The Protestant watchwords—grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone—embody principles of understanding which continue to guide and motivate the people of God in the life of faith” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0400). The church has also inherited and continues to affirm a Reformed polity that is representative in nature.

Openness to renewal by God entails a flexibility of structure and openness to growth and change. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the need for growth and is open to it under the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Reformed tradition’s awareness of the fallen nature of humanity and human institutions has led to the development of church government made up of a system of checks and balances. In recent years, these checks have included limited terms and rotation for elected officers, and plans to ensure fair representation of the diverse elements of the church on governing bodies.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shares with all Reformed churches a belief in the priesthood of all believers. For this reason, persons called to leadership positions in the denomination are envisioned by this organizational plan as enabling the whole church to do the work of mission.

#### E. *Partnership*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to develop a system of relationships among governing bodies functioning through collaboration rather than competition. Partnership is characterized by enduring commitment, equality, humility, openness, sensitivity, flexibility, and love. More than an end to be attained, partnership is a process or journey that can be undertaken only under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Consultation is highly valued as part of the process of decision making.

Each governing body is a primary agent in mission and has two foci:

- its appropriate role in assisting congregations and other governing bodies in the mission of the whole church; and
- the performance of its own mission as a governing body in consultation with other governing bodies.

#### F. *Personnel and Compensation*

The General Assembly has approved a personnel, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, and compensation system that is used by the General Assembly Council. This system provides guidance regarding overseas personnel, and for General Assembly level entities, synods, presbyteries, sessions, congregations, and church-related institutions in their employment practices. In order to develop consistency and equity across the whole church, these governing bodies and institutions are urged to approve and implement these policies with such adaptations as may be necessary.

#### G. *Additional Factors*

Additional factors to guide the structure and style of mission are:

- the need to affirm the centrality of the mission of congregations, and their need and desire for resources from General Assembly entities, as well as from presbyteries and synods;
- the need to recognize demographic realities that bear on the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);
- the need to be responsive to persons who identify themselves as Presbyterian without actually taking part in a particular congregation’s life and ministry;
- the need for styles that support and enable the momentum of movements rather than styles that create or lead to institutional inertia;
- the need to reverse the trend toward reducing the church’s function and style to that of a regulatory agency, creating instead a more responsive, less bureaucratic reality;

- the need to be more simple yet holistic;
- the need to build hope and trust within the denomination, while maintaining commitments to and safeguards for those historically ignored, excluded, or silenced; and
- the need for an evolutionary design that can be responsive to unfolding changes in the structure and work of the General Assembly, synods and presbyteries.

## **II. Statement of Vision and Priority Goals for Mission**

A statement of vision and goals that articulate the mission emphasis for the next phase of our life are identified.

### *A. Statement of Vision*

At the heart of our vision for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is its congregations, dedicated to Jesus Christ and scattered

- from rural Alabama to Sitka, Alaska;
- from suburban Pittsburgh to South-Central Los Angeles;
- from the bustling city of San Juan, Puerto Rico, to the small towns of the upper peninsula of Michigan;
- from congregations with a handful of members and those where thousands gather.

Called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian church (U.S.A.) offers the world a viable witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With congregations, governing bodies, and other mission partners, we serve the church in mission.

### *B. Goals*

Goals give shape and direction to our mission as a denomination and are reflected in the *GAC Manual of Operations* and can be found in the current Mission Work Plan ([www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac) )

### *C. How Our Vision Unfolds*

Embedded in our understanding of what it means to be Presbyterian is the conviction that the church is always being reformed under the judgment of God's reign. Our vision includes congregations and governing bodies so aware of belonging to God in Jesus Christ that each day and each challenge are received as gifts from our Lord, who is the same yesterday and today and forever. In life and in death, we belong to God. Therefore, we look to the future with hope and confidence.

## **III. Mission of the General Assembly**

*(Book of Order, G-13.0103)*

The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and governing bodies. It therefore has the responsibility and power

- a. to set priorities for the work of the church in keeping with the church's mission under Christ as described in G-3.0000;
- b. to develop overall objectives for mission and a comprehensive strategy to guide the church at every level of its life;
- c. to provide the essential program functions that are appropriate for overall balance and diversity within the mission of the church;
- d. to establish and administer national and worldwide ministries of witness, service, growth, and development;
- e. to provide a system of administrative services to fulfill its objectives and program;
- f. to provide services for the whole church that can be performed more effectively from a national base;

- g. to establish and maintain an office of the General Assembly;
- h. to establish and superintend the agencies and task forces necessary for its work, including a General Assembly Council, providing for the regular review of the functional relationship between the General Assembly's structure and its mission;
- i. to adopt the comprehensive budget of the General Assembly, providing full information to the whole church of its decision in such matters;
- j. to provide for communication within the church;
- k. to oversee the work of the synods and to facilitate their participation in the mission of the church;
- l. to review the records of the synods and to take care that they observe the Constitution of the church;
- m. to organize new synods and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine synods or portions of synods previously existing;
- n. to approve the organization, division, uniting, or combining of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries by synods;
- o. to serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline;
- p. to warn or bear witness against error in doctrine or immorality in practice in or outside the church;
- q. to decide controversies brought before it and to give advice and instruction in cases submitted to it, in conformity with the Constitution;
- r. to provide authoritative interpretation of the *Book of Order* which shall be binding on the governing bodies of the church when rendered in accord with G-13.0112 or through a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission in a remedial or disciplinary case. The most recent interpretation of a provision of the *Book of Order* shall be binding;
- s. to establish and maintain those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church;
- t. to correspond with other churches;
- u. to receive under its jurisdiction, with the consent of two thirds of the presbyteries, other ecclesiastical bodies whose life is consistent with the faith and order of this church;
- v. to authorize synods to exercise similar power in receiving ecclesiastical bodies suited to become constituents of those governing bodies and lying within their geographic bounds;
- w. to unite with other churches in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Constitution (G-15.0300)

Furthermore, the General Assembly is responsible to review the work of the Office of the General Assembly in consultation with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### **IV. General Assembly Officers and Committees and the Office of the General Assembly**

##### *A. Moderator of the General Assembly*

The Moderator of the General Assembly is an ecclesiastical officer, along with the Stated Clerk, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The ministry of the Moderator is grounded in the ministry of baptized persons and in the particular ordained ministry of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

1. The title of the Moderator is "The Moderator of the (number) General Assembly (year) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)."

2. The Moderator of the General Assembly is a commissioner of the General Assembly. When the Moderator presides at the assembly, it is to be a sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church. During the period between assemblies, the Moderator serves as an ambassador of the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, telling the story of the church's life and upholding the people of God through prayer.



When the Moderator travels throughout the church, it is for the purpose of strengthening the mission of congregations and governing bodies, encouraging officers and members, and their work. The Moderator listens for the joys and concerns of the church and ascertains the needs of the world and the gifts of the church's mission program.

When the Moderator serves as an ecumenical representative, s/he expresses the concern of Reformed churches for the visible unity of Christ's body and fuller communion among churches.

When the Moderator visits national and international mission sites, s/he encourages mission personnel, brings the prayerful concern of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to sister churches, and helps to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the world.

When the Moderator addresses the church and the society, s/he speaks pastorally and prophetically from within the standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), preserving the rights and responsibilities outlined in G-6.0108.

a. The Moderator shall preside over the General Assembly that elects him or her, and over the meetings of the next General Assembly until a successor is elected. "The Moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the governing body" (*Book of Order*, G-9.0202).

b. The Moderator of the General Assembly is a voting member of the General Assembly Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. The Moderator of the General Assembly may attend and participate without vote in the meetings of all other entities of the General Assembly.

c. The Moderator shall be the official representative of the church at gatherings and functions, both civic and ecclesiastical, at which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is invited or expected to be represented, unless otherwise provided by the General Assembly. In the event that the Moderator is unable to attend, the Vice Moderator, or some other person designated by the Moderator in consultation with the Stated Clerk, may represent the church.

d. The Moderator and the Vice Moderator shall submit a written report of their work to the session of the General Assembly at which their successors are installed.

### 3. *Enabling the Moderator and Vice Moderator to Serve*

a. It is incumbent upon the church to understand, respect, and remain accountable for the balance of the stewardship of time between the ministry of the Moderator and Vice Moderator and the larger vocation of the ones serving in these roles. That balance includes a commitment to respect the need for Sabbath by the Moderator and Vice Moderator of the General Assembly.

The church should expect the Moderator to ordinarily spend no more than half of her/his work time responding to invitations in attending meetings of General Assembly entities, in participating in other opportunities, and attending to constitutional functions. In assisting the Moderator in these activities, the church should expect the Vice Moderator to ordinarily spend no more than a third of her/his work time.

b. The Moderator, the Vice Moderator, and the Office of the General Assembly shall jointly develop a comprehensive plan for their travel based upon the mission of the church and the needs of agencies, governing bodies, institutions, ecumenical partners, and other constituencies.

Each synod, in consultation with its presbyteries, will be invited to develop a plan for itineration of the Moderator or Vice Moderator. Ordinarily, a single invitation for a visit within a presbytery will be accepted during each term.

c. The Stated Clerk shall request the congregation or employer of the Moderator and Vice Moderator to grant a leave of absence for time appropriate to their commitments to permit the Moderator and Vice Moderator to fulfill the functions of their offices.

No later than three months following the election, the Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Moderator and Vice Moderator and representatives of the congregation or employer they serve, shall conduct an appropriate service of dedication and covenant between these leaders and their faith and/or vocational community, recognizing the unique demands and responsibilities placed upon these officers.

d. To prevent financial sacrifice to these leaders personally, or undue adverse effect upon the work in which they are engaged, the Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Moderator and Vice Moderator, shall propose appropriate financial arrangements to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

e. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall budget for the official travel of the Moderator and Vice Moderator and their spouses, and other expenses incurred in the performance of official duties.

f. An office for the use of the Moderator and Vice Moderator shall be provided within the office suite of the Office of the General Assembly.

#### 4. *Vice Moderator*

a. The Vice Moderator represents the assembly at the request of the Moderator. When the Vice Moderator serves in this capacity, all those duties incumbent on the Moderator shall be expected of him/her.

b. The Vice Moderator shall serve as a corresponding member without vote on the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council.

c. Should there be a Moderator's Conference, the Vice Moderator participates with the Moderator in planning the Moderator's Conference.

d. The Vice Moderator is expected to itinerate at the request of the Moderator.

e. The Vice Moderator shall consult with the Moderator and the Office of the General Assembly about the special emphasis for the Vice Moderator's itineration.

f. The Moderator may request the Vice Moderator to preside and to assist in the performance of other functions of the Moderator during and following the General Assembly.

#### 5. *Regular Reporting: Accountability of the Moderator and Vice Moderator*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) shall assist the General Assembly in ensuring the accountability of the Moderator and Vice Moderator of the General Assembly by receiving and reviewing, at each of their stated meetings, a written report from the Moderator and Vice Moderator.

#### B. *Stated Clerk of the General Assembly*

1. The title of the Stated Clerk is "The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);" and may be used by the incumbent until a successor is elected and takes office.

#### 2. *Functions of the Stated Clerk* [For functions related to General Assembly meetings, see Standing Rule H.2.]

a. The Stated Clerk shall conduct the general correspondence of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In this connection, all items of correspondence directed to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or to the General Assembly, shall be routed to the Stated Clerk.

b. As an officer of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall preserve and defend the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and support the decisions, actions, and programs of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall give advisory opinions concerning the meaning of the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and shall give advisory opinions on the meaning of the actions of the General Assembly. When the Stated Clerk deems it necessary, after consulting with appropriate persons or bodies, the Stated Clerk may retain legal counsel and institute or participate in legal proceedings in civil and criminal courts.

c. The Stated Clerk shall publish the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and other materials as may be necessary to help the church understand and be guided by the Constitution. The Stated Clerk shall prepare editorial changes in the *Book of Order*, which should be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, provided the changes do not alter the substance of the text approved by vote of the presbyteries. The Stated Clerk shall be a member ex officio of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, without vote.

d. On receipt of the certified record and final decision in a case of judicial process from the clerk of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall report the decision to the General Assembly if it is in session, or to its first session thereafter if it is not. When a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission contains an order directed to another governing body, the Stated Clerk shall obtain from the governing body a statement of its compliance and make a full report to the next General Assembly.

e. The Stated Clerk shall provide staff services to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and any other committees established to draft, consider, or amend *The Book of Confessions* or any of the documents it includes.

f. As the continuing ecclesial officer of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall be a member of each committee that may be established to undertake discussion regarding organic union with another church or churches.

g. The Stated Clerk is the permanent ecumenical representative of the General Assembly and shall be a member of each delegation representing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ecumenical or interchurch bodies or General Assembly Councils, and in faith and order bodies, including bilateral conversations and dialogues.

h. The Stated Clerk shall be a corresponding member of the General Assembly Council, and a nonvoting member of its Worldwide Ministries Division. He or she shall be a member of any other body responsible for coordinating, formulating, or implementing the ecumenical and interfaith policies and programs of the General Assembly.

i. The Stated Clerk is the chief executive officer of the Office of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall have available personnel to assist in performing the assigned functions.

j. The Stated Clerk, with the concurrence of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, may nominate to the General Assembly one or more persons to serve as Associate Stated Clerks of the assembly (Standing Rule H.2.d.).

k. The Stated Clerk, after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, may appoint one or more Assistant Stated Clerks. The term of the appointment shall be four years, subject to reappointment by the Stated Clerk, after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

l. The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, for its action and recommendation to the General Assembly, a proposed budget. This budget shall provide for the funding of the sessions of the General Assembly, the Office of the General Assembly and all bodies related to it, the funding of the participation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ecumenical bodies, and other expenses deemed necessary.

m. The Stated Clerk is responsible for maintaining the archives and records management facilities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), for the supervision of an agency for the preservation of the history of American Presbyterianism, and for the promotion of the study of Presbyterian history. The Stated Clerk shall assure the implementation of a records management program.

n. The Stated Clerk shall promote the harmony and efficiency of the General Assembly and its agencies in cooperation with the General Assembly Council and its Executive Director, with special attention to relationships between General Assembly entities, and with synods, presbyteries, and sessions. The Stated Clerk shall have membership on or relationship to appropriate committees, commissions, and agencies of the General Assembly as it shall determine from time to time.

o. The Stated Clerk shall receive all resignations from service on General Assembly entities and shall declare the positions vacant in accordance with Paragraph IV.C.1. below entitled "Serving on Assembly Entities."

### 3. *The Office of the General Assembly*

a. The Stated Clerk shall employ and supervise the personnel necessary to do the work of the Office of the General Assembly, and provide oversight of the personnel of all bodies related to the Office of the General Assembly who shall be accountable to the Stated Clerk unless other provisions have been made. Staff vacancies within the Office of the General Assembly (other than the appointment of Assistant Stated Clerks) may be filled by the appropriate supervisor (with the concurrence of the Stated Clerk).

b. All equal employment opportunity and other uniform policies relating to employment and compensation of the personnel of General Assembly agencies shall apply also to personnel of the Office of the General Assembly and all bodies related thereto. All personnel appointments shall be in accordance with the personnel policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the requirements of *Book of Order*, G-9.0104.

c. The Stated Clerk may designate a member of the staff of the Stated Clerk to be the budget officer of the Office of the General Assembly.

The following will be related to the Office of the General Assembly for staffing and budgeting purposes: Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, Permanent Judicial Commission, Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Committee on Representation, Advisory Committee on the Constitution, Advisory Committee on Litigation, General Assembly Nominating Committee, Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates, and commissions and special committees of the General Assembly (see Standing Rule K.I.).

d. All income received by the Office of the General Assembly from sales, bequests, gifts, or from any other source, shall be transmitted to the treasurer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation. These funds shall be separately accounted for by the treasurer. All payments related to the Office of the General Assembly shall be made by the treasurer upon the receipt of regular vouchered requests, or other adequate documentation, bearing the authorization of the Stated Clerk or a person designated by the Stated Clerk.

e. The Department of History in the Office of the General Assembly shall be under the direction of a person appointed by the Stated Clerk. The general administration of the Department of History shall be carried out from Philadelphia, which will be the location of the office of the director of the department. The director, with the concurrence of the Stated Clerk, shall determine which functions shall be carried out in Philadelphia and in the department's study center in Montreat, North Carolina. All restricted and other funds contributed to the endowment of the former Department of History of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. or the former Historical Foundations of the Presbyterian Church in the United States are held by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Foundation, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation. Funds secured after 1983 resulting from development efforts are also placed in accounts with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Foundation, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation. Funds originally designated for the maintenance of the archival facility at Montreat and the records and memorabilia contained therein will continue to be used for that facility alone. Should that archival function cease at the Montreat facility, all restricted and other funds contributed for that purpose will be held by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Foundation, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, and used for the support of the archival facility and program of the Office of the General Assembly by the Department of History.

### C. *Committees of the General Assembly*

#### 1. *Serving on Assembly Entities*

a. Each person nominated shall be an active member of a congregation, or a continuing member of a presbytery, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the exception of nominees for election to the National Committee on the Fund for the Self-Development of People and the Women Employed by the Church Committee.

b. A person may serve as a member-at-large of only one General Assembly entity at a time. Ordinarily, no more than one member-at-large from any one presbytery may serve on the same General Assembly entity at the same time. Members serving by virtue of office, or elected to membership on a second entity to fulfill the requirements of the *Organization for Mission* or other General Assembly actions, are not affected by this provision.

c. Persons nominated for election by the General Assembly shall ordinarily be eligible to serve a four-year term, and be eligible for election to one additional term. No person may serve more than two terms, full or partial. After serving as a member of a General Assembly entity for two terms, full or partial, a person shall not be eligible for nomination or renomination to a General Assembly entity until two years have elapsed.

d. Consideration shall be given to the full requirements of full participation expressed in *Book of Order*, G-4.0403, in considering nomination and election to entity service, and also to the nomination of one-third ministers of the Word and Sacrament, one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen (see *Book of Order*, G-9.0801b).

e. A member of a General Assembly entity who finds it necessary to resign shall send his or her resignation to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, who shall notify the entity and the nominating committee or other body that originated the person's nomination or election. When any member of an entity of the General Assembly (council, commission, unit, division, committee, task force, or any other body) shall resign, or becomes unable to serve because of chronic or permanent physical or mental illness or disability, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall declare the position vacant.

f. When any member of the board of an entity of the General Assembly, a council, commission, unit, division, committee, task force, or any other body authorized by the General Assembly does not attend two successive sessions of that body and such absence is unexcused, the membership of that person shall be automatically vacated, and that person shall be notified by the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be notified of the vacancy by the chairperson of the entity, and the Stated Clerk shall announce the vacancy and shall notify the General Assembly Nominating Committee or other body that originated the nomination or election of the person who has been absent without excuse, in order that the vacancy may be filled in the manner by which the same position had been filled originally.

g. If a minister of the Word and Sacrament serving as a member of a General Assembly entity representing a synod or presbytery shall transfer his or her presbytery membership and thereby cease to be under the jurisdiction of the presbytery or synod that nominated her or him to serve on the assembly entity, the position shall be declared vacant by the Stated Clerk. If a member of a particular church serving as a member of a General Assembly entity representing a presbytery or synod shall transfer her or his membership to a particular church that is not under jurisdiction of the presbytery or synod that nominated him or her, the position shall be declared vacant by the Stated Clerk.

h. The Stated Clerk shall also notify appropriate entities and governing bodies upon being advised of the death of any person holding membership on an assembly entity or who is unable to serve for any other reason. The Stated Clerk shall also declare vacant a position on any such entity held by a minister of the Word and Sacrament who ceases to be a minister member of a presbytery of this denomination, or a position held by a member of a particular church who ceases to be a member of a congregation of this denomination.

All such vacancies shall be filled by the same process under which the former incumbent was elected. If a vacancy shall occur during the first term of service of an incumbent, then the original source of the nomination shall propose a nominee for election to complete the unexpired term, and such nominee shall be eligible for renomination and election to an additional full term. If a vacancy shall occur during the second term of service of an incumbent, and the position vacated is one designated for a representative of a presbytery or synod, then the privilege of proposing a nominee for the unexpired term shall pass to the next appropriate presbytery or synod under any rotation system that may be in use, and the nominee so proposed shall be eligible for nomination and reelection to an additional full term. Any vacancy in a position for which the General Assembly Nominating Committee makes nominations may be filled until the next succeeding General Assembly by appointment of the Moderator of the General Assembly upon advice by the nominating committee that the committee has decided to present the name of the appointee to the next session of the General Assembly as its nominee for the position.

## 2. *Committee on the Office of the General Assembly*

a. The General Assembly shall elect a Committee on the Office of the General Assembly composed of fifteen persons. This committee shall be empowered to carry out the assembly's oversight of the Stated Clerk and the Office of the General Assembly; to assure the accountability of the Stated Clerk to the General Assembly during the interim between sessions of the assembly; and to provide linkage with the General Assembly Council. The members of the committee shall serve a four-year term, and be eligible for election to one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial.

The Moderator of the General Assembly will serve as a member of the committee with vote during his or her moderatorial service. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, and the vice chair of the General Assembly Council will serve as corresponding members of the committee without vote.

b. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall elect its own officers and determine its structure, including any subcommittees (see Standing Rule I.4.a. for exception).

c. The committee shall be funded from the per capita apportionment and its financial activity shall be reported through a separate line in the General Assembly Commission and Committee Schedule. The proposed budgets of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be submitted to the General Assembly.

d. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall have the responsibility to do the following:

(1) Assist the General Assembly in assuring the accountability of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and of the Office of the General Assembly by reporting to each session of the General Assembly, including a report or summary of any evaluation of the work of the Stated Clerk and of the Office of the General Assembly that has been completed since the last session of the assembly.

(2) Review annually the work of the Stated Clerk and be responsible for an end-of-term evaluation (see Standing Rule H.2.b.(3)(f)) or exit interview.

(3) Review the budget requests submitted by the Stated Clerk for that portion of the per capita budget administered by the Stated Clerk, and to forward the requests to Mission Support Services with the comments of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will also be responsible for approving proposed changes in the staffing design of the Office of the General Assembly presented by the Stated Clerk.

(4) Consult with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly regarding any proposals to the General Assembly concerning persons being recommended for election to the office of Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, and any proposals concerning the appointment of persons to the office of Assistant Stated Clerk (see Standing Rule H.2.d.).

(5) Meet annually with the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Council to discuss items of concern and common interest.

(6) Be available to the Stated Clerk for consultation on all proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of the General Assembly and that such consultation shall occur prior to the Stated Clerk proposing any amendments to the Standing Rules of the General Assembly (see Standing Rule L.1.).

(7) Review the work of special committees and report to each session of the General Assembly a summary of the work being carried out by special committees, including recommendations to transfer the work assigned to a special committee elsewhere or to dismiss the committee (see Standing Rule K.1.e.).

(8) Review the evaluation of each General Assembly session secured by the Stated Clerk.

(9) Outline the programs for future General Assemblies sufficiently in advance to ensure an orderly progression of themes and emphases and to ensure the appointment of significant speakers and other program participants.

(10) Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk's proposed docket for the next session of the General Assembly (see Standing Rule C.4.a.).

(11) Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk's proposed referral of each item of business to an appropriate assembly committee (see Standing Rule C.3.).

(12) Assist the Moderator regarding the appointment of a commissioner to be the moderator of each assembly committee and a commissioner to serve as vice moderator of each assembly committee (see Standing Rule C.1.c.).

(13) Consult with the Moderator regarding the planning of all worship at the General Assembly (see Standing Rule G.a.).

(14) Coordinate the programmatic aspects of each General Assembly session, ensuring that adequate time is provided for the business that must be transacted.

(15) Review requests from entities of the General Assembly, governing bodies, other entities related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any way, or coalitions in which this denomination or any of its entities participate to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings, or other events of any kind during those hours when the General Assembly or its committees are in session.

(16) Prepare a report, including recommendations on the docket and the referral of assembly business, to be printed and distributed with other materials provided to commissioners.

(17) Review and present to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of meeting six years hence and any changes in dates and places of meetings previously set (see Standing Rule I.1.a.).

(18) Review the recommendation of the Stated Clerk and set the amount of per diem for sessions of the General Assembly (see Standing Rule I.3.).

### 3. *Advisory Committee on the Constitution*

a. The members of this committee shall be composed as provided for in *Book of Order*, G-13.0112a.

b. Except as otherwise specified in the *Book of Order*, the committee shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly and receive staff services as provided by the Stated Clerk.

### 4. *Advisory Committee on Litigation*

a. The Advisory Committee on Litigation shall advise the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly in connection with instituting or participating in legal proceedings (see Functions of the Stated Clerk earlier in this section).

b. The members of the committee shall ordinarily be attorneys, and the members shall be experienced in fields related to issues that may be the subject of legal proceedings in which the church is, or may become, interested. The committee shall be composed of six persons, elected by the General Assembly upon nomination by the General Assembly Nominating Committee. The advisory committee may invite other persons with special competency related to particular cases or situations to participate in the consideration of particular cases or issues. The members shall be evenly divided into three classes, shall serve six-year terms, and shall be eligible for election to one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial. Members of this committee are exempted from the prohibition against service on more than one entity of the assembly set forth in Section M.3.a.(3) above.

c. The committee shall elect its own moderator and ordinarily shall meet at the call of the Stated Clerk. The committee may carry on its work by correspondence, telephone consultation (including conference telephone calls), or meetings.

d. The committee shall advise the Stated Clerk regarding participation in litigation related to matters of civil and religious liberty, relations between church and state, and any other matters related to the mission and interest of the church. The Advisory Committee on Litigation shall advise the Stated Clerk regarding the establishment and maintenance of a resource file of legal documents as a means of assisting the governing bodies and agencies of the church in initiating or participating in litigation in the areas within the concerns of the committee.

e. The committee shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly, receive staff services as provided by the Stated Clerk, and designate a representative to the annual session of the General Assembly (see Standing Rule B.3.).

f. The committee shall report to each session of the General Assembly.

#### 5. *General Assembly Nominating Committee*

The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall be composed as provided for in *Book of Order*, G-13.0111.

#### 6. *Board of Directors for the Presbyterian Historical Society*

a. The board of directors exists to assure that the mission of the Presbyterian Historical Society—to collect, preserve, and share our history—is achieved in the most effective and efficient manner, in faithfulness to God’s call and in support of the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

b. The board of directors shall be composed of a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve persons. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall elect and the General Assembly shall confirm the board. The members of the board of directors shall serve a four-year term and shall be eligible to serve one additional full or partial term.

c. The budget for the Presbyterian Historical Society shall be submitted as part of the Office of the General Assembly’s regular budget process.

d. The responsibilities of the board of directors shall include:

(1) Establishing the strategic direction for the Presbyterian Historical Society with the concurrence of the Stated Clerk.

(2) Providing oversight of and accountability for the Presbyterian Historical Society to the church at large.

(3) Ensuring the financial stability of the Presbyterian Historical Society.

(4) Advocating for and promoting the work of the Presbyterian Historical Society.

#### 7. *Committee on Ecumenical Relations*

a. The Committee on Ecumenical Relations shall function to give a high profile to the vision of the ecumenical involvement and work as central to the gospel and key to the life of the church; plan and coordinate, in consultation with the agencies and governing bodies of the church, the involvement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ecumenical relations and work; connect the ecumenical efforts of all governing body levels of the church; provide a common point for all ecumenical efforts connecting us with those outside our church; keep a unity of vision that includes the ecclesiastical, programmatic, ecumenical, and denominational (organizational) parts of our ministries and commitments; articulate the Reformed and Presbyterian identity in the midst of our ecumenical commitments; and promote awareness of the role of the unity of all humankind in the search for the unity of the church; and promote the unity of the church as an exhibition of the kingdom to the world.

b. The Committee on Ecumenical Relations shall be composed of twenty members. Twelve shall be members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) nominated for at-large positions by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) and elected by the General Assembly in as nearly equal classes as possible. Four shall be members of four churches invited by the Stated Clerk to appoint one member each from their communion to serve as voting members of the committee. One of the four churches shall be one of our ecumenical church partners. The other three shall be our full communion partners. One member shall be appointed by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. One member shall be appointed by the General Assembly Council. The other members of the committee shall be the Stated Clerk or the Associate Stated Clerk for

Ecumenical Relations and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council or the Associate Director of Ecumenical Partnerships of the Worldwide Ministries Division, both serving ex officio with vote.

In addition, the directors of the three divisions of the General Assembly Council shall be corresponding members without vote.

c. Elected members of the committee shall be elected to a four-year term, and be eligible for election to one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial. Appointed members from ecumenical church partners shall serve for four years and be eligible for appointment to one additional term.

d. The Committee on Ecumenical Relations will meet twice annually and shall have the responsibility to do the following:

(1) Envision, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) leads and participates in the search for the unity of Christ's Church within this nation and worldwide, and propose appropriate strategies to the General Assembly, its agencies, and other governing bodies;

(2) Provide oversight to the implementation of the responsibilities given to the General Assembly in *Book of Order*, Form of Government, Chapter XV. Relationships, G-15.0000-.0302;

(3) Act on and process recommendations and proposals addressing ecclesiastical ecumenical work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

(4) Propose to the General Assembly, for election, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) members to serve on ecumenical delegations to the National Council of Churches of Christ (USA), the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and the Caribbean and North American Area Council assemblies;

(5) Represent the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in negotiation and coordination of the search for Christian unity with other communions as authorized by the General Assembly;

(6) Select Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) representatives to serve on ecumenical dialogues, ecumenical negotiations on church unions, multilateral and bilateral dialogues, and representatives from the PC(USA) serving as PC(USA) ecumenical representatives to other church assemblies;

(7) Oversee the implementation of "A Formula of Agreement" (Full Communion) with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Churches of Christ, and represent the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in planning and coordinating structures to carry this out;

(8) Give guidance to the nurturing of unity among Presbyterian and Reformed churches in the U.S.A., with one another and with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

(9) Empower all agencies of the General Assembly and governing bodies to carry out their mission program with an ecumenical consciousness and in close coordination with one another and to model this consciousness in their own work;

(10) Propose and advocate to appropriate bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that they share in funding ecumenical and conciliar ministry;

(11) Propose to the General Assembly names of churches to be invited to send ecumenical advisory delegates to the General Assembly meeting (see Standing Rule B.2.g.);

(12) Give guidance to the Stated Clerk and General Assembly agencies on ecclesial (church-to-church) ecumenical relations, helping to carry out the General Assembly's G-13.0103s and t responsibilities;

(13) Give guidance to General Assembly agencies on new opportunities to strengthen the relationships with other faith communities and on strategies for fulfilling the General Assembly mandates on interfaith relationships;

(14) Give guidance to the Mission Agency on ecumenical mission opportunities in partnership with churches in the United States and around the world; and

(15) Give guidance to program entities on ecumenical formation of Presbyterians, both ministers and lay members.



e. The committee shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly. The co-chairs of the Ecumenical Staff Team will have primary staffing responsibilities. The Ecumenical Staff Team shall be a staff resource to the committee.

#### D. *Review of Agencies and Committees*

1. Based on a six-year schedule, the agencies of the General Assembly will be reviewed to evaluate the relationship of their individual ministry with the mission of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). On nomination of the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the General Assembly will elect two committees, each to review the work of one of the agencies of the General Assembly. Each committee will be composed of twelve members: four commissioners from the previous three General Assemblies, four who have served on the board of a General Assembly entity other than the one being reviewed, and four at large. The at-large members may include ecumenical partners. The committee will use the Standards for Review of General Assembly Agencies in the Guidelines and Policies of the General Assembly. The committee will report to the next General Assembly following its election the results of the review and make recommendations based on its findings.

2. The permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees and commissions of the General Assembly will be reviewed to evaluate their processes to fulfill the mandates given to them by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The General Assembly will review the work of the permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees and commissions based on a six-year schedule. A committee at the General Assembly will be assigned the review. The assembly committee will use the Standards for Review of General Assembly Permanent, Advocacy, and Advisory Committees and Commissions in the Guidelines and Policies of the General Assembly. The assembly committee will report to the General Assembly the results of the review and make recommendations based on its findings.

E. Proposed amendments to this Section IV of the Organization for Mission from related bodies or from within the Office of the General Assembly, shall be submitted to the Committee on the General Assembly (COGA). The COGA shall review these proposed changes and forward those it approves as part of its report to the General Assembly.

### V. The General Assembly Council

The General Assembly Council shall advise and respond to the General Assembly on priorities, programs, and strategies for addressing matters of concern for the Ministries of our church. The primary purpose of the General Assembly Council is to lead and coordinate the total mission program. It will cultivate a style of work that emphasizes

- coordination among ministries;
- flexible deployment of resources to match changing needs;
- allocation of funding to reflect stated goals;
- concluding as well as initiating programs;
- attention to the needs and gifts of congregations;
- effective relationships with all governing bodies; and
- holding the vision described without reverting to old patterns.

According to the *Book of Order*, G-13.0201, the General Assembly Council is the body of the General Assembly in which are lodged the following responsibilities:

- a. to cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church;
- b. to provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities;
- c. to develop and propose, for General Assembly approval, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the General Assembly Council; doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for General Assembly approval an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the General Assembly Council;
- d. to act in those specific matters assigned to the General Assembly Council by the General Assembly or this Constitution, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions;

e. to perform such additional responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the General Assembly. (*Book of Order*, G-13.0201)

#### A. *Policy Responsibility*

The General Assembly Council may recommend churchwide policies to the General Assembly and is responsible for implementing policies established by the General Assembly and for establishing overall procedures for the General Assembly Council, and its Ministries.

#### B. *Planning and Priority Setting*

The General Assembly Council is responsible for carrying out planning and priority-setting processes. The General Assembly Council is responsible for instituting ongoing review processes.

#### C. *General Assembly Budget*

It is the responsibility of the General Assembly Council to recommend to the General Assembly a General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and a Per Capita Budget. The General Assembly Council develops the Mission Budget. The General Assembly Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly jointly have responsibility for developing a per capita budget and apportionment.

All restricted and unrestricted funds (principal or income) that support the programs or functions for which the General Assembly Council is responsible are allocated by the General Assembly Council and distributed in accordance with procedures approved by the General Assembly Council. In every case the instructions of the donors are carefully followed. Such resources presently include contributions from individuals, congregations, and related organizations; proceeds from wills and bequests; and sales of property and other assets. All funds administered by the Board of Pensions, including dues and earnings on investments, are specifically excluded.<sup>2</sup>

#### D. *Personnel Responsibilities*

Regarding the General Assembly Council staff, the General Assembly Council is responsible for the following:

1. Approval of personnel procedures.
2. Approval, annually, of a staff rationale that determines staff commitments for the year. Any staff deployed regionally must be approved as part of the annual staff rationale.
3. Election of the Executive Director subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.
4. Annual performance reviews of the Executive Director as specified in the *General Assembly Council Manual of Operations* (Appendix 10), and in concurrence with the General Assembly Council personnel policies.
5. Approval and monitoring of the “Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.”
6. Approval of compensation guidelines within which salaries are administered.

Members of the General Assembly Council are not eligible for election or selection as staff during the period of their term of service.

#### E. *Reporting*

The General Assembly Council is responsible for submitting a report to the General Assembly. The Ministries will report regularly to the General Assembly Council, keeping the General Assembly Council fully informed about the work. Recommendations from Ministries, including matters that involve an exception or a proposed change in General Assembly Council procedures, a major shift in program emphasis, or a major budget adjustment, require action by the General Assembly Council. Issues of social witness policy, advocacy for racial ethnic and women’s concerns, and those related to Presbyterian theological institutions are reported to the General Assembly Council and General Assembly.

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<sup>2</sup>See Appendix A of this document for additional procedures related to budgets and funding.

## F. *Elected Leadership*

### 1. *Organization of the General Assembly Council*

Direction and oversight of General Assembly Council entities deploys a majority of General Assembly Council members as members of Mission Committees and Audit Committee. The work of the Ministries is a direct expression of the planning and mission understanding of the General Assembly Council, which is accountable to the General Assembly in this regard. The number and makeup of the committees and assignments are adjustable to accomplish the work of the General Assembly Council in its mission and to allow flexibility to meet changing emphases in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission. The Mission Committees are to be policy, strategy, and planning committees.

Each Ministry evaluates its need for area program committees. The General Assembly Council determines how many are to be established, specifying the expertise and/or experience needed, the terms of service for members, and the duration of the committees' existence.

The General Assembly Council ensures advocacy functions for women and racial ethnic persons, and advisory functions for social witness policy by providing direct access to the General Assembly Council and General Assembly. The General Assembly Council also provides for the development of social witness policy.

The General Assembly Council ensures the continuation of a committee that includes representatives of each Presbyterian theological institution, and that will review the effectiveness and stewardship of the schools on behalf of the church, will exercise the governance responsibilities of the church to the schools, and will encourage and enhance cooperation among the church's theological schools. The committee will be provided direct access to the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly.

The principal legal corporation is the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, which receives, holds, and transfers property, and facilitates the management of the church's corporate affairs. All voting members of the General Assembly Council serve as members of the board of directors of this corporation.

### 2. *Membership of the General Assembly Council*

The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council (*Book of Order*, G.13.0202 Membership).

## G. *Staff Leadership*

### 1. *Executive Director*

**Election and Review**—The Executive Director of the General Assembly Council is elected by the General Assembly Council, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The Executive Director is accountable to the General Assembly Council. Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly following election. Should the General Assembly refuse to confirm any Executive Director, the position becomes vacant immediately. Periodic in-depth reviews of the Executive Director are the responsibility of the General Assembly Council. The Executive Director is elected for a term of four years and may be reelected for additional terms. Initial four-year terms start on the date that work commences following election. Subsequent four-year terms commence on the day following expiration of the prior term. The Executive Director may be dismissed by the General Assembly Council in conformity with current personnel policies and procedures.

**Responsibilities**—The responsibilities of the Executive Director include:

- a. enabling the General Assembly Council, in response to mission directions and policies set by the General Assembly, to lead the whole church in the implementation of directions for the life and mission of the church;
- b. supporting the organizational health of the General Assembly Council, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);
- c. enabling the General Assembly Council to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities;
- d. providing oversight of the work of the General Assembly Council as a whole and the linkages among the various parts that carry out its work;
- e. providing leadership and administrative oversight to the staff and to the staffing and personnel decision process of the General Assembly Council;

- f. leading and supervising the staff lodged in the office of the Executive Director including a staff rationale, position description, selection of staff, annual performance reviews and staff development;
- g. bearing direct responsibility for the coordination of planning and budgeting for the General Assembly General Assembly Council;
- h. leading the council in implementing policies and procedures related to inclusiveness, affirmative action, and equal employment opportunity; and
- i. presiding as president of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation.

## 2. Deputy Executive Directors

Deputy Executive Directors are hired by the General Assembly Council Executive Director subject to confirmation by the General Assembly Council.

Responsibilities—The Deputy Executive Directors are responsible for the healthy functioning of their Ministries in the fulfilment of their responsibilities, as well as for the support of the wider organizational health of the General Assembly Council and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For detailed staff organization, refer to the GAC website [www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac) .

## 3. Staff

All staff are staff of the General Assembly Council and are accountable to the Executive Director. Mission personnel have shared accountability both to the overseas partner church to which they are assigned and to the General Assembly Council through the Deputy Executive Director for Mission.

## VI. General Assembly Council Relationships

The General Assembly Council works in partnership with synods, presbyteries, and sessions to enable the various governing bodies to join together in churchwide expression of the life and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The General Assembly Council shares responsibility with the Office of the General Assembly for the joint committees of Vocation and Governing Body Relations. In addition, the General Assembly Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will cooperate in the preparation and presentation of the Per Capita Budget and other opportunities for joint endeavors.

The Ministries are responsible for carrying out the mission program for the General Assembly. The Ministries are linked together through the General Assembly Council and with the church on behalf of that part of the mission entrusted by God to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The General Assembly Council is responsible for financial and corporate services supporting the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Other relationships include the following committees:

### 1. *Advocacy and Advisory Committees*

The Executive Director has the responsibility for the advocacy and advisory committees. All three groups have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, and their work is coordinated through the Office of the Deputy Executive Director.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, G-4.0403. The Committee shall be a prophetic voice for involving racial ethnic people in the formation of public policy, particularly where race is a factor that negatively impacts the quality of life of people of color. The committee will also monitor the implementation of policies adopted by the church that impact the quality of life of racial ethnic people in the church and in the world.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, G-4.0403. The committee shall monitor and evaluate policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the

church and the world; and shall advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society as a whole.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the General Assembly Council, is responsible for the process of developing and recommending social witness policy to the General Assembly. The term “social witness policy” refers to the positions adopted by the General Assembly to express its stance on and guide response to issues in the public order, including their relation to the church’s own life and mission. These positions may take the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, or social involvement reports, as defined in the *Manual of the General Assembly*, p. 77, *Forming Social Policy*, 2.a.

## 2. *Committee on Theological Education*

The Committee on Theological Education has direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, and their work is coordinated through the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry with staff accountability to the director of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry. The purpose of the Committee on Theological Education is to provide an effective linkage between the General Assembly and the theological seminaries of the PC(USA) by: providing a forum through which the church-at-large can express its concerns to the seminaries; interpreting the mission of the denomination’s theological seminaries to the whole church; overseeing the interpretation and administration of the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan); serving as a means for cooperation among the church’s theological seminaries; implementing suggestions made by the Special Committee to Study Theological Institutions as approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993); serving as an agency of the denomination for relating to theological seminaries other than those of the PC(USA); and working in partnership with middle governing bodies and agencies of the General Assembly to provide for leadership in local congregations, the denomination, and the world.

## VII. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, (previously the Central Treasury Corporation—CTC) is a corporate entity of the General Assembly and, as the principal church corporation, will hold title to property in accordance with the 1986 Deliverance (see [www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac)), and provide accounting, reporting, and financial services for the General Assembly and its entities. All voting members of the General Assembly Council are members of the board of directors. (See [www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac).)

The officers of the corporation include a president, an executive vice-president and a chief financial officer (“treasurer”), one or more vice-presidents, a secretary, a controller, and an associate treasurer. The president shall be elected by the board of directors for a term of four years subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.

Ordinarily, the offices of the president and the treasurer are held by the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council and the Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services, respectively.

Responsibility for managing the activities of this corporation is assigned to the Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services and other Shared Services staff who have been elected officers of the corporation under the direction of the president.

The treasurer shall prepare an annual report, audited by a certified public accountant, of the financial position and operations of the General Assembly activities for the General Assembly.

## VIII. Other General Assembly Related Corporations

### A. *Board of Pensions*

The Board of Pensions is the legally responsible corporate body established under a civil charter for the purpose of administering the pension and benefits program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is required by law to administer these programs for the sole and exclusive benefit of its participants and members.

The relationship between the Board of Pensions and the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is set forth in an official “Memorandum of Understanding” (see [www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac)) to provide the necessary and desirable cooperation between these bodies, while respecting and reflecting the special needs of the Board of Pensions as it carries out its ministry to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) within an ecclesiastical structure.

In view of the close relationship between compensation, benefits, pensions, and financial assistance, there is need for a close continuing relationship between the General Assembly Council and the Board of Pensions. Consistent with the “Memorandum of Understanding” between the General Assembly Council and the Board of Pensions, the chairperson of the General

Assembly Council (or designee) serves as a corresponding member of the Board of Pensions, while the chairperson of the Board of Pensions or designee serves as corresponding member of the General Assembly Council. The General Assembly Council proposes to the General Assembly Nominating Committee one of its members to be elected to the Board of Pensions. This person also represents the General Assembly Council in regard to churchwide personnel and compensation policies. At the staff level, the Board of Pensions' president has the privilege of the floor at the General Assembly Council meetings but without vote and is included as part of the Expanded Staff Leadership Team through the Office of the Executive Director. The Board of Pensions reports directly to the General Assembly.

#### B. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation*

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (the Foundation) is a corporate entity that acts as a "fiduciary" for the General Assembly, providing investment services, holding title on behalf of the church to the investment assets of the church, providing a deferred giving and wills emphasis program, and otherwise assuring that there is strict adherence to the wishes and restrictions of donors and others who have entrusted funds to its care. The Foundation holds title to property in accordance with the 1986 Deliverance. In addition to its work on behalf of the General Assembly, the Foundation offers similar services to churches and church organizations as well as to individuals who wish to use such programs as an expression of their Christian faith and stewardship. The board of the Foundation is elected by the General Assembly through the normal nominating processes. It reports to the General Assembly with a definitive copy to the General Assembly Council, which may comment on the report. The Foundation provides information about its work to the General Assembly Council on a regular basis. The total budget of the Foundation is made available for review by the General Assembly Council. The Foundation reports directly to the General Assembly.

In view of the close relationship between stewardship, mission funding, and deferred giving, there is need for a close continuing relationship between the General Assembly Council and the Foundation. A future appendix will define such a relationship. The joint report of the General Assembly Council and the Foundation, as reported to the 208th General Assembly (1996), provides agreements and understandings regarding restricted funds and is can be seen at [www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac). The chairperson of the General Assembly Council (or designee) sits with the trustees of the Foundation with voice and without vote, for purposes of coordination. This person also represents the General Assembly Council in regard to churchwide personnel and compensation policies. The board of the Foundation appoints one member to serve on the General Assembly Council as a corresponding member.

At the staff level, the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council is a trustee of the Foundation; the Foundation's president has the privilege of the floor at General Assembly Council meetings, but without vote. In addition, the Foundation's president is included as part of the Expanded Staff Leadership Team through the Office of the Executive Director.

#### C. *Presbyterian Publishing Corporation*

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation is a legally independent, self-supporting corporation dedicated to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is responsible for publishing books and educational materials for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and for a broad ecumenical audience around the world. The publishing program strives to extend the mission of the church to the widest possible audience, representing a wide range of religious, social, and cultural points of view.

In view of the dynamic interrelationship between the printed word and the mission of our church, there is need for a close continuing relationship between the General Assembly Council and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. The corporation is governed by its board of directors, one of whom is the corporation's president and publisher, and one of whom is the Executive Director. The remaining directors are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for four-year terms and shall be eligible for reelection to one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial. The board of directors elects officers of the corporation in accordance with its corporate bylaws.

The chairperson (or designee) of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation is a corresponding member of the General Assembly General Assembly Council with voice and without vote. One member of the General Assembly Council serves as a corresponding member of the board of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation with voice and without vote. At the staff level, the president and publisher of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation has the privilege of the floor at the General Assembly Council meetings but without vote, and is included as part of the Expanded Staff Leadership Team through the Office of the Executive Director. The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation reports directly to the General Assembly.

#### D. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a great commission community. It tells and retells the story of salvation in Jesus Christ to successive generations. It does so in buildings that are shaped to meet the needs of worshipping, witnessing, serving

congregations. Generating capital to build and rebuild church buildings is the work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., (the Program) is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Program offers unsecured, interest bearing investments in various states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. In general, any individual and any organization related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may invest. The funds generated by investments become mortgage loans that are used by congregations, governing bodies, and related entities for building church buildings and rebuilding existing facilities.

Close relationships of cooperation exist among the Program, Foundation, and General Assembly Council. Both the Foundation and Council have significant investments commitments with the Program.

The Board of Directors consist of fifteen (15) members. All members are elected by the General Assembly Council, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The General Assembly Council elects four members from among its membership. The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates six at-large members, one member from among the synods and one member from among the presbyteries. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation nominates two members and the General Assembly Council National Ministries Division Committee nominates one member. The Program reports to the General Assembly through the General Assembly Council.

[*Note: The above section relating to the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc Board of Directors will change upon action of the 218th General Assembly (2008) on recommendation from Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.*]

The Chair of the Program's Board of Directors and its President and Chief Executive Officer have privilege of the floor without vote at General Assembly Council meetings. They are corresponding members of the General Assembly. In addition, the President participates in the Expanded Staff Leadership Team plus Synod Executives Forum.

## **IX. Amendments**

Proposed amendments to the *Organization for Mission* that are submitted by overture shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Except as provided in Section IV.E., proposed amendments to this Section IV. of the *Organization for Mission* from related bodies or from the General Assembly Council shall be submitted to the General Assembly Council. The General Assembly Council shall review these proposed changes and forward those it approves as part of its report to the General Assembly.

## **APPENDIX A Financial Issues**

A revised Appendix A will be included here following action by the 218th General Assembly (2008) on a separate recommendation from the GAC's Mission Funding Task Force.

## **APPENDIX B**

The following documents related to various organizational structures can be viewed at ([www.pcusa.org/gac](http://www.pcusa.org/gac)). These were formerly appendices B–J.

- B. 198th General Assembly (1986) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Deliverance Implementing a Design for the Corporate Structure of Certain Agencies of the General Assembly [Adopted June 17, 1986, modified by the 199th General Assembly (1987)\* and the 214th General Assembly (2002)]
- C. Deliverance Concerning Corporate Structure of Certain Agencies of the General Assembly Council
  - Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation
  - The Publishing Corporation - Amended by 217th General Assembly (2006)
- D. Memorandum Defining the Relationship Between the Board of Pensions and the General Assembly Council
- E. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Establishment of a Corporation and Related Matters [(Approved by the 207th General Assembly (1995) and amended by the 209th General Assembly (1997)]

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\*[From *Structural Design for Mission*]

- F. Joint Report—General Assembly Council and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 617–18)
- G. Ratification of Establishment of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A. A Subsidiary of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation and Related Matters [Approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999), amended by the 212th General Assembly (2000) and the 214th General Assembly (2002).] [*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 492–94; *Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 339]
- H. Establishment of New Covenant Annuity Insurance Company and Related Matters [Approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999).] [*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 500–502]
- I. Ratification of Foundation Participation in Formation of New Covenant Funds [Approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999).] [*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 505]
- J. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mortgage Corporation [Approved by the 213th General Assembly (2001).] [*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 173–75]

## Item 08-09

[The assembly approved Item 08-09 with amendment. See pp. 22, 24.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the amendment of Appendix A of the *Organization for Mission* by striking the current text and inserting the following in its place.

### APPENDIX A OF THE *ORGANIZATION FOR MISSION*

#### *Organization for Mission*

#### Appendix A: Financial Issues

#### OUTLINE OF APPENDIX A

##### Outline of Appendix A

##### Glossary of Terms Related to Financial Issues

##### Values Statement

##### Churchwide Mission Support

- A. Forms of Giving in Churchwide Mission Support
- B. Roles and Responsibilities of Governing Bodies
- C. Special Offerings and Other Specific Appeals
- D. Validation of Mission
- E. Accounting Definitions and Standards: Designated, Restricted, and Unrestricted
- F. Collection, Reporting, and Audits

##### General Assembly Budget Development

- A. Mission Budget Cycle
- B. Basic Mission Direction
- C. The Proposed Budget
- D. The Detailed Budget
- E. Budget Monitoring
- F. Roles and Responsibilities in Developing Budgets
- G. Per Capita Budget

##### Mission Support Services

#### GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATED TO FINANCIAL ISSUES

*Adopted Budget* — The formally approved budget of a session, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly.

*Consultations* — Ordinarily, face-to-face experiences between duly selected representatives of governing bodies to exchange information, perspectives, opinions, and advice regarding mission planning, funding, and personnel staffing for the health of the whole church.

*Contributor*—An individual, agency, or governing body that transfers control of a gift to another tax-exempt agency or governing body. *See Donor.*



**Designations**—Budget categories as described or determined by a governing body. Only governing bodies may make designations. *See Restricted Giving.*

**Division of Committed Dollars**—Agreements among governing bodies giving concrete expression to the sharing of Mission Support Commitments for the church’s mission.

**Donor**—An individual or other taxable entity (e.g., an estate or trust) making a gift for charitable purposes eligible for favorable tax treatment. When governing bodies are nontaxable entities, they cannot be donors. *See Contributor.*

**Emergency Appeals**—Properly authorized and approved calls for an immediate response to emergency needs through an Emergency Relief Alert.

**Equalization**—The use of unrestricted funds to fulfill the commitments and/or agreements that have been made by a governing body.

**Funding for General Mission**—Gifts and contributions received with no restrictions for the overall support of the adopted budgets of governing bodies

**Funding for Specific Mission**—A form of restricted giving for designated budget categories or projects within adopted budgets.

**Ministry Areas**—The three primary areas of work within the General Assembly Council staff structure: Mission, Communication and Funds Development, and Shared Services.

**Mission**—For the purposes of Appendix A, ‘mission’ is understood in its broadest sense: proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

**Mission Support Commitment**—A specific dollar figure or a percentage of total dollars adopted by a governing body to be given in a specified year to support the mission and ministry of other governing bodies.

**Mission Support Consultation**—A face-to-face event among duly selected representatives of governing bodies to (1) establish shared ownership of the church’s total mission, (2) advocate recommendations of Mission Support Goals, and (3) agree upon means for the division of committed mission dollars.

**Mission Support Goals**—Specific dollar figures for mission support projected as goals for some subsequent year or years.

**Other Specific Appeals**—Requests for support of specific validated mission projects or programs, which may not be included in adopted budgets.

**Per Capita Apportionment**—A means for all members to share in the costs of coordinating and evaluating mission, and performing the ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**Projects Beyond the Budget**—Approved projects not included in the adopted budgets.

**Restricted Giving**—Gifts that are restricted by a contributor or donor for use in support of a validated project, budget category, or appeal. The processing of restricted gifts will comply with the standards established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB).

**Special Offerings**—Planned, organized, and approved supplemental offerings for specified causes that may or may not be included in approved budgets.

**Taxable Entity**—For the purposes of Appendix A, individuals, partnerships, estates and trusts, or corporations who may be taxpayers under the federal income tax law.

**Unrestricted Giving**—Unrestricted gifts received for the overall support of the adopted budget of a presbytery, a synod, or the General Assembly.

**Validated Mission**—Any project or program within the bounds of and approved by formal action of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly, whether or not it is funded from the adopted budget of the governing body.

#### VALUES STATEMENT

The funding of the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) rests on the following principles:

**Faithfulness to Jesus Christ**—because God loves the world and Christ gave his life, we are called, as individuals and groups, to respond with our lives and resources.

**Flexibility**—because we believe that the Holy Spirit informs the missional instincts of all God’s people honoring the promises of the past and preparing the promise of the future, we will accommodate regional differences, historical practices, and changing realities.

**Respect**—because we seek to have the same mind in us that was in Christ Jesus, who looked not to his own interests but to the interest of others (Phil. 2:4–5), we will acknowledge the passion of donors through accountable systems and transparently open, informed and inclusive decision-making, acknowledging the many views of mission designed and enacted in every part of the church. We recognize the tension that exists between respecting the passions of donors and encouraging support of our connectional nature, but confess that “the earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it” (Ps. 24:1–2).

**Communication**—because we are servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1); we will commit ourselves to frequent interaction with governing bodies and individuals, for the purpose of mutual clarification and unity of experience and hope across diverse boundaries.

Therefore, a design for funding Christ’s work throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be consistent with the following core values:

1. A design for funding Christ’s work will recognize stewardship as integral to Christian discipleship:
  - promoting the biblical concept of tithing,
  - encouraging stewardship education that is understood as the faithful response of discipleship to God’s gifts in all of life,
  - requiring the development of stewardship education materials that are creative, attractive, clear, and affordable.
2. A design for funding Christ’s work will appeal to the passions and values of members, pastors, governing bodies, and benefactors:
  - communicating to the head and heart of the people of God
  - engaging the donor in the mission of the church
  - recognizing that everyone is a beneficiary of God’s grace, and everyone benefits from joyful stewardship.
3. A design for funding Christ’s work will be transparent and accountable:
  - honoring donor intent,
  - offering easily understood opportunities for giving,
  - meeting clear standards of accountability for pastors, sessions, and potential donors.
4. A design for funding Christ’s work will utilize our connectionalism, recognize our interdependence, and demonstrate our partnership in mission:
  - emphasizing the value of interpersonal relationships,
  - encouraging the more inclusive governing body to facilitate the mission of its constituent members,
  - encouraging the less inclusive governing body to participate in the mission of the church beyond its bounds,
  - encouraging mutual investment of time and resources among governing bodies and constituent members recognizing that Presbyterians are the primary base of support for Presbyterian missions, and affirming the importance and priority of funding Presbyterian validated mission.
5. A design for funding Christ’s work will emphasize information sharing between governing bodies leading to a dynamic mission and vision:
  - placing governing bodies in structural and interactive relationships,
  - valuing the wisdom of other governing bodies,

- recognizing the need for consultation prior to engaging in ministries beyond one's bounds.
6. A design for funding Christ's work will encourage two-way communications:
- welcoming and encouraging a flow of information and feedback,
  - recognizing that information sharing benefits the whole church,
  - encouraging face-to-face communication when possible.
7. A design for funding Christ's work will honor historic relationships:
- recognizing that previous funding systems had value and may continue to inform the development of new funding systems,
  - requiring careful investigation of current funding partnerships before altering or eliminating those partnerships.

### CHURCHWIDE MISSION SUPPORT

#### A. *Forms of Giving in Churchwide Mission Support*

Churchwide Mission Support is the funding system used by all governing bodies to plan and implement the mission of the whole church. Churchwide Mission Support has three overall forms of giving.

1. **Basic Mission Support**—There are two components of mission support:

a. **Funding for General Mission**—gifts, with no restrictions, for the overall support of the adopted budgets of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly.

b. **Funding for Specific Mission**—gifts, with restrictions, for use within the adopted budgets of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly.

2. **Churchwide Special Offerings**—gifts, with restrictions, for General Assembly planned, organized, and approved offerings for specified purposes that may be included in approved budgets.

3. **Other Specific Appeals**—gifts, with restrictions, for specific use in support of validated mission that ordinarily are not included in the budget of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly. Such appeals may be ongoing, time-limited, or responsive to emergency needs.

There are additional forms of giving that are distinct from Churchwide Mission Support. These include giving through Presbyterian Women, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Validated Mission Support Groups, and other organizations. Some of these gifts may be applied to adopted budgets. These gifts are and may be increasingly important to support the work of the church.

#### B. *Roles and Responsibilities of Governing Bodies*

To encourage openness and accountability in all financial matters, the following roles and responsibilities will be observed.

1. **Roles Held in Common by All Governing Bodies**

a. Select representatives who will participate in inter-governing body consultations on mission support goals and the division of Mission Support Commitments.

b. Share mission priorities, budget projections, funding needs, and mission support goals.

c. Provide information for, support of, and participation in an annual season of interpretation

d. Consider other governing bodies' mission priorities and funding needs.

- e. Adopt mission support commitments and honor these commitments in budgets for which the governing body is directly responsible.
- f. When changes in mission support commitment are contemplated, promptly communicate with other affected governing bodies.
- g. Thank leaders and donors.
- h. Hold receiving sites accountable to accepted churchwide standards.
- i. Provide full financial reports annually to other governing bodies and congregations on the receipt and expenditure of funds and of a governing bodies' assets, and liabilities.
- j. Collect and transmit mission support from donors, congregations, and organizations within 60 calendar days from the date of receipt.
- k. Provide General Assembly, and as appropriate, synods and constituent presbyteries, a regular accounting of church-by-church giving and any relevant data requested by a governing body, while maintaining the right to privacy by individual donors.

## 2. *Role of the General Assembly*

- a. Assist the development of mission support goals at every governing body level.
- b. Adopt a mission budget and a per capita budget.
- c. Annually provide full financial reports and program assessments to sessions, presbyteries, and synods.
- d. Disseminate industry standards in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and in compliance with applicable accounting pronouncements and regulations specific to the not-for-profit industry as best practices for governing body treasurers and financial officers.
- e. Approve the purposes and beneficiaries of the four churchwide special offerings, upon recommendation of the General Assembly Council.

## C. *Special Offerings and Other Specific Appeals*

### 1. *Churchwide Special Offerings*

- a. Churchwide special offerings will provide valuable mission interpretation opportunities.
- b. Churchwide special offerings will enable the church to meet traditional and ongoing needs in relationship to the total mission priorities of the church, always proclaiming the name of Jesus.
- c. Causes included in special offerings will have demonstrated potential for churchwide donor support.
- d. Causes included in a special offering will specifically define the needs to be met; plans will be provided for funds' allocation, program implementation, and accountability.
- e. Causes grouped within the same churchwide special offering will have a focussed mission purpose.
- f. Special offering promotions within the comprehensive mission funding strategy will occur in a central promotion office rather than within programmatic entities.
- g. Costs of promoting and receiving each churchwide special offering will be paid from receipts of the offering. After deducting each offering's costs from total receipts, restricted and unrestricted, of that offering, all receipts will then be considered permanently restricted, and will be used only for the purposes for which they were given. Each offering's costs will be determined by the GAC through its regular budget process.
- h. Start-up costs for new or significantly revised special offerings will be expensed as incurred."
- i. Promotion materials for a special offering will relate to the liturgical season in which the offering is received.
- j. Any change in the pattern of distribution of a special offering will require an eighteen-month time period before becoming effective to allow adequate time for development and distribution of promotion materials.

k. There will be no more than ~~four~~ **[five]** churchwide special offerings in any given calendar year. The General Assembly will identify times for the promotion and receipt of offerings.

l. On a six-year cycle, the General Assembly Council will provide for review and evaluation of the causes supported by churchwide special offerings and will consider new causes in light of established criteria and current mission priorities. Between reviews, if an offering lacks support, the GAC will provide a process for review.

m. It is important for the continuity of operations that some programs funded by churchwide special offerings maintain operation reserves. However, it is not the purpose of special offerings to develop or augment reserves. Beginning in 2001, each General Assembly will assign one of its committees to review the appropriateness of reserves accumulated from special offerings.

n. The agencies receiving churchwide special offering funds will prepare annual reports on the uses of those funds for the General Assembly.

o. Special offerings will not be used to supplement funding for programs included in ongoing basic mission support.

p. Special offerings will not be used to create funding for a cause when a similar program already exists.

## **2. Other Specific Appeals**

a. Other specific appeals include the Theological Education Fund, special campaigns or gifts (national, regional, or local), Emergency Relief Alerts (national, regional, or local), and additional giving opportunities.

(1) The Theological Education Fund is a unique type of an annual specific appeal to sessions through the 1% Plan as approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986).

(2) Special time-limited campaigns approved by one or more governing bodies are essential for meeting capital needs and achieving other mission purposes. These require governing body approval and may include needs across governing body lines with advance concurrence of other appropriate governing bodies. In the case of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council may approve time-limited campaigns between sessions of the General Assembly.

(3) Emergency Relief Alerts enable persons to respond compassionately to emergency needs, such as natural disasters of large proportion or other crises. The General Assembly Council will authorize a process for issuing national Emergency Relief Alerts, providing timely information indicating how church funds are being used to meet the emergency and how individuals and sessions may contribute additional funds to meet such needs. There may be occasions when sessions, presbyteries, or synods will issue Emergency Relief Alerts in response to more localized emergencies.

(4) Additional giving opportunities provide a way for contributors or donors to support mission not funded by adopted budgets.

(a) A validation process that maintains the integrity of the church's mission will be used to identify such opportunities. Whenever possible, such opportunities will be promoted jointly by governing bodies beyond the session through a program of additional giving opportunities.

(b) Contributors or donors desiring to support validated mission beyond established budgets may do so through additional giving opportunities up to whatever limits have been set by a more inclusive governing body. Concurrence in the purpose of the gift by the receiving governing body or agency is required.

(c) An effective additional giving program depends on significant sharing of information about adopted budgets and additional giving opportunities.

b. All campaigns for other specific appeals shall identify in advance the anticipated administrative costs that may be charged to receipts. A governing body that designates an other specific appeal may apply a charge, not to exceed an agreed upon percentage, against other specific appeals receipts to cover actual costs of promoting, receiving, and disbursing funds. Contributors and donors will be informed of the actual percentage. The General Assembly Council shall determine the cost of communicating national Emergency Relief Alerts and may authorize a charge against receipts with this charge being reported for each specific appeal.

c. Acknowledgment of receipt of gifts to all validated projects or agencies will be made to the contributor or donor by the receiving governing body or validating agency in a timely manner, including concurrence in the purpose of the gift (see further at Appendix A, Churchwide Mission Support, Item G.2.).

d. All recipients of validated mission funds are responsible for reporting all gifts received directly from Presbyterian contributors or donors to the validating governing body.

#### D. *Validation of Mission*

1. Validated mission is any project or program within the bounds of and approved by formal action of a session, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly that is consistent with the responsibilities assigned by the Form of Government, whether or not it is funded from the adopted budget of the governing body. Validated mission should cohere with the great ends of the Church (*Book of Order*, G-1.0200) and is determined in accord with the following provisions of the *Book of Order*:

- a. G-3.0000 The Church and Its Mission
- b. G-9.0404b The Nature of Presbyterian Polity
- c. G-10.0102 Session Responsibilities
- d. G-11.0304 Presbytery Budget
- e. G-12.0102 Synod Responsibilities
- f. G-13.0103 General Assembly Responsibilities.

2. Each and all governing bodies serve the mission of the whole church and thereby appropriately validate mission. Such validated mission may be commended to others but does not require their concurrence or support.

3. Validated mission may be within or beyond governing body budgets.

a. Validated Within Budget—projects or programs included in the adopted budget of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly, including projects that will be funded with Funding for General Mission and Funding for Specific Mission.

b. Validated Beyond Budget—projects or programs not included in adopted budgets, but validated by action of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly. The validating governing body may specify dollar and/or time limitations.

#### E. *Accounting Definitions and Standards: Designated, Restricted, and Unrestricted Giving*

1. For accounting purposes, the following definitions of designators, contributors, and donors are observed.

a. Designations may be made only by governing bodies. A designator has received funds from a contributor or donor and applies such funds to designated categories or items. A designator must be a governing body.

b. Contributors can be donors, governing bodies, or other sources of income. Contributors may make unrestricted or restricted gifts.

c. The term donor applies to persons or entities whose gifts are eligible for a tax deduction. Donors may make restricted gifts consistent with IRS regulations and acceptable to the receiving entity. Restrictions must be agreed to prior to the completion of the gift.

2. For accounting purposes, unrestricted giving and restricted giving are defined as follows:

Restricted giving refers to gifts with restrictions by a contributor or donor for use in support of a particular project, budget category, or appeal. The processing of restricted gifts will comply with the standards established by the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Internal Revenue Service regulations. Unrestricted giving refers to gifts made without restriction and subject to the use and discretion of the receiving governing body.

a. Unrestricted giving remains foundational in the System of Giving. Through unrestricted giving, individuals and governing bodies share in support of the whole mission and ministry in which the church engages.

b. Restricted giving, such as churchwide special offerings and other specific appeals, is a valuable and important method of adding to unrestricted giving. Contributors wishing to use restricted giving are encouraged first to choose projects or categories within adopted budgets. Special offerings and other specific appeals are always restricted by their stated purpose.

(1) Each governing body must handle funds according to the donor's intention in giving the gift. If the intent cannot be honored, the gift must be returned.

(2) Clarity in this regard may on occasion require conversation and/or negotiation with donors even beyond the governing body where the gift is first received.

c. Restrictions on the use of gifts may come from a donor or a governing body making the gift but always require concurrence by the governing body or validated not-for-profit agency receiving the gift.

(1) A donor must relinquish control of a gift or it does not qualify for tax preference treatment and the receiving organization jeopardizes its tax-exempt status.

(2) When restricted gifts are accepted, they will always be used for the restricted purpose within designations approved by the governing body.

3. The obligations of designators are to:

a. honor restrictions that have been accepted or to consider permitting additional support of a project beyond its approved budget;

b. ensure conformity with all applicable civil law;

c. report back to all donors and contributors;

d. disburse money received within 60 days;

e. contact all donors or contributors if restricted giving cannot be used according to its restrictions—if restrictions cannot be met and the donors or contributors do not agree to the use of funds for other purposes, the gifts are to be returned to the donor.

4. *Budgeting and Equalization*

a. Funding of approved budgets is accomplished as follows:

(1) First, restricted funds are applied to the appropriate budget items.

(2) Then, unrestricted funds are applied toward fulfillment of all budget items.

(3) This use of unrestricted funds provides for equalization within a governing body's budget. This process supports the orderly planning and budgeting decisions of governing bodies while honoring appropriate restrictions and designations.

b. Sessions are encouraged to follow the division of mission support commitments adopted by their presbyteries. If a session does not follow these division agreements, a presbytery may seek to fulfill agreements through use of unrestricted funds—provided that such a policy is communicated to its sessions. This use of unrestricted funds provides for equalization among governing bodies. Churchwide special offerings and other specific appeals shall not be used to fulfill mission support commitments and are not subject to equalization.

F. *Collection, Reporting, and Audits*

1. *Collection and Transmittal of Funds*

a. The General Assembly will maintain financial records in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and in compliance with all applicable accounting pronouncements and regulations specific to

the not-for-profit industry. Software and systems will be appropriate to support compliance with the requirements stated above.

b. The General Assembly will observe the following minimum standards for its operations. It is expected that presbyteries and synods will also adopt and adhere to these same standards:

(1) Provide a detailed receipt to a contributor or congregation for all money received.

(2) Close monthly and remit funds within sixty days of receipt.

(3) Utilize the Federal Reserve system to expedite the transfer of funds whenever and wherever possible.

(4) Use a standardized, detailed transmittal format for transmitting data and funds electronically between presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly.

(5) Establish and follow cash management policies and procedures that are designed to maximize cash management earnings.

## *2. Reporting*

The General Assembly will provide financial information quarterly for receipt of funds from all sources, and this information will be posted to the PC(USA) Web site on the financial page.

a. Each presbytery and synod will be responsible for obtaining with remittances the detailed information required for disbursement.

b. Each presbytery and synod will report all giving on an approved information transmittal form to the General Assembly site no later than sixty days after receipt of funds.

c. The General Assembly will furnish to every presbytery and synod an annual information report on a church-by-church basis. This annual report will provide information for churches within a synod or presbytery bounds on all funds received by it for presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.

d. The General Assembly will furnish, in cooperation with the presbyteries, at least quarterly and not more often than monthly, an information report to every presbytery showing the agreed upon distribution of dollars (including the presbytery's mission support commitments) between the presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly as compared to the actual funds received. Should discrepancies exist, the General Assembly site will work with the reporting site to clarify and to effect the necessary changes and/or corrections.

## *3. Internal Audit*

The General Assembly Council will establish an internal audit function involving a broad variety of audit services. Included among these are:

a. reviewing the reliability and integrity of financial information and how that information is identified, measured, classified, and reported;

b. reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of particular financial management functions;

c. reviewing established internal control systems for efficiency and compliance;

d. reviewing compliance with internal policies and procedures;

e. reviewing financial statements contained in the annual report with management and the independent auditors to determine that the independent auditors are satisfied with the disclosure and content of the financial statements;

f. reviewing and recommending to the General Assembly Council Audit Committee, the independent auditors to be selected to audit the financial statements of the corporation; and

g. reporting of the Internal Audit Committee directly to the General Assembly Council.



## GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

### A. *Mission Budget Cycle*

The Mission Budget will be developed in budget cycles. Each budget cycle will consist of two consecutive calendar years, where the first year is the year following a biennial General Assembly meeting (e.g., 2008 General Assembly, 2009/2010 budget cycle). A separate budget will be developed for each year within the cycle.

### B. *Basic Mission Direction*

1. The Mission Work Plan is adopted by the General Assembly Council and provides the framework for the two-year budget cycle.

2. The ministry areas will develop proposals that will advance the Mission Work Plan.

3. The General Assembly Council will recommend a budget to the General Assembly that will provide the funding to fulfill the goals in the Mission Work Plan for the budget cycle.

### C. *The Proposed Budget*

1. At the second General Assembly Council meeting of the year prior to the budget cycle, (e.g., May of 2008 for the 2009/2010 budget cycle), the General Assembly Council will review the budget presented by the Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services and recommend to the General Assembly a proposed budget for the budget cycle that embodies the Mission Work Plan and describing the work to be added or deleted as part of the recommendation. The Executive Committee will recommend a budget if, for any reason, the General Assembly Council does not make a recommendation.

2. At the General Assembly during the year before the budget cycle (e.g., 2008 General Assembly for the 2009/2010 budget cycle), the appropriate assembly committee of the General Assembly will receive the report of the Mission Work Plan and the proposed budget for approval and recommendation to the full assembly.

3. The appropriate assembly committee of the General Assembly will recommend a balanced budget for each year in the budget cycle, incorporating work from the proposed budget and overtures, commissioners' resolutions, and other actions of the General Assembly, for approval as the outline of work for the budget cycle. The General Assembly may make decisions to add or subtract any element to or from proposed budgets. The General Assembly Council will then make appropriate adjustments.

### D. *The Detailed Budget*

#### 1. *Detailed Budget Development*

a. Following the General Assembly and under the leadership of the Executive Committee, detailed implementation of the Mission Work Plan as approved by the General Assembly will be outlined, and work responsibility assigned.

b. Under the management of Shared Services and with specific involvement by the Ministry Areas, a detailed budget proposal that encompasses the work approved by the General Assembly will be developed for each year in the budget cycle.

#### 2. *Approval of the Detailed Budget*

At its third meeting of the year prior to each budget cycle (e.g., September 2008 for the 2009/2010 budget cycle), the General Assembly Council will review both the detailed budget for the following year and the most up-to-date financial information. The General Assembly Council will review the adequacy of the Executive Committee's response to the General Assembly directives in the adopted budget and, after any necessary changes, approve the detailed budget for the following year with particular expenditures by organizational entity displaying both budget of-fices and relatedness to the basic Mission Work Plan.

### E. *Budget Monitoring*

1. The General Assembly Council will monitor the accomplishment of the Mission Work Plan and the appropriate expenditure of funds throughout the budget cycle.

2. The General Assembly Council will report to each biennial General Assembly on the results of the work undertaken during the previous two budget years (e.g., 2008 General Assembly for budget years 2006 and 2007), including full disclosure of the financial results of each year and other information related to the financial condition of the church. These two budget years will not be within the same budget cycle.

**F. Roles and Responsibilities in Developing Budgets**

1. The General Assembly does the following:

- a. Determines churchwide mission goals upon which budget development will be based.
- b. Has the authority to institute and terminate programmatic emphases and activity.
- c. Upon recommendation from the General Assembly Council, approves both the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and the Per Capita Budget.

2. The General Assembly Council does the following:

- a. Implements General Assembly decisions regarding (1) Mission Work Plan goals and objectives and (2) programmatic activity.
- b. Recommends a Mission Work Plan for each budget year to the General Assembly, after appropriate consultation.
- c. Presents the budget to the General Assembly.
- d. Approves detailed budgets based upon General Assembly action.
- e. Oversees programmatic activity funded through the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and General Assembly Council related work from the Per Capita Budget.

3. The Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services is responsible for the following:

- a. Manages the process for budget development.
- b. Prepares budget presentations for both the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly.

4. The Deputy Executive Director for Mission is responsible for the following:

- a. Prepare descriptions of programmatic activities in appropriate form for budget consideration, reflecting the adopted Mission Work Plan goals.
- b. Develop detailed budgets based on budget allocations made by the General Assembly and as instructed by the General Assembly Council.

**G. Per Capita Budget**

The General Assembly Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) jointly have responsibility for developing a per capita budget and apportionment for recommendation to the General Assembly. The per capita budget will be prepared using timelines similar to those for the General Assembly mission budget.

**SHARED SERVICES**

Shared Services is accountable to the Executive Director and carries out the following responsibilities.

**A. To provide accounting and reporting services for**

1. the General Assembly Council, its Ministry Areas, and certain related bodies and committees;
2. the Office of the General Assembly;

3. other entities as requested on a fee-for-service basis; and
4. synod, presbytery, and session finance officers, as appropriate.

**B. To perform and establish policies and procedures for the following functions of**

1. controller/financial accounting controls, general ledger maintenance, general accounting, financial reporting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, church and student loans, payroll, budgeting, fixed asset management, overseas accounting, inventory control, and project accounting;
2. treasury/central receiving service, bank relations and services, overseas treasury service (as appropriate), foreign exchange, short-term investments, working capital/cash management, and endowment and revenue accounting;
3. financial planning, capital planning and economic forecasting, and financial modeling;
4. property maintenance and management including acquisitions, gifts, leases, and dispositions, purchasing and print services, and mail services;
5. establishing standards for receiving sites throughout the church in consultation with other parts of the church;
6. distribution management services, including order processing, customer services, warehousing, and shipping.

**C. To ensure that no payment of any expenditure is made in excess of the total budget approved by the General Assembly Council. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of each Deputy Executive Director to ensure that expenditures for their respective areas are within the approved budget before commitments are made.**

**D. To maintain all financial records and prepare monthly reports to the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly Council Executive Staff Leadership.**

**E. To prepare and present the annual report of the Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets, and Statement of Cash Flows of the General Assembly that will be audited by a certified public accountant and presented to the General Assembly.**

*Rationale*

As noted previously, Appendix A (of the *Organization for Mission*) is a document that outlines a collection and distribution process for mission funding. What we have learned is that though the process outlined and envisioned in that document was a good one, it was never successfully implemented. This was in part due to the length of the document, and an unintentional failure to make its contents known and enforceable. In any event, it is apparent that there remains a need for such a document that is more enforceable, shorter and clearer.

Further, we note that noncompliance with some portions of Appendix A risks the federal tax-exempt status of the PC(USA), therefore it is important that the document state accurately the mission funding and accounting policies of the church.

## Item 08-10

[The assembly approved Item 08-10. See pp. 22, 23.]

*On Reinstating the Office of Environmental Justice as an Integral Part of the Mission of the Church—From the Presbytery of Heartland.*

**The Presbytery of Heartland overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council to reinstate the Office of Environmental Justice in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a vital and integral part of the ministry and mission of the church to help protect and save God's creation.**

### *Rationale*

Reaffirmation of the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215th, and 216th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006) will reflect the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is an essential part of the Christian faith.

The Office of Environmental Justice has served as a vital link between the General Assembly office and the local church, providing essential leadership and resources. The office/staff have served to interpret environmental issues, stewardship of creation issues, and to help put into action the other resolutions the church has already put into place. The office was removed at a time critical to sustaining the planet and life on earth as we know it.

Scripture proclaims, "... 'You are the Lord, you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. To all of them you give life, and the host of heaven worships you'" (Neh. 9:6, NRSV). Ours is a God concerned not only with humanity but all of creation, a God whose spirit is the breath of all life and whose glory is manifest in the creation we share.

The *Book of Order* (W-7.5001a) states that "God calls the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit to participate in God's work of creation and preservation." In (W-7.5003), it reminds us that we are "... stewards of God's creation who hold the earth in trust..."

Justice, peace, and the environment are interrelated. Whenever we humans abuse the environment, whenever we engage in non-sustainable consumption of our earth's finite resources, we are not only endangering the future of life on our planet, but we are committing acts of violence and injustice against other life—both present and future. Protecting and restoring creation is central to our own survival.

Caring for the environment is another way to care for people. We care about people who are hungry and impoverished as well as people who are the victims of pollution and resource depletion; we care about people who share the planet with us today as well as future generations. When we think of loving and caring for our neighbor as Jesus taught us, let us realize that we all live upwind and upstream from someone else—both in time and space. Ecosystems and people systems are intricately interwoven and interconnected, forming the tapestry of life.

We in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a rich tradition of justice and reverence for life. Included in our mission is responsible and faithful stewardship of God's earth. We have been commanded to tend the garden.

### Historical References

In 1954, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America stated:

We call upon the Christian conscience to recognize that our stewardship of the earth and water involves both a land-use program that recognizes the interdependence of soil, water and man and the development of a responsible public policy which will resist the exploitation of land, water, and other natural resources, including forests, for selfish purposes and maintain intelligent conservation for the sustenance of all living creatures through future generations (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1954, p. 198).

This stewardship commitment has been repeated and reaffirmed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors, as follows:

1967     The Confession of 1967 stresses the justice of sharing resources and the interdependence of resources and living creatures.

1971     The 183rd General Assembly (1971) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America accepts the Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal statement that calls for a new order of values based on an "eco-ethic" and a Statement on Environmental Renewal (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 578–83).

1975     A recommendation is made to the 187th General Assembly to affirm advocacy of the protection of wildlife areas and parklands (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1975, Part I, p. 59).

1980     The 192nd General Assembly votes to (1) develop educational resources on the adverse impact that careless technology has on the environment and health of the unborn; (2) instruct the Board of Investment Committee to review corporate responsibility regarding manufacture of dioxins (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1980, Part I, p. 56).

1981 The 193rd General Assembly (1981) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) pledges support of the United Nations Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade, 1981–1990, calling upon Presbyterians to develop lifestyles that are consistent with the necessity to conserve water (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 254).

1983 The 195th General Assembly (1983) urges the session of each congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to consider making a “commitment to peacemaking” that included making peace with the earth—involve the congregation in efforts to protect and restore the environment (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, pp. 438–39).

1984 The 196th General Assembly (1984) calls upon Congress of the United States to reduce the emissions of sulphur dioxide and the oxides of nitrogen to a level that will protect the most sensitive environment and states that human stewardship is not a dominion of mastery and calls us to exercise respect for the integrity of natural systems and for the limits that nature places on economic growth and material consumption (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 348–49).

1987 The 199th General Assembly (1987) votes to urge the United States government to assure acceptable disposal sites for high-level nuclear waste (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 865–66). It also votes to urge each presbytery and local church to encourage and support alternatives to pesticides and support the victims of pesticide poisoning (*Minutes*, 1987, Part I, p. 796).

1988 The Environmental Justice Office is created to study past environmental policies of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States to create a combined report of environmental concerns for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Environmental Justice Office is a ministry of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), lodged in the National Ministries Division, Social Justice Program Area, and is now actively involved in creation care and environmental justice issues (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, pp. 671–72).

1989 The 201st General Assembly (1989) calls for governments to strengthen regulations and enforcement regarding transportation of oil and hazardous substances, in response to the Exxon-Valdez tanker spill in 1989 (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 642).

1990 The 202nd General Assembly (1990) passes “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” affirming “creation cries out in this time of ecological crises,” calling the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respond to this cry and “engage in an effort to make the 1990s the ‘turnaround decade,’” providing the foundation for the work of the Environmental Justice Office. Also, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) calls attention to the problem of global warming and encourages the United States government to take steps toward incorporating environmental damage and depletion into “full-cost pricing” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp. 646–70).

The Affirmation of Faith from that General Assembly notes that “Restoring Creation is God’s own work in our time,” and that “The love of neighbor, particularly ‘the least’ of Christ’s brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death. ... The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake. ... In this critical time of transition to a new era, God’s new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 647).

1992 The 204th General Assembly (1992) directs all future General Assemblies to “print all official reports on recycled and recyclable paper ... and ... direct all related bodies ... to use recycled and recyclable paper [for] all reports and publications ....” (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 846).

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1996 The 208th General Assembly adopts the paper “Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development” as policy for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Just and sustainable human development is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future; it necessarily involves the integration of economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 524ff).

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1999 The 211th General Assembly (1999) again calls upon the U.S. to ratify the Kyoto Protocol; urges the United States to go beyond Kyoto targets for carbon dioxide emission reductions; directs the Presbyterian Center in Louisville and all other properties of the General Assembly to minimize fossil fuel energy (along with urging local congregations to do the same); and directs the General Assembly to promote education regarding global warming and other environmental concerns (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 669–70).

2001 The 213th General Assembly (2001) calls to issue and disseminate the “Call to Halt Mass Extinction.” The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls Presbyterians, other citizens, governments, and societal institutions to face the severity of this threat and to take steps to prevent mass extinction and preserve the biodiversity essential to the flourishing of life (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 473–75).

2003 The 215th General Assembly (2003) calls on the United States government to join the world effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to develop and enact a national emergency response, underwritten by law, with adequate financial support, and economic enforcement mechanism, to be fully functioning by 2005, with targeted reductions by that time (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 617).

2006 The 217th General Assembly (2006) asked that the church ask its members to make a bold witness by aspiring to carbon neutral lives (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 896–97). It was noted that “without significant changes in public policy and corporate behavior to complement actions of personal discipleship, massive and irreversible climate changes will only accelerate over the next century” (PC(USA) Memorandum; Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, December 4, 2006)

This overture was drafted by Earthkeepers, a mission unit of MOSJ and Heartland Presbytery’s chapter of the national group, Presbyterians for Restoring Creation.

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**Concurrence to Item 08-10 from the Presbyteries of Baltimore, the Cascades, Florida, Susquehanna Valley, the Twin Cities Area, and Utica.**

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 08-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 08-10, from the Presbytery of Heartland, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to reaffirm environmental policies and reinstate the Office of Environmental Justice as an integral part of the mission of the church.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval of Item 08-10, as amended below, and advises that this action answer Item 08-11 as well: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Heartland overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to[.]

[1. Commend the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215th, and 217th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006) reflecting the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is an essential part of the Christian faith, and providing guidance to environmental education and advocacy efforts of all councils and offices of the church.]

“[2.] Direct the [~~Executive Director of the~~] General Assembly Council to reinstate [~~the~~] [an] Office of Environmental Justice in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a vital and integral part of the ministry and mission of the church to help protect and save God’s creation.”

#### *Rationale*

The reestablishment of a clearly identified Environmental Justice Office could provide central coordination and support, as well as a point of contact, for many care of creation and environmental ministries at all levels of the church, including resource sharing, education, public witness, advocacy, and fundraising. Commissioners may wish to lift up particular functions

as denominational offices can have a range of emphases. The General Assembly Council's comment on the programs involved is properly comprehensive and signals about the availability of resources for the office are very hopeful. This office could play a key role in implementing both environmental and energy policies, such as "The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming," being considered this year by the 218th General Assembly (2008). While necessarily requiring valuable funds, guidance on energy retrofitting and new technologies from such an office could also be a source of great cost savings by the church. Acknowledging that program funds are limited, ecumenical experience also shows that environmental programs can attract joint funding from within and beyond the church.

Item 08-10 asks that previous General Assembly policy (which both overtures list carefully but not exhaustively) be reaffirmed. This is significant for it indicates that the church has been at the forefront of environmental witness and education and has been correct in its estimation of the danger of global warming for at least fifteen years. The office has also been influential in developing respected, voluntary corporate codes of conduct as well as developing support for environmental protection legislation. It could be noted as well that Presbyterians such as Holmes Rolston III, William Gibson, and Dieter Hessel have been leaders in environmental theology, as reflected in the inclusion of environmental concerns in "A Brief Statement of Faith" (1990, *The Book of Confessions*).

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 08-10 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) to reinstate the Office of Environmental Justice in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a vital, integral part of the ministry and mission of the church.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 08-10 be approved.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns would like for the assembly to be aware of the following policy statement: *The Hazardous Waste, Race, and the Environment*. This mandate was approved by the 207th General Assembly (1995).

#### *Rationale*

The ACREC believes environmental racism must be part of the duties of the Office of Environmental Justice.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 08-10 asks for reaffirmation of the past statements on protection of the environment and for the reinstatement of the Office of Environmental Justice as a vital part of our church's ministry.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 08-10 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC supports and encourages the reaffirmation of all past statements on protection of the environment. We support the reinstatement of the office when resources are available (Item 08-11) and it does not negatively impact existing justice ministries.

At this time, we do not support Item 08-10, which asks for the reinstatement of the Office of Environmental Justice without regard to cost. Because of limited resources, we would suggest the linking with the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC-USA), which has a team of twelve persons working on environmental justice resources, which may be approved for our use in the PC(USA). The General Assembly Council (GAC) mission work plan for 2009 and 2010 will have resources persons to track this and distribute this material to our churches and middle governing bodies.

**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-10**

*Comment on Item 08-10—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council (GAC) agrees with the concerns addressed in Item 08-10 and Item 08-11, and reaffirms the intention of the 202nd General Assembly (1990) policy statement “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” that called for a dual focused strategy that would embody the church’s commitment to caring for God’s creation. This strategy recommended that the GAC develop new creative ministry initiatives for healing the environment and called upon the GAC to incorporate caring for God’s creation into existing GAC ministries.

Recognizing that God’s good creation is suffering from the impact of environmental degradation, climate change, and significant loss of biodiversity, the General Assembly Council has determined that the 2009 and 2010 Mission Work Plan and budget includes significant emphasis, support, and staffing for caring for God’s creation as a vital part of the mission of the church.

This revitalized ministry will focus on equipping the whole church to care for creation and will serve as an entry point for church members, congregations, and middle governing bodies seeking advice, resources, and networking to nurture their faith and witness on behalf of God’s creation. It will work with a reenergized network of stewardship of creation enablers to foster networking, communication of effective ideas for congregational practices, and leadership development.

In addition, it will coordinate environmental ministries already underway in the General Assembly Council, including but not limited to environmental work being done by the Hunger Program; Presbyterian World Mission area coordinators; Racial Justice ministries; Presbyterian Women; Peacemaking; Presbyterian United Nations Office; Washington Office; Self-Development of People; Office of Theology, Worship, and Education; and Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI).

A staff project team will develop and implement a focused strategy to infuse environmental stewardship into “theological work, evangelism, education, justice and peacemaking, worship and liturgy, public witness, global mission and congregational service and action at the local community level” (1990 policy).

The General Assembly Council advises that the General Assembly prayerfully support this commitment to environmental stewardship and encourages the whole church to engage in ministry that heals and restores God’s creation.

**Item 08-11**

**[The assembly answered Item 08-11 by the action taken on Item 08-10. See pp. 22, 23.]**

*On Reinstating an Office for Environmental Justice as a Priority as Resources Allow—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.*

The Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to request the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council to reinstate an office for environmental justice in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a priority as soon as resources may allow.

***Rationale***

Reaffirmation of the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215, and 216th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006) will reflect the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is an essential part of the Christian Faith.

Providing an office for environmental justice has served as a vital link between the General Assembly Office and the local church, providing essential leadership and resources. Prior office/staff have served to interpret environmental issues, stewardship of creation issues, and to help put into action the other resolutions the church has already put into place. The Office of Environmental Justice (a former office of the General Assembly Council) was removed at a time critical to sustaining the planet and life on earth as we know it.

Scripture proclaims, “You are the Lord, you alone; you have made heaven, the heavens of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. To all of them you give life, and the host of heaven worships you” (Neh. 9:6).



Ours is a God concerned not only with humanity but all of creation, a God whose spirit is the breath of all life and whose glory is manifest in the creation we share.

The *Book of Order* (W-7.5001) states that “God calls the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit to participate in God’s work of creation and preservation.” In (W-7.5003), it reminds us that we are “stewards of God’s creation who hold the earth in trust” Justice, peace, and the environment are interrelated. Whenever we humans abuse the environment, whenever we engage in non-sustainable consumption of our earth’s finite resources, we are not only endangering the future of life on our planet, but we are committing acts of violence and injustice against other life—both present and future.

Protecting and restoring creation is central to our own survival.

Caring for the environment is another way to care for people. We care about people who are hungry and impoverished as well as people who are the victims of pollution and resource depletion; we care about people who share the planet with us today as well as future generations. When we think of loving and caring for our neighbor as Jesus taught us, let us realize that we all live upwind and upstream from someone else—both in time and space. Ecosystems and people systems are intricately interwoven and interconnected, forming the tapestry of life.

We in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a rich tradition of justice and reverence for life. Included in our mission is responsible and faithful stewardship of God’s earth. We have been commanded to tend the garden.

Historical References [Note: Identical to references in Item 08-10]:

In 1954, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America stated:

We call upon the Christian conscience to recognize that our stewardship of the earth and water involves both a land-use program that recognizes the interdependence of soil, water and man and the development of a responsible public policy which will resist the exploitation of land, water, and other natural resources, including forests, for selfish purposes and maintain intelligent conservation for the sustenance of all living creatures through future generations (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1954, p. 198).

This stewardship commitment has been repeated and reaffirmed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors, as follows:

1967 The Confession of 1967 stresses the justice of sharing resources and the interdependence of resources and living creatures.

1971 The 183rd General Assembly (1971) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America accepts the Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal statement that calls for a new order of values based on an “eco-ethic” and a Statement on Environmental Renewal (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 578–83).

1975 A recommendation is made to the 187th General Assembly to affirm advocacy of the protection of wildlife areas and parklands (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1975, Part I, p. 59).

1980 The 192nd General Assembly votes to (1) develop educational resources on the adverse impact that careless technology has on the environment and health of the unborn; (2) instruct the Board of Investment Committee to review corporate responsibility regarding manufacture of dioxins (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1980, Part I, p. 56).

1981 The 193rd General Assembly (1981) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) pledges support of the United Nations Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade, 1981–1990, calling upon Presbyterians to develop lifestyles that are consistent with the necessity to conserve water (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 254).

1983 The 195th General Assembly (1983) urges the session of each congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to consider making a “commitment to peacemaking” that included making peace with the earth—involve the congregation in efforts to protect and restore the environment (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, pp. 438–39).

1984 The 196th General Assembly (1984) calls upon Congress of the United States to reduce the emissions of sulphur dioxide and the oxides of nitrogen to a level that will protect the most sensitive environment and states that human stewardship is not a dominion of mastery and calls us to exercise respect for the integrity of natural systems and for the limits that nature places on economic growth and material consumption (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 348–49).

1987 The 199th General Assembly (1987) votes to urge the United States government to assure acceptable disposal sites for high-level nuclear waste (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 865–66). It also votes to urge each presbytery and local church

to encourage and support alternatives to pesticides and support the victims of pesticide poisoning (*Minutes*, 1987, Part I, p. 796).

1988 The Environmental Justice Office is created to study past environmental policies of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States to create a combined report of environmental concerns for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Environmental Justice Office is a ministry of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), lodged in the National Ministries Division, Social Justice Program Area, and is now actively involved in creation care and environmental justice issues (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, pp. 671–72).

1989 The 201st General Assembly (1989) calls for governments to strengthen regulations and enforcement regarding transportation of oil and hazardous substances, in response to the Exxon-Valdez tanker spill in 1989 (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 642).

1990 The 202nd General Assembly (1990) passes “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” affirming “creation cries out in this time of ecological crises,” calling the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respond to this cry and “engage in an effort to make the 1990s the ‘turnaround decade,’” providing the foundation for the work of the Environmental Justice Office. Also, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) calls attention to the problem of global warming and encourages the United States government to take steps toward incorporating environmental damage and depletion into “full-cost pricing” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp. 646–70).

The Affirmation of Faith from that General Assembly notes that “Restoring Creation is God’s own work in our time,” and that “The love of neighbor, particularly ‘the least’ of Christ’s brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death. . . . The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake. . . . In this critical time of transition to a new era, God’s new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 647).

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1996 The 208th General Assembly adopts the paper “Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development” as policy for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Just and sustainable human development is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future; it necessarily involves the integration of economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 524ff).

1998 The 210th General Assembly (1998) calls upon the United States to ratify the protocol negotiated in Kyoto and urges Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and institutions to pursue energy efficiency and conservation in their buildings and property.

1999 The 211th General Assembly (1999) again calls upon the U.S. to ratify the Kyoto Protocol; urges the United States to go beyond Kyoto targets for carbon dioxide emission reductions; directs the Presbyterian Center in Louisville and all other properties of the General Assembly to minimize fossil fuel energy (along with urging local congregations to do the same); and directs the General Assembly to promote education regarding global warming and other environmental concerns (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 669–70).

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2006 The 217th General Assembly (2006) asked that the church ask its members to make a bold witness by aspiring to carbon neutral lives (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 896–97). It was noted that “without significant changes in public policy and corporate behavior to complement actions of personal discipleship, massive and irreversible climate changes will only accelerate over the next century” (PC(USA) Memorandum; Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, December 4, 2006)

[Note: Major portions of the rationale section of this overture were drafted by Earthkeepers, a mission unit of MOSJ and Heartland Presbytery’s chapter of the national group, Presbyterians for Restoring Creation.]

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 08-11 be answered by the action taken on Item 08-10.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 08-11 asks for the reinstatement of the Office of Environmental Justice as resources allow.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 08-11 be approved.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC supports and encourages the reaffirmation of all past statements on protection of the environment and support the reinstatement of the office when resources are available. Those who have the least power and resources are always the ones most affected by environmental destruction. Typically women and children are those who suffer the most and have the least resources to move or change their environment. The ACWC counsels increased attention to dimensions of race, class, and gender in all environmental and climate study and policy development. Too often, our zeal to do ecological justice ignores effects on people without resources and power. Justice work requires balancing both human and environmental concerns.

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#### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-11

*Comment on Item 08-11—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council (GAC) agrees with the concerns addressed in Item 08-10 and Item 08-11, and reaffirms the intention of the 202nd General Assembly (1990) policy statement “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” that called for a dual focused strategy that would embody the church’s commitment to caring for God’s creation. This strategy recommended that the GAC develop new creative ministry initiatives for healing the environment and called upon the GAC to incorporate caring for God’s creation into existing GAC ministries.

Recognizing that God’s good creation is suffering from the impact of environmental degradation, climate change, and significant loss of biodiversity, the General Assembly Council has determined that the 2009 and 2010 Mission Work Plan and budget includes significant emphasis, support, and staffing for caring for God’s creation as a vital part of the mission of the church.

This revitalized ministry will focus on equipping the whole church to care for creation and will serve as an entry point for church members, congregations, and middle governing bodies seeking advice, resources, and networking to nurture their

faith and witness on behalf of God’s creation. It will work with a reenergized network of stewardship of creation enablers to foster networking, communication of effective ideas for congregational practices, and leadership development.

In addition, it will coordinate environmental ministries already underway in the General Assembly Council, including but not limited to environmental work being done by the Hunger Program; Presbyterian World Mission area coordinators; Racial Justice ministries; Presbyterian Women; Peacemaking; Presbyterian United Nations Office; Washington Office; Self-Development of People; Office of Theology, Worship, and Education; and Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI).

A staff project team will develop and implement a focused strategy to infuse environmental stewardship into “theological work, evangelism, education, justice and peacemaking, worship and liturgy, public witness, global mission and congregational service and action at the local community level” (1990 policy).

The General Assembly Council advises that the General Assembly prayerfully support this commitment to environmental stewardship and encourages the whole church to engage in ministry that heals and restores God’s creation.

## Item 08-12

[The assembly approved Item 08-12 as amended. See pp. 22, 24.]

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve “Funding Christ’s Mission Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (see Attachment 1) as its mission funding strategy, and that this report supersede and replace the “Comprehensive Mission Funding Strategy Report” as approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998) (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, pp. 209ff).**

### *Rationale*

Developing mission funding strategies is a focus for General Assembly Council work about once a decade. The previous mission funding strategy, “Comprehensive Mission Funding Strategy Report” was approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998). In order to eliminate potential confusion between multiple mandates, the task force recommends that upon the approval of this report, previous strategies set forth in the 1998 report no longer function as policy.

### **Attachment 1**

Funding Christ’s Work Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Report of the Mission Funding Task Force to GAC

#### A. A SYSTEM OF GIVING

1. We propose that the General Assembly Council develop a system of giving which preserves the equal [~~worth~~] [importance] of both shared and designated mission giving as faithful ways to support Christ’s mission. There are two components of mission support:

Funding for General Mission (Shared Mission Giving)—gifts with no restrictions, for the overall support of the adopted budgets of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly.

Funding for Specific Mission (Designated Mission Giving)—gifts, with restrictions, for use within the adopted budgets of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly.

#### Background

As the task force members examined the current giving patterns of individual Presbyterians and governing bodies (excluding the General Assembly), we recognized that the current funding system is composed of two basic, yet interdependent, components, each of which is fundamental to the life of the church. The mission of the PC(USA) is most fully alive when each Presbyterian and each governing body is involved with and supports both components.

*Funding for General Mission* (Shared Mission Giving)—This component demonstrates our ecclesiastical, organic interdependence, expressed through common mission relationships among the governing bodies, as well as providing resources for the PC(USA) to be a prophetic voice of God. This funding supports mission work in line with the Mission Work Plan of the PC(USA); as well as providing support for mission partnership funding, stewardship education, and mission interpretation.

*Funding for Specific Mission* (Designated Mission Giving)—This component demonstrates the Spirit at work in specific ways, and celebrates the particular passionate and theologically grounded commitments to mission made by our members and governing bodies. This

funding stream currently provides designated or restricted funding to validated mission of the PC(USA) as well as special offerings, designated mission support, extra commitment opportunities and, of course, per capita.

A system of giving which preserves the equal [worth] [importance] of both forms of giving will provide every governing body and individual Presbyterian an opportunity to “select” the mission work they wish to support. We hope each governing body will engage in all forms of giving as a sign of their Presbyterian connection and their discernment of God’s spirit.

Aware that providing donors with a “shopping” list might tend to undercut shared mission giving, one of the primary options available and the first one presented in all communications would be “Funding for General Mission.” Funding for General Mission, under the stewardship of the General Assembly Council would fund mission and ministry not otherwise financially supported, to begin new initiatives or to “top off” and adequately fund work that is supported, but not to the extent necessary to make it completely effective or even viable.

~~[Likewise, where a particular ministry through designated giving is oversubscribed, an understanding would be communicated as part of the process of seeking support that funding received in excess of the amount requested would be channeled to a similar ministry, where possible. And, further, such excess subscription would stay within the particular mission area as the ministry identified for support.] [Excess subscription would stay within the particular ministry identified for support. If the particular ministry is no longer in existence or ceases to be designated, any excess would stay within the particular mission area as the ministry identified for support.]~~

Such a system would need a form/format that would be given to every governing body in the church for their completion and would be available to individual Presbyterians and non-governing body groups so that they might have an opportunity to provide their own direct support to General Mission or Specific Mission.

2. We propose that the General Assembly Council gradually transition the two current forms of designated mission giving, Direct Mission Support and Extra Commitment Opportunities, into “Funding for Specific Mission” over a five-year period beginning in 2009.

#### Background

One of the most commonly heard responses to the current mission funding system is that its complexity prevents ease of use by donors. Many Presbyterians are finding it easier to give to other causes instead of Presbyterian mission. As part of our emphasis on improved communication, the task force seeks to streamline the number of mission giving options, so that it is easier to fund Christ’s mission through the PC(USA).

Changes with this level of complexity also affect the accounting systems that support Presbyterian mission, therefore we recognize that the transition will be gradual.

#### B. A SEASON OF INTERPRETATION

1. We propose that the General Assembly Council recommend that the General Assembly set aside a period of time each year, beginning in 2009, for the church to covenant to interpret and promote its work in the context of the mission programs of the local, regional, and national governing bodies of the PC(USA). During this season of interpretation, the stories of our participation in the Realm (Kingdom) of God would be presented as an integrated whole with international, national, regional, and local missions all working together to the glory of God.

#### Background

A quick analysis of current giving trends reveals that the areas most consistently demonstrating growth are those successfully engaging the giver. The traditional system of Presbyterian mission support relies primarily on appealing to the giver’s loyalty to the institution. It says, “Give because you are a Presbyterian!” rather than, “Give because your gifts can change lives and further the Realm (Kingdom) of God here on earth.” A new approach would require the church to interpret the mission program of the church for potential givers. This approach would not discount traditional stewardship but would highlight and promote the concept of giving as a form of Christian discipleship. Presbyterians would be reminded of their participation in the eschatological reality of God at work in their lives and in God’s world through stories that demonstrate the advance of Christ’s mission.

This churchwide period of interpretation and celebration would be a collaborative effort wherein governing bodies would partner across all levels of the church. Each governing body would help promote and interpret not only its particular mission emphasis, but also that of its related governing body partners. For example, during this season, a particular presbytery would not only be promoting its work and mission to its congregations it would participate in facilitating the promotion and celebration of the work and mission of its synod and of the General Assembly.

This season of interpretation should not be confused with earlier patterns of mission interpretation and promotion within the church, such as the Witness Season or the Witness Offering. The Witness Season was an annual period of mission education observed in many congregations, with a different geographical focus on international mission each year. In many congregations this was accompanied by a Witness Offering, a special offering which received funds for international mission, evangelism and new church development, and educational materials for racial ethnic congregations.

The season of interpretation called for in this recommendation will not be part of a special offering, and will not be focused on one specific understanding of mission. Instead, it will focus on the broad sense of mission, defined earlier in this paper: “proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.”

## C. COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDS DEVELOPMENT

1. We propose that General Assembly Council direct the Communications and Funds Development ministry area to be the lead office in implementing the season of interpretation, and that the General Assembly Council allocate sufficient personnel and budget resources to:

- Develop, produce, and distribute promotional materials
- Coordinate the sharing of mission stories with governing bodies and support their efforts at promotion and celebration.
- Coordinate the dates for the season of interpretation, paying special attention to the flow of the Christian calendar and the needs of the denomination.

## Background

Leadership from the Communications and Funds Development ministry area will be critical for a successful implementation of a season of interpretation. A variety of resources will be needed by congregations and governing bodies. The task force expects that the work of the staff team will be guided by an analysis of the Mission Challenge '07 project currently underway, and that materials will be tested for effectiveness before they are distributed to congregations.

2. We propose that the General Assembly Council adopt these priorities for funds development work within the Communications and Funds Development ministry area, in its role as a coordinating center for providing promotion, support, training, interpretation, communication and evaluation functions; and that implementation of these priorities be reviewed by the appropriate General Assembly Council committee.

- a. Create and coordinate mission interpretation and stewardship resources for congregations and presbyteries to use in:
  - (1) Cultivating mission development and funding.
  - (2) Learning how to ask for mission funding support.
  - (3) Encouraging giving to mission by individuals and congregations.
- b. Establish processes to coordinate promotion and interpretation for mission programs in partnership with governing bodies and other programs of the PC(USA).
- c. Promote funds development efforts and opportunities for mission in governing bodies, through means such as specific appeals, major campaigns, large gifts, planned/deferred gifts, and for both designated and undesignated giving.
- d. Encourage and assist middle governing bodies and sessions in interpreting the work and mission of the PC(USA), through its General Assembly Council, by putting a “face” on mission and helping to share the stories of Presbyterian mission throughout the whole church through related networks.
- e. Encourage work with national and international network partners, such as the Validated Mission Support Groups and others.
- f. Develop, using national and ecumenical research, and disseminate proven techniques and guidelines for effective mission funds support.
- g. Design, implement, and monitor effective processes of funds transfer, thanking donors and coordinating donor data at the General Assembly level.
- h. Create materials that interpret mission both through the General Assembly Council, and across the denomination.
- i. Integrate lessons learned from the recent Joining Hearts and Hands Campaign into an ongoing and effective long-term funds development effort throughout the church.
- j. Publish resource materials, easily accessible to donors and governing bodies, and ensure that such materials are sensitive to a variety of cultures that are part of our church and are available in a variety of languages.
- k. Maintain close working relationship with staff from the Theology Worship and Education program area, on a daily basis (possibly through an embedded staff person), so that programs demonstrate sound theological principles.
- l. Coordinate, schedule, and evaluate special offerings, capital campaigns, and other forms of designated giving, in partnership with other agencies and entities of the church, including affiliated organizations with historical ties to mission and mission funding in the PC(USA).
- m. Provide constituency services related to stewardship and mission funding, as necessary, in partnership with middle governing bodies.

## Background

We celebrate that the new structure of the General Assembly Council has included an office for communications and funds development. We also celebrate the consolidation of mission interpretation and stewardship functions at the General Assembly Council level into a single body. As the task force listened to individuals representing a broad constituency of stakeholders in mission programs and governing bodies across the PC(USA), we heard the need for coordinated and accountable approaches to mission funding resources and funds development. A review of the PCUSA's *Organization for Mission, Appendix A—Financial Issues (2000)* ("Appendix A"), wherein the previous churchwide funding plan was articulated, led the task force members to conclude that while the document outlined a collection and distribution process for mission funding, it lacked a foundational process for the continuing interpretation of, and funds development for, wider mission giving, a practice which is no longer the norm with individuals and congregations. (See section G.2, a. & b. of Appendix A.) As mission funds are directed towards mission programs both in and outside of governing bodies in designated ways, a mission funding system for the whole church needs the support of coordinated administration, educational resources, current and creative funds development approaches, transparency and accountability which reflect the emerging shape of the PC(USA).

The task force has learned that advocacy for mission programs consistent with Reformed theology and values are a high priority. We have heard repeatedly that communication and education for mission, in formats that reflect the diversity of the PC(USA), are lacking. Many congregations and individuals are unable to use the interpretive and stewardship materials that are available. The task force believes that the General Assembly Council must do a better job of making materials available in a variety of formats, so that they can be used by the diverse constituencies of the PC(USA).

Members, pastors, and congregations are bewildered by the variety of major campaigns, offerings, and funds development programs within PC(USA) entities. The complex array of mission funding options has stymied the desire of many Presbyterians to participate in funding Christ's mission as manifested in the work and mission of the PC(USA).

In addition, the task force has recognized that "givers" give generously to organizations that they know and trust. An identity is important. Of equal importance is the need for an organization to operate with integrity to its purpose and with transparency toward its "givers" regarding the source and use of funds.

While we acknowledge the tension between encouraging the freedom to promote mission support for programs at all governing body levels and coordinating the asking of such support at a time when many congregations and presbyteries are experiencing financial restrictions to their own mission, we do not endorse a theology of scarcity. We believe that communication has been one of our obstacles, not a scarcity of resources.

By focusing on these priorities, the task force believes that the General Assembly Council can improve communication regarding mission funding, and make it easier for Presbyterians to participate joyfully in Christ's mission at all levels of the church.

3. We propose that the General Assembly Council direct the Communications and Funds Development ministry area to create, promote, and protect a consistent brand identity for the mission agency of the General Assembly with implementation to begin in 2009, reducing redundancy and addressing the needs of various targeted audiences, and to report back to the appropriate General Assembly Council committee.

## Background

The Mission Funding Task Force has not worked in a vacuum. As we completed our assignment, we were aware of other activities, such as the staff-led, Communication Strategy Project Team. Our mission funding activities are not possible in an isolated environment. The completion and implementation of a brand identity strategy is an important ingredient for all future funds development work by the General Assembly Council.

## D. A SHARED SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION &amp; ACCOUNTABILITY

1. We propose that the General Assembly Council direct the Communications and Funds Development ministry area, in collaboration and consultation with the Shared Services ministry area, to ensuring that the principles of accountability, accessibility, and information management (including processes and avenues for the free exchange of information) be incorporated into the administration and oversight of the mission funding system of the church.

## Background

Scripture clearly tells us that accountability is an important part of Christian stewardship as we endeavor to live as faithful disciples of Christ. In 2001, the General Assembly adopted "Living Grateful Lives: Stewardship Theology in Our Time," as a framework for responsible stewardship of all the resources that God provides. The task force, therefore, acknowledges the need for accountability as responsible stewards. On this subject, however, the task force notes that budgets, timeliness, and accessibility to information vary greatly across the breadth of the church, and these factors impede accountability. There are frustrations with the reporting of contribution data for the numerous giving opportunities within the church. The task force has heard that the church needs to leverage existing channels of funding mission more effectively and provide for timely transfer of funds. The system of giving needs to be more transparent and accountable to donor intent.

2. We propose that the General Assembly Council request the Office of the General Assembly to collect statistical data of synods and presbyteries in the same manner that they collect data from sessions, and that it, too, be published.

#### Background

Every effort needs to be made to ensure that accountability and the free exchange of information are encouraged at all levels of the church regardless of the funding systems that are in place.

3. We propose that the system of giving developed by the General Assembly Council fairly and accurately allocate all costs associated with individual projects in the General Assembly mission budget, including the costs associated with the systems necessary for the support, promotion, and accountability of each item; and that the results of this system be communicated to the church as part of the General Assembly Council's mission interpretation. This transition will be gradually phased in over a five-year period, beginning in 2009.

#### Background

The task force believes that our system of giving needs to be more transparent and accountable to donor intent.

Previous mission funding strategies have used designated mission giving opportunities as a means to fund direct mission, and undesignated mission giving as a means of funding the administrative expenses associated with mission. The task force views this as an artificial division, which fails to communicate clearly to donors the costs of doing mission. Allocating the full cost of mission activities in each item enables the church to communicate more clearly both the need for funding, and accountability for how the funds have been used.

For example, a governing body or individual choosing to support racial-ethnic education would be aware that included in the cost of that ministry would be direct expenses such as salaries, benefits, and promotional costs AND pro rata overhead expenses such as its share of financial systems, administrative support personnel, paper, utilities, the salary of the particular area director, etc. This would mean that the costs of doing mission would be spread more evenly among all the ministries that are supported by, carried out through or passed on to, the ultimate user by the national offices.

4. We propose that the General Assembly Council recommend the amendment of Appendix A of the *Organization for Mission* as set forth in Attachment H to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

#### Background

As noted previously, Appendix A (of the *Organization for Mission*) is a document that outlines a collection and distribution process for mission funding. What we have learned is that though the process outlined and envisioned in that document was a good one, it was never successfully implemented. This was in part due to the length of the document, and an unintentional failure to make its contents known and enforceable. In any event, it is apparent that there remains a need for such a document that is more enforceable, shorter and clearer.

Further, we note that non-compliance with some portions of Appendix A risks the federal tax-exempt status of the PC(USA), therefore it is important that the document state accurately the mission funding and accounting policies of the church.

#### E. STEWARDSHIP

1. We propose that the General Assembly Council broaden its focus on stewardship by changing the name and orientation of the Shared Support Committee to become the Council's fifth goal area committee, "Stewardship and Shared Support." All matters of stewardship relating to the General Assembly Council will be coordinated by this goal area committee.

#### Background

Any faithful funding system to support the mission and ministry of the PC(USA) must be embedded in our theology of stewardship. We affirm that stewardship is not merely one part of Christian discipleship, but involves every aspect of life as we respond gratefully to God's grace and goodness. Stewardship is the prayerful exercise of discernment of God's will, followed by careful choices that show Christ is the cornerstone of our lives. Stewardship requires us to be good caretakers of the world God has entrusted to us, and to seek to do for others as Jesus would do. According to the *Book of Order*, one of the central affirmations of faith in the Reformed Tradition is "faithful stewardship" that "shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation" (G-2.0500a). Practicing stewardship is far more than raising funds; it is nothing less than our exercise of discipleship as followers of Jesus Christ.

Currently there are four goal area committees within the General Assembly Council: Evangelism and Witness, Justice and Compassion, Spirituality and Discipleship, and Leadership and Vocation. In addition, a fifth committee is charged with matters of shared support (including shared services, communication, and funds development.) This change seeks recognition, among our most visible goals, that stewardship is central to our calling as Christians and to our organizational life as the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

This change would not require any additional elected members, or a reduction in the number of members currently assigned to each goal area committee. Instead, it would move the Council from a four goal area committee plus one support committee to a five goal area committee structure.

In the Mission Work Plan, work would be designed to support all give of the goal areas, giving the church a broader focus on the centrality of stewardship in all we do.



## F. PER CAPITA

1. We propose that the General Assembly Council reactivate the General Assembly Council/Committee on the Office of the General Assembly per capita table for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the mission and work covered by the per capita budget and the general mission budget to determine what work and ministry would best be accomplished in which budget.

## Background

The task force gave consideration to per capita matters as we progressed through our charge to “develop a multi-dimensional funding design for the mission, program, and administration of the whole church, built upon relationships among sessions, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly.”

The task force learned that per capita, though flawed, remains a working part of the current funding system, and therefore it should be left intact and outside the design set forth in our other recommendations.

Nonetheless, we have learned that there are perhaps ministries and work currently included in the General Assembly mission budget that might better be included in the per capita budget and vice versa. Previously, the mechanism for reviewing the allocation of per capita funds was the General Assembly Council/Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Joint Per Capita table. The task force believes that reactivating this joint table would improve our accountability and communication regarding the per capita budgets.

## G. CONCLUDING MATTERS

1. We propose that the General Assembly Council adopt “Funding Christ’s Mission Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” as its mission funding strategy, and recommend to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that this report supersede and replace the “Comprehensive Mission Funding Strategy Report” as approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998).

## Background

Developing mission funding strategies is a focus for General Assembly Council work about once a decade. The previous mission funding strategy, “Comprehensive Mission Funding Strategy Report” was approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998). In order to eliminate potential confusion between multiple mandates, the task force recommends that upon the approval of this report, previous strategies set forth in the 1998 report no longer function as policy.

*Overall Background*

## The Work of the Mission Funding Task Force

## A. THE ASSIGNMENT

As part of the 2005–2006 General Assembly Council Mission Work Plan, approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004), the General Assembly Council was instructed to “develop and propose a conceptual framework for a new mission funding system for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 479).

The Special Offerings Task Force that also reported to the 216th General Assembly (2004) concurred with this action, saying, “changes that have taken place in mission giving and funding make the present system unable to meet current and future mission needs. For example, several worthy requests were directed to the Special Offering Review Task Force for which no appropriate funding was available through Special Offerings. This calls for a more comprehensive review of mission funding than is in the charge of any one existing task force or committee” (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 494).

As the task force began its work and solicited feedback from the many partners involved in the churchwide mission funding system, the task force developed a charge for its work that has reminded it of the full scope of the task: “To develop a multi-dimensional funding design for the mission, program, and administration of the whole church, built upon relationships among sessions, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly.”

The 217th General Assembly (2006) sent further instructions to the General Assembly Council and its Mission Funding Task Force regarding the allocation of administrative costs in the mission funding system:

That the 217th General Assembly:

1. instruct the General Assembly Council (GAC) to assist congregations in communicating to their membership the reality of changed patterns in unrestricted giving and the resulting cost implications of administering restricted funds, and
2. implore the GAC and the Mission Funding Task Force earnestly to seek alternative ways of budgeting in order to deal with this changing reality. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 649)

## B. MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE

In September of 2004, the General Assembly Council ratified the appointment of the following council members to serve on the task force: Charles Easley, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta; Carol Hylkema, Synod of the Covenant; Linda Knieriemen, Presbytery of Lake Michigan; Reg Kuhn, Homestead Presbytery; Paul Masquelier, Presbytery of San Jose; Conrad Rocha, Synod of the Southwest; Dan Schomer, Eastminster Presbytery.

After an initial meeting, the task force was expanded to include representation from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, given the integral nature of the per capita funding to the mission funding systems of the church: Katherine Cunningham, Ridge-wood, N.J.; Jim Collie, Albuquerque, N.Mex.

Paul Masquelier served as task force chair from September 2004 until March 2005. Conrad Rocha has been chair of the task force for the remainder of its work.

The terms of service on the task force for Paul Masquelier and Katherine Cunningham came to an end in 2006. At this time, additional members were added to fill vacancies in representation and provide additional expertise: Dennis Hughes, Edmonds, WA (Committee on the Office of the General Assembly member); Linda Toth, Presbytery of Eastern Oregon (General Assembly Council member).

The task force has been ably supported by a diverse group of staff representing both different phases of General Assembly Council leadership and particular expertise in aspects of the church's funding system, including: Joey Bailey, Beth Basham, Barry Creech, John Detterick, Debbie Gardiner, Ann Gillies, Claude Godwin, Curtis Kearns, Marian McClure, Gradye Parsons, Sherri Pettway, Karen Schmidt, Alejandra Sherman, Gary Torrens, Linda Valentine, and Keith Wulff.

#### C. MEETINGS

Since its formation in September 2004, the task force has met eighteen times, through face-to-face meetings and conference calls.

#### D. DATA GATHERING

The task force has undertaken active information gathering as to the real and perceived strengths and weakness of the current mission funding system. The task force has conducted extensive research into the current system, sponsored focus groups, commissioned a survey by the Presbyterian Panel focusing on mission funding issues and participated in other research. See Attachment A. In addition, the task force has been in conversation with other denominations as to their mission funding systems. For a full list of the groups consulted by the task force, see Attachment B.

The initial round of data gathering led the task force to adopt a Statement of Values to guide its work. See Attachment C. These values provide the 'big picture' context that kept the task force grounded in the feedback received from across the church.

#### E. REVIEW AND CRITIQUE

The task force recognizes and affirms that mission funding is ultimately determined and guided by local sessions and presbyteries. Thus, the task force is committed to the principle that any change in the mission funding system of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the "PC(USA)") can only come about as a result of the active participation and affirmation of these bodies. The task force members believe that it is imperative that if the church is to remain relevant to its constituent parts and to be actively engaged in the work and ministry to which we are all called, the church must broaden its vision to include opportunities for partnering with, and encouraging, its people in the work and ministry to which they are involved.

While the task force has been in active dialogue with the church during its work, and anticipates such dialogue to continue (particularly with middle governing bodies) after it has concluded its work, its members have come to the realization that the issue is not one of creating a design, but of proposing a process by which that dialogue may continue and evolve. Finally, we note that though we will use the work and ministries either supported or carried out by the national offices of PC(USA) in modeling this system, we hope it will be adopted for use by all governing bodies of the PC(USA).

The task force has shared its working documents widely as part of its effort to work collegially with each of the stakeholders in the mission funding system. In 2005, synod executives, the Association of Executive Presbyters, and the General Assembly Council received copies of the "Proposed Framework for a Churchwide Funding System" and the "Values Statement" developed by the task force. This feedback was used to refine the developing conclusions of the task force.

A basic draft of the task force report was prepared in 2006, and shared with the General Assembly Council at its February 2007 meeting, and then distributed to middle governing body executives for their review and comment, prior to this final version of the report.

The task force is grateful for the thoughtful and challenging comments that it has received from reviewers across the church. Such strong feedback demonstrates the connectional nature of the PC(USA) and the common stake that all parties share in Funding Christ's Mission.

#### Executive Summary

Any attempt to design a successful funding system that supports the ministry and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must be embedded in the theology of stewardship. Stewardship is not just one part of Christian discipleship but involves every aspect of life as we respond gratefully to God's grace and goodness.

God's Spirit alone enables faithfulness to Jesus Christ: Because God loves the world and Christ gave his life for it, God's Spirit calls us as individuals and as the Church to respond with our lives and resources.

The Mission Funding challenge facing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not a problem of resources, as Presbyterians are a people with abundant resources.

The primary challenges for the mission funding system of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are low awareness of Presbyterian mission, a preference for designated gifts, and a complicated funding system which is difficult to understand.

Therefore the task force recommends:

- a raised priority for the communications and funds development activities of the General Assembly Council,
- a revision of the funding system to broaden the availability of designated mission funding opportunities, and
- a new emphasis on simplified giving and accountable processes

so that all Presbyterians might more clearly understand the need for funding and accountability for how the funds have been used.

## Narrative Report

### PREFACE

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “PC(USA)”) struggles to find the best ways to address issues related to funding for the churchwide ministry and mission of our church, as it attempts to respond to the programmatic and leadership needs of congregations, their sessions and other governing bodies.

The task force listened to leaders from across the church through several rounds of focus groups, dialogue sessions, and feedback forums, so that its work would reflect the concerns of the PC(USA) at all levels.

In response to these conversations, the task force developed a statement of values to guide its work as foundational principles. Perceived and actual practices in the present mission funding system have tended to impinge and interrupt our ability to implement a funding design consistent with these values, therefore the task force is proposing changes to the processes that serve as the framework to any mission funding design.

The task force’s statement of values can be found in Attachment C. These values are being recommended for approval as part of our revision to Appendix A of the Organization for Mission.

Any attempt to design a successful funding system that supports the ministry and mission of the PC(USA) must be embedded in the theology of stewardship. In 2001, the 213th General Assembly approved the paper “Living Grateful Lives: Stewardship Theology in Our Time,” which sets forth our scripturally informed, historically rich understanding with a depth we could not attempt to duplicate here. We commend that document for further reading even as we affirm its insistence that stewardship is not merely one part of Christian discipleship, but involves every aspect of life as we respond gratefully to God’s grace and goodness. Stewardship requires us to prayerfully make choices that show Christ is the cornerstone of our very lives. Stewardship requires us to be good caretakers of the created world and to do for others as Jesus would have done. Practicing good stewardship is how we can best serve God as disciples of Christ.

### A. THEOLOGY: THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

God’s Spirit alone enables faithfulness to Jesus Christ: Because God loves the world and Christ gave his life for it, God’s Spirit calls us as individuals and as the Church to respond with our lives and resources.

#### *God’s Grace*

God’s graciousness to us in Jesus Christ is beyond measure and is not earned. The Holy Spirit invites our response to such grace: the offering of our whole being. Our generosity and our practices as stewards in all of life witness to God’s love.

#### *God’s Mission*

God’s intent is to bring all of creation back into right relationship with God through Jesus Christ. From the tree of knowledge in Genesis to the tree in Revelation whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, all of Scripture tells us about God’s comprehensive plan for salvation, God’s mission, and our role in it.

#### *God’s World*

Because God is sovereign over all, the good news of Jesus Christ is good news for all of life. The calling of every Christian is to demonstrate this fact in every sphere of life. God’s world is teeming with variety and richness. For this reason, the church’s organization for mission is, and must be, extremely diverse.

#### *God’s Church*

The church has a unique place in the constellation of organized mission endeavors. Through no merit of our own, God has given Christ’s church a special role in mission. Sometimes this role expresses itself in encouraging all believers in their various mission endeavors. It always expresses itself in the discernment processes and common enterprise of the visible body of Christ, organized in denominations and traditions. The ecumenical (“worldwide”) Christian church has a vast heritage of learning how to be faithful to God in mission, and members of the particular churches engage that heritage as part of their discipleship.

*Presbyterians in God's Mission, Church, and World*

The larger body of Christ values many of the characteristic gifts Presbyterians offer because of our mission heritage. Indeed, one of those characteristic gifts is the extent to which we also value and respect other Christians' roles in mission. We are ecumenically minded and we do mission in partnership. We do a great deal to develop leadership for the church and society through education and training. We share both people and resources. We understand the holistic call of mission and of the Gospel to involve us in both evangelism and justice ministries, always with joy and in Jesus Christ's ways. In addition, we seek to have integrity in our commitments, both in distant places and in our own communities.

## B. ENABLING DENOMINATIONAL MISSION

*A vision for the work and ministry of the Church as it is designed, validated and enacted through its members, congregations and governing bodies (collectively and individually).*

## Description/Definition

Presbyterians believe they can do more in mission, and do mission more effectively, when they do it together. In 1706, the first presbytery was organized in this country "to consult the most proper measures for advancing religion and propagating Christianity." Within a few years, they were encouraging offerings from individual congregations to support pious uses. From these simple beginnings, we see two prevailing actions to promote mission: One is to discern together the best way to conduct the mission of the church, and the other is to join together to support the mission of the whole church. Both of these are based on the original belief that when our resources are pooled together, we can do more in mission.

Christ's Great Commission defines our mission as a church and as individuals: "Go ... and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to [observe all that Christ has] commanded" (Mt. 28: 19, 20 RSV). For the purposes of this paper, "mission" is understood in its broadest sense: proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Presbyterians understand the Great Commission in the context of our own denominational proclamation that the "mission of the Church is given form by God's activity in the world as told in the Bible and understood by faith" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0100). To that end, this church, and, therefore, its people are called to participate in God's activity in the world through their life for others by: "(a) healing and reconciling and binding up wounds, (b) ministering to the needs of the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the powerless, (c) engaging in the struggle to free people from sin, fear, oppression, hunger, and injustice, (d) giving [of themselves and their] substance to the service of those who suffer, (e) sharing with Christ in [establishment] of [a] just, peaceable, and loving rule in the world" (*Book of Order*, G-3-0200(c)(3)).

The church in this new century resides and "does" mission within this Christian and denominational context. However, how that work and ministry are accomplished have changed dramatically from the post-World War II decades when Christians looked largely to the national denomination both to define and implement mission on their behalf. Today, congregations are once again much more directly involved in mission. The "people in the pews" are designing, validating and actively participating in ways wherein they personally engage as partners in God's activity in the world.

## Opportunities

These facts reveal the Spirit's intention that we continually are guided to recapture the biblical self-understanding of the church as the organically united, flexibly organized, and diversely gifted Body of Christ. In this new century, it is imperative that the church and its members remain centered on the Spirit's call to be actively engaged in Christ's work and ministry, ever deepening and broadening our vision as we seek opportunities for partnering with and encouraging God's people in the work and ministry to which they are called.

This will require that the church, including individual members, congregations, and governing bodies, strive to become more actively engaged in listening to and affirming each other's sense of the Spirit's call to faithfulness in mission. In addition, all will need to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the value of engaging with various secular, ecumenical and interfaith networks, para-church organizations, social service agencies, humanitarian and rescue relief projects and other objects of their various mission emphases. This will include not only where they are directing their dollars, but also where they are committing their time and talent.

This unique moment in the church's history offers opportunities for the constituent parts of the church to rediscover the value of common vision and coordinated and disciplined action in mission. Guided by God's Spirit, we are called to seek a new consensus about the roles we need our national church structures to play in support of local, regional, national and international mission, both in supporting the involvement of all disciples and in acting at times on their behalf.

## Challenges

The challenge to the church at all levels in being a listener, partner and encourager is to put aside the tendency quickly to judge, undervalue and dismiss mission emphases dear to others. The challenge to the more inclusive governing bodies will necessarily involve relinquishing varying levels of control over what is to be emphasized, designed, validated and carried out. The challenge to the less inclusive bodies will involve empowering others to play needed roles of leadership, coordination or collective witness.

## CONCLUSION

Our guiding principle and direction must be to honor Christ's Great Commission and to recognize that partnership with God in God's activity in the world is as mysterious and multi-faceted an undertaking as is the face of God, but we profess our faith in the Spirit's leading, and we must not fear what we do not always understand.

## C. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

The task force gathered input from across the church, through focus groups, specific survey research, and trend data through comparative statistics, using the denomination's Research Services. The results guided the task force to focus on a specific set of challenges.

- From 2004 to 2005, average per member giving increased nearly \$50 per member to \$984.41. In 2006, per member giving was even higher at \$1,040.43. (*See Attachment D*).
- From 2004 to 2005, contributions to congregations increased by more than \$68 million. In 2006, the figure was almost \$56 million higher than 2005. (*See Attachment D*).
- From 2004 to 2005, total receipts by congregations were up by more almost \$147 million. In 2006, the figure was \$132 million higher. (*See Attachment D*).
- In 2004, the difference between total congregational receipts and total congregational expenses produced a surplus of more than \$65 million. In 2005, that figure grew to \$128 million, and by 2006, it was \$251 million. (*See Attachment E*).

The task force found that resources were not the most pressing problem facing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Presbyterians are a people with abundant resources.

Instead, the feedback received by the task force suggested a different problem:

- In 2006, all forms of congregational giving to mission were down from the previous year (*See Attachment D*):
  - Local Mission—down \$1.6 million from \$155 million in 2005
  - Validated Mission—down \$25 million from \$136 million in 2005
  - Other Mission—down \$11 million from \$96 million in 2005.

Validated mission expenditures include all monies given to presbytery, synod, and General Assembly agencies, including payments toward mission budgets of these entities, special offerings, payments to the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan), and funds donated to all other PC(USA)-sponsored programs. Other mission refers to all mission causes outside of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) relationships.

- Over the past five years, there has been a gradual trend away from validated mission and toward other mission. Over that period, Validated mission giving has decreased by \$31 million, while other mission has increased by \$16 million.
- In 2001, the gap between validated mission and other mission was \$73 million, but in 2006, that figure is down to \$26 million. (*See Attachment F*).

The task force examined why Presbyterian giving would be collectively higher in all categories, but Presbyterian mission would be declining. The May 2005 Presbyterian Panel report shows some of the factors (*See Attachment A*):

- 84% of Presbyterian laity are either "little informed" or "not informed" about "the range and scope of Presbyterian mission," leaving only 16% who described themselves as "very informed" or "generally informed."
- Few pastors (only 16%) report being "very informed" about the range and scope of Presbyterian mission, but a majority (64%) is "generally informed."
- Relatively few (12%) members report very often or often wanting to know more about Presbyterian mission. Most (66%) want to know more occasionally or rarely.
- Only 27% of members place much importance on an agency's connection to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) when deciding to make a gift.
- Majorities of members (53%) and elders (58%) favor their congregation designating the gifts that it gives to Presbyterian mission.
- More than one-third of members, elders, pastors, and specialized clergy would give more of their charitable contributions to fund Presbyterian mission, if they knew how to do it.

These themes: low awareness of Presbyterian mission, a preference for designated gifts, and difficulty understanding the church's mission funding system are also reflected in the responses from focus groups conducted by Research Services (*See Attachment G* for the full report):

- What is covered by per capita is almost unknown.
- There is a need for a better way of communicating with members and clergy.
- We need to put a face on mission.
- Designated giving has to be part of the funding plan, but program areas should not have to raise their own money – therefore we should not go to a system based entirely on designated giving.
- The problem for many is the presbytery—as a receiving site, as mission interpreters, and in terms of congregational contact.
- Giving to the national level needs to be easier.
- Many pastors—like many people in our society today—have an anti-institutional bias, and this makes communication very important.
- Theological conflict or the theological positions of the General Assembly/General Assembly Council were rarely mentioned overtly (in relation to mission funding issues).

#### D. IMPACT OF THE TASK FORCE

As the research demonstrates, many of the answers to the current mission funding problem lay in better communication. The ongoing work of the task force has created synergy around these topics and resulted in solutions beyond the original scope of its mandate.

#### Communication and Funds Development Ministry Area Created

In part due to the work of the task force, the General Assembly Council has created a Communications and Funds Development ministry area, as one of three primary components of the staff structure. Led by a deputy executive director, this area will give the Council the means of integrating better communication with its funds development efforts. The task force has worked in close cooperation with the Council’s executive director during the formation of the ministry area, and has had the opportunity over the past six months to work with members of the staff of this new area. It is the feeling of the task force that this new area will be effective at bringing new solutions to these reported problems, and that with better communication will come additional resources for Presbyterian mission.

#### MGB/GAC Annual Meeting Established

Another area of improved communication for which the task force is proud to have played a part is the annual meeting of the General Assembly Council with middle governing body executives. The task force had several meetings with middle governing body executives and found that the conversation always brought us to a new understanding as we worked with each other. By working more diligently to be in conversation, the task force believes unity of mission will result, as well as improved communication within the church.

#### A Yes to Simplified Giving But No “Magic Pill”

While there are multiple recommendations, the task force, acknowledges the disappointment that some readers of this report will experience when they find that the changes are not a ‘magic pill’ that will quickly generate additional funds for mission. There is no quick magic solution to the funding issues facing the PC(USA). The task force has noted trends and seeks to be responsive to them by recommending changes that will accommodate new Presbyterian patterns of giving. The task force has also sought simplicity in the mission funding system, both through fewer giving options, and through increased accountability with donors at all levels of the church structure.

#### Appendix A Streamlined

The task force has also sought to simplify the complex mission funding system that has evolved since reunion. Appendix A of the *Organization for Mission* is the official policy document that governs the church’s funding system. In the recommendations of the task force, Appendix A has been streamlined by eliminating redundant citations from the *Book of Order* (while ensuring that the document is in compliance with the *Book of Order*). Sections of Appendix A for use by sessions, presbyteries, and synods have also been streamlined, since in practice these governing bodies are guided by the *Book of Order* and not Appendix A.

#### Collaboration and Partnering Among All Levels of PC(USA) Necessary

The success of this plan will be based on collaboration and partnering between all governing levels of our church. By stating this fact clearly, the task force acknowledges that many of the mission funding issues are relationship issues...issues of trust between members of the PC(USA). No member, nor any agency or governing body of the church alone can solve the relational issues that are affecting the PC(USA). Our calling, however, is not to solve trust issues, but to be engaged as faithful partners in Christ’s mission. Each of us is called to do our part to be faithful, if we are faithful, trust within our body will be built.

## ATTACHMENT A

## THE PRESBYTERIAN PANEL

## FUNDING CHRIST'S MISSION THROUGH THE PC(USA)

## The May 2005 Questionnaire

## Appendix

	Members	Elders	Ministers
Number of questionnaires mailed.....	692	1,029	1,181
Number of questionnaires returned.....	332	497	710 ‡
Percent returned.....	48%	48%	60%
‡ 450 pastors; 260 specialized clergy			

Note: "PC(USA) mission" refers to any program, project, service, resource, or personnel administered, produced, or funded by the General Assembly or the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in either the United States or overseas

Q1. In the last two years, have you ever wanted to know more about PC(USA) mission?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Yes, very often .....	3%	8%	10%	10%
Yes, often .....	9%	14%	27%	22%
Yes, occasionally.....	40%	43%	43%	38%
Yes, but rarely.....	26%	20%	14%	20%
No.....	21%	15%	5%	10%

Q2. How often in the last two years have you relied on or turned to each of the following sources to obtain information about PC(USA) mission?

a. GA or GAC staff persons				
Very often.....*	—	—	2%	6%
Often .....	1%	1%	6%	7%
Occasionally .....	5%	7%	22%	22%
Rarely .....	12%	14%	31%	19%
Never .....	82%	78%	39%	46%
b. <i>Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study</i>				
Very often.....	1%	2%	12%	9%
Often .....	3%	6%	20%	16%
Occasionally .....	12%	19%	34%	32%
Rarely .....	16%	20%	20%	20%
Never .....	68%	54%	14%	24%
c. <i>Presbyterians Today (PT) magazine</i>				
Very often.....	1%	4%	11%	7%
Often .....	5%	12%	25%	16%
Occasionally .....	20%	25%	27%	28%
Rarely .....	18%	18%	18%	20%
Never .....	57%	42%	19%	30%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

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		Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q2. (Cont.)	How often in the last two years have you relied on or turned to each of the following sources to obtain information about PC(USA) mission?				
d.	<i>Horizons</i> magazine				
	Very often.....	2%	2%	3%	3%
	Often.....	3%	4%	8%	7%
	Occasionally.....	7%	11%	12%	12%
	Rarely.....	9%	12%	22%	19%
	Never.....	79%	71%	55%	58%
e.	PC(USA) <i>News Briefs</i>				
	Very often.....	—	1%	10%	10%
	Often.....	2%	4%	20%	15%
	Occasionally.....	5%	15%	31%	27%
	Rarely.....	11%	14%	16%	17%
	Never.....	82%	66%	23%	31%
f.	PC(USA) Web site				
	Very often.....	1%	1%	14%	18%
	Often.....	3%	7%	26%	15%
	Occasionally.....	9%	16%	32%	28%
	Rarely.....	10%	13%	11%	13%
	Never.....	77%	63%	17%	25%
g.	<i>Presbyterian Outlook</i> magazine or Web site				
	Very often.....	1%	2%	20%	13%
	Often.....	2%	5%	22%	13%
	Occasionally.....	7%	12%	17%	22%
	Rarely.....	11%	14%	16%	14%
	Never.....	80%	67%	24%	37%
h.	The Laymen newspaper or Web site				
	Very often.....	3%	3%	3%	3%
	Often.....	2%	10%	8%	7%
	Occasionally.....	7%	11%	17%	11%
	Rarely.....	10%	11%	19%	15%
	Never.....	78%	65%	52%	65%
i.	Presbyweb ( <a href="http://www.presbyweb.com">www.presbyweb.com</a> )	+			
	Very often.....	—	1%	4%	4%
	Often.....	1%	2%	4%	3%
	Occasionally.....	4%	7%	10%	13%
	Rarely.....	6%	11%	19%	14%
	Never.....	88%	80%	64%	66%
j.	My pastor or other ministers in the PC(USA)				
	Very often.....	7%	7%	10%	7%
	Often.....	13%	22%	26%	30%
	Occasionally.....	30%	38%	40%	35%
	Rarely.....	19%	15%	15%	16%
	Never.....	31%	18%	9%	12%

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 + = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)  
 n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question  
 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q2. (Cont.) How often in the last two years have you relied on or turned to each of the following sources to obtain information about PC(USA) mission?				
k. Congregational newsletter				
Very often.....	12%	11%	8%	8%
Often.....	18%	23%	18%	25%
Occasionally.....	24%	28%	30%	31%
Rarely.....	17%	12%	19%	17%
Never.....	30%	25%	26%	20%
l. Presbytery or synod newspaper/newsletter/meeting/staff				
Very often.....	2%	3%	8%	10%
Often.....	6%	11%	27%	30%
Occasionally.....	15%	22%	41%	29%
Rarely.....	15%	19%	15%	16%
Never.....	62%	44%	10%	15%
m. Other PC(USA) publications (e.g., newsletter from a specific program area)				
Very often.....	1%	*	3%	5%
Often.....	2%	5%	13%	13%
Occasionally.....	11%	14%	40%	28%
Rarely.....	14%	19%	25%	20%
Never.....	72%	62%	19%	33%
n. Other (specify): _____	+	+	+	+
Very often.....	2%	2%	6%	3%
Often.....	1%	4%	10%	4%
Occasionally.....	3%	2%	11%	3%
Rarely.....	4%	6%	8%	9%
Never.....	90%	86%	65%	80%
Q3. How well-informed would you say you are about the range and scope of PC(USA) mission?				
Very informed.....	2%	2%	16%	15%
Generally informed.....	15%	27%	64%	52%
A little informed.....	52%	54%	20%	28%
Not informed.....	32%	16%	1%	6%
Q4. Did you or your family give any money to your congregation in 2004?				
Yes.....	97%	99%	98%	93%
No.....	*	*	1%	5%
Not sure.....	3%	1%	*	2%
Q4a. [If "Yes,"] How much did you give as a percentage of your total family income (pre-tax) from all sources? (Write the percentage on the line): _____ percent				
	+	+		
	n=316	n=481	n=442	n=236
1% or less.....	15%	10%	4%	13%
2% - 3%.....	14%	11%	6%	12%
4% - 5%.....	19%	16%	13%	16%
6% - 10%.....	33%	44%	55%	32%
11% - 15%.....	4%	7%	12%	6%
16% - 20%.....	3%	2%	2%	6%
More than 20%.....	7%	9%	10%	15%
Don't know.....	6%	2%	—	1%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero  
 — = zero (0.0); no cases in this category  
 + = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)  
 n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question  
 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q5. Besides your congregation, did you give money to any other religious or charitable causes during 2004?				
Yes .....	88%	94%	92%	93%
No .....	8%	5%	8%	4%
Not sure .....	4%	2%	*	2%
Q5a. [If "Yes,"] How much did you give as a percentage of your total family income (pre-tax) from all sources? (Write the percentage on the line): _____ percent				
	+	+		
	n=287	n=453	n=407	n=239
1% or less .....	34%	36%	31%	25%
2% - 3% .....	24%	26%	27%	24%
4% - 5% .....	15%	13%	12%	13%
6% - 10% .....	13%	11%	9%	16%
More than 10% .....	7%	11%	20%	22%
Don't know .....	7%	3%	2%	1%
Q6. Did you make a financial pledge for 2005 to your congregation?				
Yes .....	75%	85%	85%	59%
No .....	24%	15%	14%	39%
Not sure .....	2%	*	*	2%
Q6a. [If "Yes,"] About what percentage of your total family income (pre-tax) from all sources have you pledged for 2005? (Write the percentage on the line): _____ percent				
	+	+		
	n=244	n=412	n=379	n=148
1% or less .....	11%	8%	3%	9%
2% - 3% .....	17%	11%	5%	8%
4% - 5% .....	18%	19%	11%	15%
6% - 10% .....	36%	44%	61%	37%
More than 10% .....	13%	17%	20%	32%
Don't know .....	5%	1%	—	1%
Q7. Did you give any money to help the victims of the tsunami that devastated parts of Indonesia and South/Southeast Asia on December 26, 2004?				
Yes .....	59%	65%	74%	72%
No .....	41%	35%	26%	28%
Q7a. [If "Yes,"] Did you give any of your contributions for tsunami relief through your congregation or through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA)?				
	n=188	n=313	n=322	n=184
Yes, through my congregation .....	64%	64%	70%	53%
Yes, through PDA .....	5%	10%	22%	25%
No .....	29%	22%	7%	21%
Don't know .....	2%	4%	1%	2%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero  
 — = zero (0.0); no cases in this category  
 + = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)  
 n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question  
 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

		Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q8.	Suppose for a moment that you were given \$200 with the stipulation that you would in turn give it away to a charity or a religious cause. How important would each of the following factors be in helping you decide which cause or agency you would give the money to?				
a.	I'd given money to this cause before				
	Very important .....	23%	19%	24%	20%
	Generally important.....	40%	43%	45%	46%
	A little important .....	24%	24%	22%	25%
	Not important .....	14%	14%	9%	9%
b.	The quality of the agency's promotional materials +				
	Very important .....	5%	3%	4%	2%
	Generally important.....	17%	17%	25%	20%
	A little important .....	39%	43%	52%	52%
	Not important .....	38%	36%	20%	25%
c.	The reputation of the agency				
	Very important .....	63%	68%	76%	67%
	Generally important.....	32%	29%	22%	28%
	A little important .....	3%	2%	2%	3%
	Not important .....	2%	1%	*	2%
d.	A sound financial statement or annual report				
	Very important .....	31%	29%	34%	35%
	Generally important.....	35%	44%	43%	40%
	A little important .....	22%	21%	21%	18%
	Not important .....	12%	6%	2%	7%
e.	Prayer				
	Very important .....	29%	38%	44%	32%
	Generally important.....	34%	33%	38%	36%
	A little important .....	26%	21%	14%	23%
	Not important .....	11%	7%	4%	8%
f.	Recommendations of my pastor, session, or other congregational connection				
	Very important .....	17%	17%	25%	18%
	Generally important.....	39%	46%	48%	40%
	A little important .....	31%	29%	21%	32%
	Not important .....	13%	8%	6%	10%
g.	Other personal recommendations				
	Very important .....	10%	10%	18%	18%
	Generally important.....	36%	44%	49%	41%
	A little important .....	40%	35%	26%	34%
	Not important .....	14%	11%	7%	7%
h.	A personal connection to the cause or agency				
	Very important .....	39%	44%	48%	48%
	Generally important.....	34%	34%	36%	32%
	A little important .....	18%	14%	11%	14%
	Not important .....	9%	8%	4%	6%
i.	The agency is connected to/a part of the PC(USA)				
	Very important .....	7%	7%	20%	18%
	Generally important.....	20%	24%	35%	38%
	A little important .....	38%	34%	30%	25%
	Not important .....	35%	36%	14%	18%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q8. Suppose for a moment that you were given \$200 with the stipulation that you would in turn give it away to a charity or a religious cause. How important would each of the following factors be in helping you decide which cause or agency you would give the money to?				
(Cont.)				
j. The nature of the cause				
Very important .....	60%	60%	61%	71%
Generally important.....	33%	33%	34%	26%
A little important .....	4%	5%	4%	2%
Not important .....	2%	2%	1%	1%
k. It has low administrative costs (“overhead”)				
Very important .....	40%	40%	38%	39%
Generally important.....	42%	44%	47%	44%
A little important .....	14%	12%	13%	13%
Not important .....	5%	3%	2%	4%
l. Wanting to “give back” to an agency that has benefited my family or me				
Very important .....	30%	25%	13%	16%
Generally important.....	25%	31%	28%	28%
A little important .....	21%	24%	34%	30%
Not important .....	25%	20%	24%	26%
m. Other (specify): _____ +				
Very important .....	16%	16%	19%	30%
Generally important.....	4%	5%	10%	4%
A little important .....	3%	5%	8%	2%
Not important .....	77%	73%	63%	63%
Q9. What response(s) would you like to receive when you give money to a charitable or religious cause? (Check the box for <i>all</i> that apply.)				
		◆	◆	◆
A mailed thank-you note/letter.....	48%			
An e-mail thank-you note.....	9%			
A thank-you gift .....	*			
A brochure giving detailed information about how your contribution was used.....	30%			
A newsletter from the organization.....	25%			
A financial statement from the organization .....	14%			
A phone call of thanks.....	3%			
A statement for tax purposes.....	56%			
A listing in the organization’s annual report.....	2%			
Other (specify): _____ .....	1%			
I don’t need any response.....	23%			
Q10. Do you have a will?				
Yes .....	78%	82%	76%	76%
No.....	22%	17%	23%	24%
Not sure.....	—	1%	1%	*

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero  
 — = zero (0.0); no cases in this category  
 + = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)  
 n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question  
 ◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q10a. [If “Yes, ”] Does your will include a bequest to: (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)				
	◆ + n=246	◆ + n=387	◆ + n=335	◆ + n=190
Your congregation.....	85%	84%	65%	38%
Another PC(USA) congregation.....	12%	9%	19%	16%
A PC(USA) college, university, or seminary.....	10%	14%	36%	55%
PC(USA) mission.....	5%	6%	14%	32%
Other PC(USA) affiliated institution..... (camp, retirement home, etc.).....	15%	12%	12%	12%

If your will includes a bequest to a PC(USA) congregation, school, mission, or institution, indicate briefly why you decided to include it in your will:

[Not tabulated]

Q11. Presbyterians believe we discern best what God is calling us to do when we gather as governing bodies seeking together to find and represent the will of Christ. “Per capita apportionment” is how we mutually share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit’s leading for the future. The General Assembly, synods and (most, but not all) presbyteries create a per capita apportionment that they ask congregations to pay annually.

Have you previously heard of per capita apportionment?

Yes, definitely.....	69%	87%	99%	97%
Yes, probably.....	9%	5%	1%	1%
No, probably not.....	11%	4%	1%	1%
No, definitely not.....	10%	4%	—	1%

Q11a. [If “Yes, definitely” or “Yes, probably, ”] How aware were you that the main purpose of per capita apportionment is to support discernment?

	n=247	n=446	n=441	n=249
Very aware.....	20%	27%	46%	46%
Generally aware.....	27%	31%	24%	24%
A little aware.....	19%	15%	10%	10%
Not aware.....	34%	28%	21%	20%

Q12. Beyond per capita apportionment, sessions of PC(USA) congregations are encouraged to contribute a portion of their mission budget to fund PC(USA)-, presbytery-, and synod-related mission. Does your congregation donate funds to presbytery-, synod-, or PC(USA)-related mission?

Yes.....	68%	82%	95%	85%
No.....	2%	4%	4%	4%
Don’t know.....	30%	14%	1%	12%

[If “Yes, ”] Think about the efforts your session has made to interpret, to the congregation, all of the presbytery, synod, or PC(USA) mission(s) that it supports.

Q12a. How satisfied are you with the interpretation the session has done?

	n=216	n=397	n=419	n=204
Very satisfied.....	15%	24%	11%	14%
Generally satisfied.....	53%	50%	45%	43%
Only a little satisfied.....	16%	14%	30%	29%
Not satisfied.....	7%	5%	12%	9%
Can’t recall any interpretation → Skip to Q13.....	8%	7%	2%	5%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q12b. Has the interpretation the session has done made you want the congregation to give more money, less money, or about the same amount of money to presbytery, synod, or PC(USA) mission?				
	n=198	n=350	n=411	n=194
More .....	17%	11%	33%	29%
Less.....	9%	9%	6%	5%
About the same amount.....	57%	65%	46%	49%
No opinion.....	17%	15%	15%	17%

Q13. In the past 20 years, the amount of financial gifts for PC(USA) mission received as “undesigned” (the session or individual donor leaves the decision on how to spend the money to the PC(USA)) has declined and the amount received as “designated” (the session/donor indicates how the money is to be spent) has increased, so that now only about 20% of receipts are received as “undesigned.” This shift has enhanced the ability of individuals and sessions to support specific programs, but it has lessened the ability of the PC(USA) to respond to requests for assistance from international partners and national ministries.

Given this situation, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

a.	Only PC(USA) projects and programs able to raise their own funds should continue to exist				
	Strongly agree.....	6%	5%	4%	2%
	Agree .....	12%	14%	11%	8%
	Neither agree nor disagree.....	26%	27%	15%	12%
	Disagree.....	29%	35%	36%	37%
	Strongly disagree.....	9%	11%	32%	38%
	Not sure.....	17%	8%	2%	2%
b.	The denomination should find ways to increase undesigned gifts				
	Strongly agree.....	6%	6%	26%	29%
	Agree .....	32%	44%	42%	43%
	Neither agree nor disagree.....	31%	27%	16%	16%
	Disagree.....	11%	12%	9%	8%
	Strongly disagree.....	6%	6%	6%	2%
	Not sure.....	14%	5%	1%	1%
c.	I favor my congregation designating the dollars it gives to PC(USA) mission				
	Strongly agree.....	18%	22%	15%	10%
	Agree .....	35%	36%	20%	23%
	Neither agree nor disagree.....	21%	20%	18%	17%
	Disagree.....	10%	15%	25%	29%
	Strongly disagree.....	3%	3%	21%	19%
	Not sure.....	13%	5%	1%	2%
d.	I am uncomfortable having someone else decide where my pledge goes				
	Strongly agree.....	18%	14%	5%	8%
	Agree .....	27%	31%	16%	10%
	Neither agree nor disagree.....	21%	22%	14%	20%
	Disagree.....	20%	22%	39%	40%
	Strongly disagree.....	6%	8%	24%	21%
	Not sure.....	9%	3%	1%	1%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q14. Do you agree or disagree?				
a. I would give more of my charitable contributions to fund PC(USA) mission in general (“undesigned”) if I knew how to make a direct contribution				
Strongly agree.....	2%	1%	2%	4%
Agree .....	9%	10%	14%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	32%	34%	24%	32%
Disagree.....	31%	34%	42%	30%
Strongly disagree.....	11%	12%	16%	11%
Not sure.....	15%	8%	3%	7%
b. I would give more of my charitable contributions to fund specific PC(USA) mission projects if I knew how to make contributions for designated projects				
Strongly agree.....	2%	3%	2%	6%
Agree .....	20%	22%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	31%	35%	27%	32%
Disagree.....	24%	25%	37%	25%
Strongly disagree.....	6%	7%	11%	9%
Not sure.....	16%	8%	2%	4%
c. More financial support is needed to fund PC(USA) mission				
Strongly agree.....	6%	7%	32%	35%
Agree .....	27%	42%	49%	47%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	34%	28%	10%	11%
Disagree.....	6%	7%	5%	3%
Strongly disagree.....	3%	4%	2%	—
Not sure.....	24%	12%	2%	4%
d. My session gives too much of its mission dollars to fund PC(USA) mission				
Strongly agree.....	1%	3%	2%	1%
Agree .....	7%	4%	2%	2%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	33%	28%	9%	16%
Disagree.....	24%	43%	47%	40%
Strongly disagree.....	5%	12%	38%	36%
Not sure.....	31%	10%	1%	5%
e. Since the PC(USA) is governed by a connectional system, governing bodies should be trusted to make the right decisions with the mission dollars given to them				
Strongly agree.....	7%	4%	24%	19%
Agree .....	43%	48%	47%	54%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	21%	20%	10%	11%
Disagree.....	8%	15%	11%	8%
Strongly disagree.....	8%	7%	8%	5%
Not sure.....	14%	6%	1%	3%
f. I am comfortable letting my presbytery make decisions about where to allocate the mission dollars it receives				
Strongly agree.....	5%	6%	23%	20%
Agree .....	51%	55%	53%	57%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	13%	16%	9%	9%
Disagree.....	14%	14%	9%	9%
Strongly disagree.....	7%	6%	6%	3%
Not sure.....	10%	3%	1%	2%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q14. Do you agree or disagree? (Cont.)				
g. I am comfortable letting my synod make decisions about where to allocate the mission dollars it receives				
Strongly agree.....	5%	4%	18%	16%
Agree.....	43%	45%	41%	46%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	16%	20%	14%	13%
Disagree.....	14%	18%	15%	16%
Strongly disagree.....	7%	8%	10%	7%
Not sure.....	15%	6%	1%	2%
h. I am comfortable letting the General Assembly/General Assembly Council make decisions about where to... allocate the mission dollars they receive				
Strongly agree.....	5%	4%	20%	22%
Agree.....	39%	40%	45%	50%
Neither agree nor disagree.....	16%	18%	10%	10%
Disagree.....	17%	18%	13%	10%
Strongly disagree.....	10%	15%	11%	7%
Not sure.....	12%	6%	1%	2%
Q15. When an individual makes a direct contribution to fund PC(USA) mission (for example, by sending a check directly to the General Assembly Council or to a specific mission program), should his or her congregation receive credit for the donation?				
Yes, definitely.....	38%	43%	42%	32%
Yes, probably.....	34%	27%	30%	31%
No, probably not.....	8%	12%	12%	18%
No, definitely not.....	3%	4%	4%	5%
Not sure.....	16%	12%	14%	14%
Q16. Joining Hearts and Hands, A Mission Initiative is an effort to revitalize PC(USA) mission through raising \$40 million to fund new church development, congregational renewal (particularly for racial-ethnic and multicultural churches), and new international mission. Have you heard about this campaign?				
Yes.....	14%	26%	68%	52%
No.....	73%	64%	23%	36%
Not sure.....	13%	10%	9%	11%
Q17. In general, do you think it is a good idea for the PC(USA) to conduct special-purpose campaigns to raise money for specific mission programs?				
Yes, definitely.....	15%	21%	29%	32%
Yes, probably.....	52%	53%	48%	45%
No, probably not.....	15%	10%	12%	12%
No definitely not.....	3%	3%	4%	4%
Not sure.....	16%	14%	6%	7%
Q18. How appropriate is it to use each of the following approaches when raising money as part of a PC(USA) special-purpose campaign?				
a. Asking sessions to donate to the campaign out of their regular budgets				
Very appropriate.....	9%	7%	24%	27%
Generally appropriate.....	32%	37%	42%	42%
A little appropriate.....	19%	20%	16%	12%
Not appropriate.....	30%	32%	16%	15%
Not sure.....	10%	5%	2%	4%

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		Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q18.	How appropriate is it to use each of the following approaches when raising money as part of a PC(USA) special-purpose campaign?				
(Cont.)					
b.	Asking sessions to conduct a pledge drive for the campaign among their members				
	Very appropriate.....	8%	6%	15%	20%
	Generally appropriate.....	32%	35%	36%	40%
	A little appropriate.....	28%	27%	23%	23%
	Not appropriate.....	21%	26%	22%	13%
	Not sure.....	10%	6%	3%	4%
c.	Asking sessions to share information about the campaign with their members				
	Very appropriate.....	40%	39%	50%	61%
	Generally appropriate.....	46%	52%	39%	30%
	A little appropriate.....	8%	5%	6%	5%
	Not appropriate.....	1%	1%	3%	2%
	Not sure.....	6%	3%	1%	2%
d.	Approaching individuals directly to ask for donations to the campaign				
	Very appropriate.....	5%	5%	19%	26%
	Generally appropriate.....	26%	32%	35%	37%
	A little appropriate.....	22%	26%	23%	20%
	Not appropriate.....	38%	30%	21%	13%
	Not sure.....	9%	6%	2%	3%
e.	Asking presbyteries to donate to the campaign out of their regular budgets				
	Very appropriate.....	5%	7%	19%	22%
	Generally appropriate.....	30%	33%	36%	39%
	A little appropriate.....	22%	23%	21%	18%
	Not appropriate.....	29%	28%	21%	15%
	Not sure.....	14%	9%	3%	6%
f.	Asking synods to donate to the campaign out of their regular budgets				
	Very appropriate.....	5%	7%	19%	22%
	Generally appropriate.....	31%	34%	35%	34%
	A little appropriate.....	21%	23%	18%	16%
	Not appropriate.....	25%	26%	23%	18%
	Not sure.....	18%	11%	4%	9%
g.	Approaching foundations to ask for donations				
	Very appropriate.....	22%	26%	47%	55%
	Generally appropriate.....	38%	48%	39%	28%
	A little appropriate.....	16%	12%	8%	10%
	Not appropriate.....	9%	6%	3%	4%
	Not sure.....	15%	8%	3%	4%

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		Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q19. In column (1), indicate whether or not a representative of each organization listed below has spoken in your congregation during the past two years. Then, for those you mark "yes," indicate in column (2) whether the representative asked for or encouraged contributions to his or her organization while speaking in your church.					
a. National offices in Louisville					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
	Don't know .....	37%	15%	4%	18%
	No.....	60%	79%	88%	67%
	Yes .....	4%	6%	9%	14%
[If "Yes,"] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions					
		n=11	n=28	n=38	n=33
	Don't know .....	18%	27%	8%	14%
	No.....	18%	42%	57%	45%
	Yes .....	64%	31%	35%	41%
b. Presbyterian Foundation					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
	Don't know .....	41%	19%	4%	22%
	No.....	53%	65%	72%	57%
	Yes .....	7%	16%	24%	22%
[If "Yes,"] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions					
		n=20	n=76	n=105	n=50
	Don't know .....	19%	18%	4%	9%
	No.....	12%	9%	16%	19%
	Yes .....	69%	72%	80%	72%
c. Your synod					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
	Don't know .....	41%	20%	6%	20%
	No.....	49%	68%	87%	67%
	Yes .....	10%	12%	7%	13%
[If "Yes,"] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions					
		n=30	n=54	n=31	n=30
	Don't know .....	46%	38%	3%	20%
	No.....	32%	24%	55%	12%
	Yes .....	23%	38%	41%	68%
d. Your presbytery					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
	Don't know .....	38%	16%	6%	11%
	No.....	26%	30%	28%	26%
	Yes .....	37%	54%	65%	63%
[If "Yes,"] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions					
		n=112	n=255	n=286	n=145
	Don't know .....	29%	26%	7%	20%
	No.....	40%	41%	49%	37%
	Yes .....	31%	33%	44%	42%

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		Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q19.	In column (1), indicate whether or not a representative of each organization listed below has spoken in your congregation during the past two years. Then, for those you mark "yes," indicate in column (2) whether the representative asked for or encouraged contributions to his or her organization while speaking in your church.				
(Cont.)					
c. Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
		+			+
	Don't know .....	44%	20%	4%	22%
	No.....	55%	77%	88%	77%
	Yes .....	1%	4%	8%	1%
[If "Yes, "] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions					
		+	+		+
		n=3	n=17	n=34	n=3
	Don't know .....	50%	20%	6%	—
	No.....	—	7%	19%	—
	Yes .....	50%	73%	74%	100%
f. Medical Benevolence Foundation					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
		+			+
	Don't know .....	43%	18%	4%	17%
	No.....	54%	75%	88%	76%
	Yes .....	3%	7%	9%	7%
[If "Yes, "] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions					
		+	+	+	
		n=10	n=33	n=37	n=17
	Don't know .....	—	12%	—	7%
	No.....	12%	8%	—	13%
	Yes .....	88%	81%	100%	80%
g. Outreach Foundation of the PC(USA)					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
		+			+
	Don't know .....	44%	21%	4%	20%
	No.....	51%	73%	92%	76%
	Yes .....	5%	6%	5%	4%
[If "Yes, "] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions					
		+	+	+	+
		n=14	n=27	n=21	n=9
	Don't know .....	33%	9%	12%	—
	No.....	17%	22%	25%	14%
	Yes .....	50%	70%	62%	86%
h. World Vision					
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years					
		+			+
	Don't know .....	40%	19%	2%	15%
	No.....	50%	68%	93%	79%
	Yes .....	10%	12%	5%	6%

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Q19. In column (1), indicate whether or not a representative of each organization listed below has spoken in your congregation during the past two years. Then, for those you mark "yes," indicate in column (2) whether the representative asked for or encouraged contributions to his or her organization while speaking in your church.

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
World Vision (Cont.)				
[If "Yes,"] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions				
	+	+	+	
	n=31	n=57	n=21	n=13
Don't know .....	9%	10%	—	9%
No.....	9%	8%	35%	9%
Yes.....	83%	82%	65%	82%
i. Campus Crusade for Christ				
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years				
Don't know .....	40%	18%	3%	+
No.....	52%	71%	91%	82%
Yes.....	8%	11%	6%	3%
[If "Yes,"] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions				
	+	+	+	
	n=24	n=52	n=26	n=7
Don't know .....	13%	16%	—	—
No.....	13%	14%	14%	17%
Yes.....	74%	70%	86%	83%
j. A seminary				
A representative of this organization spoke in my church in the last two years				
Don't know .....	35%	17%	4%	+
No.....	46%	59%	78%	54%
Yes.....	19%	24%	18%	30%
[If "Yes,"] The representative asked for/encouraged contributions				
	+	+		
	n=58	n=115	n=80	n=67
Don't know .....	23%	16%	1%	13%
No.....	38%	30%	27%	30%
Yes.....	38%	54%	72%	57%

Q20. Can you think of anything that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does that excites you and makes you think about giving more money to fund Christ's mission through the PC(USA)?

Yes .....	16%	19%	53%	48%
No.....	58%	60%	30%	31%
Not sure.....	26%	22%	17%	21%

[If "Yes,"] Please specify: (Not tabulated)

Q21. Please use the space below for additional comments. (Not tabulated)

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ATTACHMENT B  
MISSION FUNDING TASK FORCE—SUMMARY OF INTERACTIONS

December 2004

The task force divided itself in two groups:

- *Constituent Groups*: To work on identifying the constituent groups with whom the task force should talk with. The group developed a list of 30 constituent groups.
  - Focus Groups with Research Services:
    - Synod and Presbytery Executives
    - Tall Steeple Pastors
    - Frontier Fellowship
    - Business managers of churches
  - Meeting with Presbyterian Center Staff
- *Draft Concept Plan*: The group's assignment was to draft a concept plan, starting with the analysis of Appendix A.

April 2005

- Met with the Reformed Church in America (RCA).

June 2005

- Doska Ross, Office of the General Assembly, shared with the task force a PowerPoint presentation on Common Faith, Common Mission.

August 2005

- Joint meeting with Governance Task Force and Mission Work Plan Workgroup
- Synod Executives Utah Meeting
- Moderator of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Rick Ufford-Chase met with the task force.

November 2005

- Polity Conference
- Churchwide Fiscal Officers Conference
- Associate of Executive Presbyters (AEPs)

December 2005

- Mission Funding Partnership Meeting
- Executives of the Validated Mission Support Groups

January 2006

- Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands
- Presbyterian Foundation
- Chairs and Executives of General Assembly agencies

April 2006

- National Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team

October 2006

- Stewardship Network

November 2006

- Churchwide Fiscal Officers Conference

ATTACHMENT C  
PRINCIPLES AND VALUES STATEMENT

## PRINCIPLES

The Mission Funding Task Force offers a design for funding Christ's work that promotes a generosity of spirit in response to the God who has dealt generously with us.

The funding of the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) rests on the following principles:

Faithfulness to Jesus Christ—because God loves the world and Christ gave his life, we are called, as individuals and groups, to respond with our lives and resources;

Flexibility—because we believe that the Holy Spirit informs the missional instincts of all God's people honoring the promises of the past and preparing the promise of the future, we will accommodate regional differences, historical practices, and changing realities;

Respect—because we seek to have the same mind in us that was in Christ Jesus, who looked not to his own interests but to the interest of others (Phil. 2:4–5), we will acknowledge the passion of donors through accountable systems and transparently open, informed and inclusive decision-making, acknowledging the many views of mission designed and enacted in every part of the church. We recognize the tension that exists between respecting the passions of donors and encouraging support of our connectional nature, but confess that “the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.” (Ps. 24:1–2).

Communication—because we are servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1); we will commit ourselves to frequent interaction with governing bodies and individuals, for the purpose of mutual clarification and unity of experience and hope across diverse boundaries.

## VALUES STATEMENT

Therefore, a design for funding Christ's work throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be consistent with the following core values:

1. A design for funding Christ's work will recognize stewardship as integral to Christian discipleship
  - promoting the Biblical concept of tithing
  - encouraging stewardship education that is understood as the faithful response of discipleship to God's gifts in all of life
  - requiring the development of stewardship education materials that are creative, attractive, clear, and affordable
2. A design for funding Christ's work will appeal to the passions and values of members, pastors, governing bodies, and benefactors
  - communicating to the head and heart of the people of God
  - engaging the donor in the mission of the church
  - recognizing that everyone is a beneficiary of God's grace, and everyone benefits from joyful stewardship
3. A design for funding Christ's work will be transparent and accountable
  - honoring donor intent
  - offering easily understood opportunities for giving
  - meeting clear standards of accountability for pastors, sessions, and potential donors
4. A design for funding Christ's work will utilize our connectionalism, recognize our interdependence, and demonstrate our partnership in mission
  - emphasizing the value of interpersonal relationships
  - encouraging the more inclusive governing body to facilitate the mission of its constituent members
  - encouraging the less inclusive governing body to participate in the mission of the church beyond its bounds
  - encouraging mutual investment of time and resources among governing bodies and constituent members

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- recognizing that Presbyterians are the primary base of support for Presbyterian missions, and affirming the importance and priority of funding Presbyterian validated mission

5. A design for funding Christ’s work will emphasize information sharing between governing bodies leading to a dynamic mission and vision

- placing governing bodies in structural and interactive relationships
- valuing the wisdom of other governing bodies
- recognizing the need for consultation prior to engaging in ministries beyond one’s bounds

6. A design for funding Christ’s work will encourage two-way communications

- welcoming and encouraging a flow of information and feedback
- recognizing that information sharing benefits the whole church.
- encouraging face-to-face communication when possible

7. A design for funding Christ’s work will honor historic relationships

- recognizing that previous funding systems had value and may continue to inform the development of new funding systems
- requiring careful investigation of current funding partnerships before altering or eliminating those partnerships

ATTACHMENT D

COMPARISON OF CONGREGATIONAL RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES  
This data was made available to the task force by Research Services.

*Congregational Receipts 2004–2005*

Receipts	2005	2004	Increase (Decrease)	Per Member <sup>2</sup> 2005	Percent of Total
Contributions	\$2,077,414,248	\$2,008,921,069	\$68,493,179	\$984.41	67.59%
Capital and Building Funds	415,438,596	374,806,344	40,632,252	299.11	13.52%
Investment Income	165,334,125	163,490,667	1,843,458	95.64	5.38%
Bequests	124,324,267	123,519,748	804,519	143.79	4.04%
Other Income	291,173,691	256,024,465	35,149,226	162.14	9.47%
Total Receipts	\$3,073,684,927	\$2,926,762,293	\$146,922,634	\$1,454.23	100.00%

Data collected from congregations’ reports on the Session Annual Statistical Report.

Per member calculations based only on congregations that reported.

*Congregational Expenditures 2004–2005*

Expenditures	2005	2004	Increase (Decrease)	Per Member <sup>2</sup> 2005	Percent of Total
Local Program	\$1,940,164,096	\$1,934,784,126	\$5,379,970	\$942.70	65.87%
Local Mission	154,880,499	151,645,277	3,235,222	76.61	5.26%
Capital Expenditures	485,835,857	452,533,819	33,302,038	323.25	16.49%
Investment Expenditures	88,241,114	77,530,362	10,683,752	142.59	3.00%
Per Capita Apportionment	43,839,651	42,768,968	1,070,683	23.24	1.49%
Validated Mission	136,303,997	129,004,948	7,299,049	69.65	4.63%
Other Mission	96,149,779	72,512,306	23,637,473	67.50	3.26%
Total Expenditures	\$2,945,387,993	\$2,860,779,806	\$84,608,187	\$1,392.72	100.00%

Data collected from congregations’ reports on the Session Annual Statistical Report.

Per member calculations based only on congregations that reported.

Validated mission expenditures include all monies given to presbytery, synod, and General Assembly agencies, including payments toward mission budgets of these entities, special offerings, payments to the Theological Education fund (1% Plan), and funds donated to all other PC(USA)-sponsored programs.

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*Congregational Receipts 2005–2006*

Receipts	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	Per Mem- ber 2006	Percent of Total
Contributions	\$2,133,177,995	\$2,077,414,248	\$55,763,747	\$1,040.43	66.53%
Capital and Building Funds	419,469,130	415,438,596	4,030,534	307.99	13.08%
Investment Income	195,264,175	165,334,125	29,930,050	197.46	6.09%
Bequests	163,434,024	124,324,267	39,109,757	114.46	5.10%
Other Income	295,225,394	291,173,691	4,051,703	169.70	9.21%
Total Receipts	\$3,206,570,718	\$3,073,684,927	\$132,885,791	\$1,559.83	100.01%

Data collected from congregations' reports on the Session Annual Statistical Report.  
Per member calculations based only on congregations that reported.

*CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURES 2005–2006*

Expenditures	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	Per Mem- ber 2006 <sup>2</sup>	Percent of Total
Local Program	\$1,964,334,961	\$1,940,164,096	\$24,170,865	\$982.22	66.47%
Local Mission	153,288,588	154,880,499	(1,591,911)	78.45	5.18%
Capital Expenditures	493,877,171	485,835,857	8,041,314	341.89	16.68%
Investment Expenditures	103,358,030	88,214,114*	15,143,916	168.66	3.49%
Per Capita Apportionment	43,911,183	43,839,651	71,532	24.10	1.48%
Validated Mission <sup>3</sup>	111,474,983	136,303,997	(24,829,014)	62.96	3.77%
Other Mission	85,161,171	96,149,779	(10,988,608)	63.55	2.88%
Total Expenditures	\$2,955,406,087	\$2,945,387,993	\$10,018,094	\$1,439.41	100.01%

Data collected from congregations' reports on the Session Annual Statistical Report.  
Per member calculations based only on congregations that reported.

Validated mission expenditures include all monies given to presbytery, synod, and General Assembly agencies, including payments toward mission budgets of these entities, special offerings, payments to the Theological Education fund (1% Plan), and funds donated to all other PC(USA)-sponsored programs.

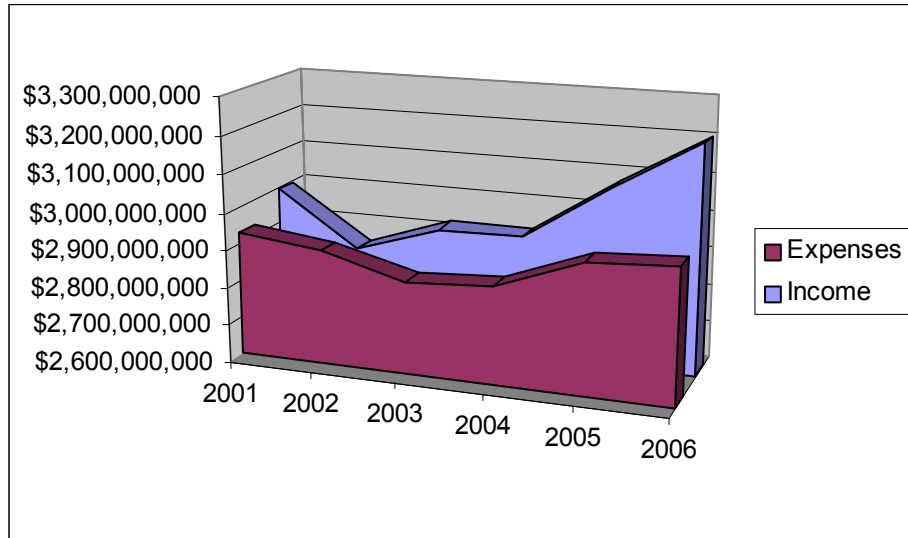
ATTACHMENT E

TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL RECEIPTS AND EXPENSES 2001–2006  
Data Provided to the Task Force by Research Services

Total Congregational Receipts and Expenses

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Income	\$2,994,889,397	\$2,849,977,046	\$2,923,384,580	\$2,926,762,293	\$3,073,684,927	\$3,206,570,718
Expenses	\$2,930,702,353	\$2,905,580,597	\$2,845,508,869	\$2,860,779,806	\$2,945,387,993	\$2,955,406,087
Difference	\$64,187,044	(\$55,603,551)	\$77,875,711	\$65,982,487	\$128,296,934	\$251,164,631
Churches	11,142	11,097	11,064	11,019	10,960	10,903
Per church	\$5,760.82	(\$5,010.68)	\$7,038.66	\$5,988.06	\$11,705.92	\$23,036.29

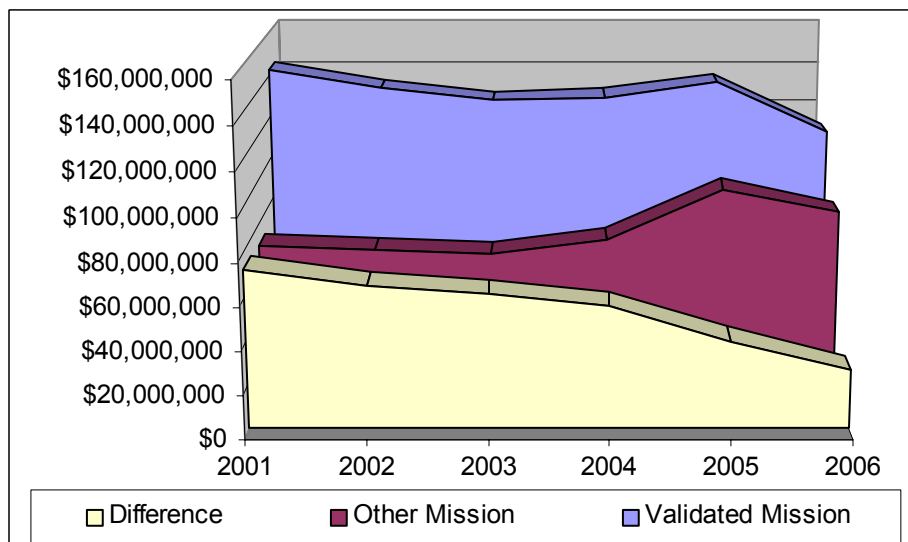




ATTACHMENT F  
COMPARISON OF VALIDATED MISSION AND  
OTHER MISSION GIVING 2001-2006

Date made available to the task force by Research Services

Comparison of Validated and Other Mission (2001-2006)						
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Validated Mission	\$142,439,598	\$133,138,027	\$127,774,575	\$129,004,948	\$136,303,997	\$111,474,983
Other Mission	\$69,565,665	\$67,426,678	\$65,716,728	\$72,512,306	\$96,149,779	\$85,161,171
Difference	\$72,873,933	\$65,711,349	\$62,057,847	\$56,492,642	\$40,154,218	\$26,313,812



ATTACHMENT G  
REPORT ON FOCUS GROUPS CONDUCTED BY RESEARCH SERVICES

Focus group participants agreed on several things:

1. What is covered by per capita is almost unknown. Some pastors knew what per capita covers, but the vast majority either did not know or had an incorrect understanding of what it covers. Some focus group participants believe the term itself turns givers off. Some believe per capita helps giving. Opinions on per capita varied widely. Attitudes toward per capita are complicated. For some it appears that their attitude toward the presbytery seems to determine their attitude toward per capita. What is done at the presbytery, synod, and GA level is basically unknown.

2. There is a need for a better way of communicating with members and clergy. Many participants acknowledged that they do not have much knowledge of what the PC(USA) does and others showed a lack of knowledge in the answers they gave. A letter from a pastor (who appears to be theologically toward the conservative end of the spectrum) is included at the end of this report. It is a good example of how the lack of knowledge of members was expressed.

A couple of presbytery executives also commented on this lack of knowledge. One presbytery executive pointed out that pastors know little about the mission of the PC(USA) and acknowledged that it is the presbytery executive's job to provide that knowledge. Another presbytery executive said: "Another element that needs to be lifted up is the role that pastors have in leadership and the role that presbytery executives play in leadership. Observation of pastors is that they are up to their eyeballs in their own structures and their own work. They focus all their attention inwardly and are not able to connect with the larger systems in the church. That will be tough to break but they are the key to unlock that."

3. We need to put a face on mission. This is related to the lack of knowledge, but is somewhat different. Simple knowledge of mission is not enough. Participants suggest that people have to be able to identify with the mission. There is little agreement on how to do this. The three most common ways mentioned were:

- a. GA staff need to get out in the field more.
- b. Presbyteries need to do a better job of educating clergy.
- c. Better communication is needed.

4. Designated giving has to be part of the funding plan, but program areas should not have to raise their own money. Focus group participants acknowledged that some areas would never be able to raise their own money, and so we cannot go to a system based entirely on designated giving. People on the extreme ends of the continuum—from those who favor all designated giving to those who favor no designated giving—were few. The vast majority fall somewhere in between.

5. The problem for many is the presbytery. Some participants believe that many presbyteries are doing the same old thing—much of which could be better done by individual congregations. Such comments were made by a pastor serving a large congregation that gives money to the presbytery and expects the presbytery to forward an appropriate sum to the General Assembly. Yet the pastor reported the presbytery is not doing that. Another participant sees the presbytery as responsible for explaining the mission of the PC(USA), but believes presbyteries are not doing that. Another complained that it is not easy to get someone from the presbytery to come out and talk with the congregation.

6. Giving to the national level needs to be easier. Some made such comments as complaints about the presbytery. They believe there is too much red tape to give through the presbytery. One example concerned a congregation that wanted to give to a disaster relief fund, but found the presbytery wouldn't pass the check directly on to the disaster relief fund. The congregation wanted their money to make a difference there *now*. Some suggested that congregations be allowed to give directly to programs at the national level, with the national office notifying the presbytery of the money a church has given. The denomination should not impede giving, but should make it easier.

7. Many pastors—like many people in our society today—have an anti-institutional bias, and this makes communication very important. This is the response of one person, but summarizes what many respondents seem to suggest. The extent of this bias is not clear. Yet many participants believe that pastors do not look to the GA/GAC for information or guidance. This does not mean that pastors are not loyal to the PC(USA), but rather that for some reason they have little knowledge of the institution.

8. Surprisingly, theological conflict or the theological positions of the GA/GAC were rarely mentioned overtly. The letter at the end of this report is a good example of how some mentioned the conflict. There was an exception to this—business managers of some congregations said clearly that no funds would be sent to Louisville until support for gay and lesbian pastors was stopped and the position on Israel changed.

Conclusion:

All of the focus groups point to a general lack of knowledge of the mission of the PC(USA). Few comments directly answered the question about what the future mission-funding plan should look like. Many do not know what the present plan is. Theological conflict was seldom mentioned as a factor hindering the mission funding of the PC(USA).

Letter from a pastor (shown here as received):

Dear Keith:

I am of the opinion that we are in a very precarious position in regards to funding for the G.A. There is a lot of money available to be given away but folks are very particular about where or to whom they will give it. The fact that our G.A. does not have people actively in the field raising funds is a dead give away that there is less interest on their part than with some other groups. If you came to ----- Presbyterian Church to make a pitch for a worthy cause you would find support. That the G.A. does not is one reason that our money goes elsewhere.

Another reason that there is less than eager support is the result of some years of bad publicity and/or bad decisions and/or difficult situations. It is hard to encourage giving when there is a perception that the rug will be pulled from under the feet of our more conservative core values. As an example there is a general belief that the deck is sort of stacked to move toward the ordination of gays and lesbians. I can tell them that this is not the position of our church but they do not believe me. That is a matter of

their perception but it feels like a reality in their minds. There is a perception that we at our center do not believe in Evangelism. Even if there is a difference in our practice we should be in agreement that proclamation of the Gospel is a major thrust for the Church.

Institutions of the Church are in a constant fund raising mode, there is no barrier to their contacting the members whose names they have, members believe that their contributions to an institution is the equivalent to a gift to the church, these institutions are very good at telling their story. The G.A. is less skilled and less inclined to follow the same practices.

I can assure you of this one fact if we did a better job of informing our payers of the positive work of the assembly and its mission we would have better advocacy. I am of the opinion that this advocacy would be enhanced by personal contact with pastors and especially those in larger congregations.

If there is serious interest in the issues discussed then I believe we will see a concerted follow-up to these conference calls.

I would be willing to be of any service to my denomination.

Sincerely,  
[Name withheld]

Research Services  
June 15, 2005

ATTACHMENT H  
APPENDIX A OF THE *ORGANIZATION FOR MISSION*

*Organization for Mission*

Appendix A: Financial Issues

OUTLINE OF APPENDIX A

Outline of Appendix A  
Glossary of Terms Related to Financial Issues  
Values Statement

Churchwide Mission Support

- G. Forms of Giving in Churchwide Mission Support
- H. Roles and Responsibilities of Governing Bodies
- I. Special Offerings and Other Specific Appeals
- J. Validation of Mission
- K. Accounting Definitions and Standards: Designated, Restricted, and Unrestricted
- L. Collection, Reporting, and Audits

General Assembly Budget Development

- H. Mission Budget Cycle
- I. Basic Mission Direction
- J. The Proposed Budget
- K. The Detailed Budget
- L. Budget Monitoring
- M. Roles and Responsibilities in Developing Budgets
- N. Per Capita Budget

Mission Support Services

GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATED TO FINANCIAL ISSUES

*Adopted Budget*—The formally approved budget of a session, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly.

*Consultations*—Ordinarily, face-to-face experiences between duly selected representatives of governing bodies to exchange information, perspectives, opinions, and advice regarding mission planning, funding, and personnel staffing for the health of the whole church.

*Contributor*—An individual, agency, or governing body that transfers control of a gift to another tax-exempt agency or governing body. *See Donor.*

*Designations*—Budget categories as described or determined by a governing body. Only governing bodies may make designations. *See Restricted Giving.*

*Division of Committed Dollars*—Agreements among governing bodies giving concrete expression to the sharing of Mission Support Commitments for the church's mission.

*Donor*—An individual or other taxable entity (e.g., an estate or trust) making a gift for charitable purposes eligible for favorable tax treatment. When governing bodies are nontaxable entities, they cannot be donors. *See Contributor.*

*Emergency Appeals*—Properly authorized and approved calls for an immediate response to emergency needs through an Emergency Relief Alert.

*Equalization*—The use of unrestricted funds to fulfill the commitments and/or agreements that have been made by a governing body.

*Funding for General Mission*—Gifts and contributions received with no restrictions for the overall support of the adopted budgets of governing bodies

*Funding for Specific Mission*—A form of restricted giving for designated budget categories or projects within adopted budgets.

*Ministry Areas*—The three primary areas of work within the General Assembly Council staff structure: Mission, Communication and Funds Development, and Shared Services.

*Mission*—For the purposes of Appendix A, ‘mission’ is understood in its broadest sense: proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

*Mission Support Commitment*—A specific dollar figure or a percentage of total dollars adopted by a governing body to be given in a specified year to support the mission and ministry of other governing bodies.

*Mission Support Consultation*—A face-to-face event among duly selected representatives of governing bodies to (1) establish shared ownership of the church’s total mission, (2) advocate recommendations of Mission Support Goals, and (3) agree upon means for the division of committed mission dollars.

*Mission Support Goals*—Specific dollar figures for mission support projected as goals for some subsequent year or years.

*Other Specific Appeals*—Requests for support of specific validated mission projects or programs, which may not be included in adopted budgets.

*Per Capita Apportionment*—A means for all members to share in the costs of coordinating and evaluating mission, and performing the ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

*Projects Beyond the Budget*—Approved projects not included in the adopted budgets.

*Restricted Giving*—Gifts that are restricted by a contributor or donor for use in support of a validated project, budget category, or appeal. The processing of restricted gifts will comply with the standards established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB).

*Special Offerings*—Planned, organized, and approved supplemental offerings for specified causes that may or may not be included in approved budgets.

*Taxable Entity*—For the purposes of Appendix A, individuals, partnerships, estates and trusts, or corporations who may be taxpayers under the federal income tax law.

*Unrestricted Giving*—Unrestricted gifts received for the overall support of the adopted budget of a presbytery, a synod, or the General Assembly.

*Validated Mission*—Any project or program within the bounds of and approved by formal action of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly, whether or not it is funded from the adopted budget of the governing body.

#### VALUES STATEMENT

The funding of the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) rests on the following principles:

*Faithfulness to Jesus Christ*—because God loves the world and Christ gave his life, we are called, as individuals and groups, to respond with our lives and resources.

*Flexibility*—because we believe that the Holy Spirit informs the missional instincts of all God’s people honoring the promises of the past and preparing the promise of the future, we will accommodate regional differences, historical practices, and changing realities.

*Respect*—because we seek to have the same mind in us that was in Christ Jesus, who looked not to his own interests but to the interest of others (Philippians 2:4–5), we will acknowledge the passion of donors through accountable systems and transparently open, informed and inclusive decision-making, acknowledging the many views of mission designed and enacted in every part of the church. We recognize the tension that exists between respecting the passions of donors and encouraging support of our connective nature, but confess that “the earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it.” (Psalm 24:1–2).

*Communication*—because we are servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1); we will commit ourselves to frequent interaction with governing bodies and individuals, for the purpose of mutual clarification and unity of experience and hope across diverse boundaries.

Therefore, a design for funding Christ's work throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be consistent with the following core values:

1. A design for funding Christ's work will recognize stewardship as integral to Christian discipleship:
  - promoting the Biblical concept of tithing
  - encouraging stewardship education that is understood as the faithful response of discipleship to God's gifts in all of life
  - requiring the development of stewardship education materials that are creative, attractive, clear, and affordable
2. A design for funding Christ's work will appeal to the passions and values of members, pastors, governing bodies, and benefactors:
  - communicating to the head and heart of the people of God
  - engaging the donor in the mission of the church
  - recognizing that everyone is a beneficiary of God's grace, and everyone benefits from joyful stewardship
3. A design for funding Christ's work will be transparent and accountable:
  - honoring donor intent
  - offering easily understood opportunities for giving
  - meeting clear standards of accountability for pastors, sessions, and potential donors
4. A design for funding Christ's work will utilize our connectionalism, recognize our interdependence, and demonstrate our partnership in mission:
  - emphasizing the value of interpersonal relationships
  - encouraging the more inclusive governing body to facilitate the mission of its constituent members
  - encouraging the less inclusive governing body to participate in the mission of the church beyond its bounds
  - encouraging mutual investment of time and resources among governing bodies and constituent members
  - recognizing that Presbyterians are the primary base of support for Presbyterian missions, and affirming the importance and priority of funding Presbyterian validated mission.
5. A design for funding Christ's work will emphasize information sharing between governing bodies leading to a dynamic mission and vision:
  - placing governing bodies in structural and interactive relationships
  - valuing the wisdom of other governing bodies
  - recognizing the need for consultation prior to engaging in ministries beyond one's bounds
6. A design for funding Christ's work will encourage two-way communications:
  - welcoming and encouraging a flow of information and feedback
  - recognizing that information sharing benefits the whole church
  - encouraging face-to-face communication when possible
7. A design for funding Christ's work will honor historic relationships:
  - recognizing that previous funding systems had value and may continue to inform the development of new funding systems
  - requiring careful investigation of current funding partnerships before altering or eliminating those partnerships

#### CHURCHWIDE MISSION SUPPORT

##### A. *Forms of Giving in Churchwide Mission Support*

Churchwide Mission Support is the funding system used by all governing bodies to plan and implement the mission of the whole church. Churchwide Mission Support has three overall forms of giving.

1. Basic Mission Support—There are two components of mission support:
  - a. Funding for General Mission—gifts, with no restrictions, for the overall support of the adopted budgets of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly.
  - b. Funding for Specific Mission—gifts, with restrictions, for use within the adopted budgets of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly.
2. Churchwide Special Offerings—gifts, with restrictions, for General Assembly planned, organized, and approved offerings for specified purposes that may be included in approved budgets.

3. Other Specific Appeals—gifts, with restrictions, for specific use in support of validated mission that ordinarily are not included in the budget of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly. Such appeals may be ongoing, time-limited, or responsive to emergency needs.

There are additional forms of giving that are distinct from Churchwide Mission Support. These include giving through Presbyterian Women, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Validated Mission Support Groups, and other organizations. Some of these gifts may be applied to adopted budgets. These gifts are and may be increasingly important to support the work of the church.

#### B. *Roles and Responsibilities of Governing Bodies*

To encourage openness and accountability in all financial matters, the following roles and responsibilities will be observed.

##### 1. *Roles Held in Common by All Governing Bodies*

- a. Select representatives who will participate in inter-governing body consultations on mission support goals and the division of Mission Support Commitments.
- b. Share mission priorities, budget projections, funding needs, and mission support goals.
- c. Provide information for, support of, and participation in an annual season of interpretation.
- d. Consider other governing bodies' mission priorities and funding needs.
- e. Adopt mission support commitments and honor these commitments in budgets for which the governing body is directly responsible.
- f. When changes in mission support commitment are contemplated, promptly communicate with other affected governing bodies.
- g. Thank leaders and donors.
- h. Hold receiving sites accountable to accepted churchwide standards.
- i. Provide full financial reports annually to other governing bodies and congregations on the receipt and expenditure of funds and of a governing bodies' assets, and liabilities.
- j. Collect and transmit mission support from donors, congregations, and organizations within 60 calendar days from the date of receipt.
- k. Provide General Assembly, and as appropriate, synods and constituent presbyteries, a regular accounting of church-by-church giving and any relevant data requested by a governing body, while maintaining the right to privacy by individual donors.

##### 2. *Role of the General Assembly*

- a. Assist the development of mission support goals at every governing body level.
- b. Adopt a mission budget and a per capita budget.
- c. Annually provide full financial reports and program assessments to sessions, presbyteries, and synods.
- d. Disseminate industry standards in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and in compliance with applicable accounting pronouncements and regulations specific to the not-for-profit industry as best practices for governing body treasurers and financial officers.
- e. Approve the purposes and beneficiaries of the four churchwide special offerings, upon recommendation of the General Assembly Council.

#### C. *Special Offerings and Other Specific Appeals*

##### 1. *Churchwide Special Offerings*

- a. Churchwide special offerings will provide valuable mission interpretation opportunities.
- b. Churchwide special offerings will enable the church to meet traditional and ongoing needs in relationship to the total mission priorities of the church, always proclaiming the name of Jesus.
- c. Causes included in special offerings will have demonstrated potential for churchwide donor support.

- d. Causes included in a special offering will specifically define the needs to be met; plans will be provided for funds' allocation, program implementation, and accountability.
- e. Causes grouped within the same churchwide special offering will have a focussed mission purpose.
- f. Special offering promotions within the comprehensive mission funding strategy will occur in a central promotion office rather than within programmatic entities.
- g. Costs of promoting and receiving each churchwide special offering will be paid from receipts of the offering. After deducting each offering's costs from total receipts, restricted and unrestricted, of that offering, all receipts will then be considered permanently restricted, and will be used only for the purposes for which they were given. Each offering's costs will be determined by the GAC through its regular budget process.
- h. Start-up costs for new or significantly revised special offerings will be expensed as incurred.
- i. Promotion materials for a special offering will relate to the liturgical season in which the offering is received.
- j. Any change in the pattern of distribution of a special offering will require an eighteen-month time period before becoming effective to allow adequate time for development and distribution of promotion materials.
- k. There will be no more than four churchwide special offerings in any given calendar year. The General Assembly will identify times for the promotion and receipt of offerings.
- l. On a six-year cycle, the General Assembly Council will provide for review and evaluation of the causes supported by churchwide special offerings and will consider new causes in light of established criteria and current mission priorities. Between reviews, if an offering lacks support, the GAC will provide a process for review.
- m. It is important for the continuity of operations that some programs funded by churchwide special offerings maintain operation reserves. However, it is not the purpose of special offerings to develop or augment reserves. Beginning in 2001, each General Assembly will assign one of its committees to review the appropriateness of reserves accumulated from special offerings.
- n. The agencies receiving churchwide special offering funds will prepare annual reports on the uses of those funds for the General Assembly.
- o. Special offerings will not be used to supplement funding for programs included in ongoing basic mission support.
- p. Special offerings will not be used to create funding for a cause when a similar program already exists.

## 2. *Other Specific Appeals*

a. Other specific appeals include the Theological Education Fund, special campaigns or gifts (national, regional, or local), Emergency Relief Alerts (national, regional, or local), and additional giving opportunities.

(1) The Theological Education Fund is a unique type of an annual specific appeal to sessions through the 1% Plan as approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986).

(2) Special time-limited campaigns approved by one or more governing bodies are essential for meeting capital needs and achieving other mission purposes. These require governing body approval and may include needs across governing body lines with advance concurrence of other appropriate governing bodies. In the case of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council may approve time-limited campaigns between sessions of the General Assembly.

(3) Emergency Relief Alerts enable persons to respond compassionately to emergency needs, such as natural disasters of large proportion or other crises. The General Assembly Council will authorize a process for issuing national Emergency Relief Alerts, providing timely information indicating how church funds are being used to meet the emergency and how individuals and sessions may contribute additional funds to meet such needs. There may be occasions when sessions, presbyteries, or synods will issue Emergency Relief Alerts in response to more localized emergencies.

(4) Additional giving opportunities provide a way for contributors or donors to support mission not funded by adopted budgets.

(a) A validation process that maintains the integrity of the church's mission will be used to identify such opportunities. Whenever possible, such opportunities will be promoted jointly by governing bodies beyond the session through a program of additional giving opportunities.

(b) Contributors or donors desiring to support validated mission beyond established budgets may do so through additional giving opportunities up to whatever limits have been set by a more inclusive governing body. Concurrence in the purpose of the gift by the receiving governing body or agency is required.

(c) An effective additional giving program depends on significant sharing of information about adopted budgets and additional giving opportunities.

b. All campaigns for other specific appeals shall identify in advance the anticipated administrative costs that may be charged to receipts. A governing body that designates an other specific appeal may apply a charge, not to exceed an agreed upon percentage, against other specific appeals receipts to cover actual costs of promoting, receiving, and disbursing funds. Contributors and donors will be informed of the actual percentage. The General Assembly Council shall determine the cost of communicating national Emergency Relief Alerts and may authorize a charge against receipts with this charge being reported for each specific appeal.

c. Acknowledgment of receipt of gifts to all validated projects or agencies will be made to the contributor or donor by the receiving governing body or validating agency in a timely manner, including concurrence in the purpose of the gift (see further at Appendix A, Churchwide Mission Support, Item G.2.).

d. All recipients of validated mission funds are responsible for reporting all gifts received directly from Presbyterian contributors or donors to the validating governing body.

#### D. *Validation of Mission*

1. Validated mission is any project or program within the bounds of and approved by formal action of a session, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly that is consistent with the responsibilities assigned by the Form of Government, whether or not it is funded from the adopted budget of the governing body. Validated mission should cohere with the great ends of the Church (*Book of Order*, G-1.0200) and is determined in accord with the following provisions of the *Book of Order*:

- a. G-3.0000 The Church and Its Mission
- b. G-9.0404b The Nature of Presbyterian Polity
- c. G-10.0102 Session Responsibilities
- d. G-11.0304 Presbytery Budget
- e. G-12.0102 Synod Responsibilities
- f. G-13.0103 General Assembly Responsibilities.

2. Each and all governing bodies serve the mission of the whole church and thereby appropriately validate mission. Such validated mission may be commended to others but does not require their concurrence or support.

3. Validated mission may be within or beyond governing body budgets.

a. Validated Within Budget—projects or programs included in the adopted budget of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly, including projects that will be funded with Funding for General Mission and Funding for Specific Mission.

b. Validated Beyond Budget—projects or programs not included in adopted budgets, but validated by action of a session, presbytery, synod, or the General Assembly. The validating governing body may specify dollar and/or time limitations.

#### E. *Accounting Definitions and Standards: Designated, Restricted, and Unrestricted Giving*

1. For accounting purposes, the following definitions of designators, contributors, and donors are observed.

a. Designations may be made only by governing bodies. A designator has received funds from a contributor or donor and applies such funds to designated categories or items. A designator must be a governing body.

b. Contributors can be donors, governing bodies, or other sources of income. Contributors may make unrestricted or restricted gifts.

c. The term donor applies to persons or entities whose gifts are eligible for a tax deduction. Donors may make restricted gifts consistent with IRS regulations and acceptable to the receiving entity. Restrictions must be agreed to prior to the completion of the gift.

2. For accounting purposes, unrestricted giving and restricted giving are defined as follows:

Restricted giving refers to gifts with restrictions by a contributor or donor for use in support of a particular project, budget category, or appeal. The processing of restricted gifts will comply with the standards established by the processing of restricted and unrestricted gifts will comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Internal Revenue Service regulations. Unrestricted giving refers to gifts made without restriction and subject to the use and discretion of the receiving governing body.

a. Unrestricted giving remains foundational in the System of Giving. Through unrestricted giving, individuals and governing bodies share in support of the whole mission and ministry in which the church engages.



b. Restricted giving, such as churchwide special offerings and other specific appeals, is a valuable and important method of adding to unrestricted giving. Contributors wishing to use restricted giving are encouraged first to choose projects or categories within adopted budgets. Special offerings and other specific appeals are always restricted by their stated purpose.

(1) Each governing body must handle funds according to the donor's intention in giving the gift. If the intent cannot be honored, the gift must be returned.

(2) Clarity in this regard may on occasion require conversation and/or negotiation with donors even beyond the governing body where the gift is first received.

c. Restrictions on the use of gifts may come from a donor or a governing body making the gift but always require concurrence by the governing body or validated not-for-profit agency receiving the gift.

(1) A donor must relinquish control of a gift or it does not qualify for tax preference treatment and the receiving organization jeopardizes its tax-exempt status.

(2) When restricted gifts are accepted, they will always be used for the restricted purpose within designations approved by the governing body.

3. The obligations of designators are to:

a. honor restrictions that have been accepted or to consider permitting additional support of a project beyond its approved budget;

b. ensure conformity with all applicable civil law;

c. report back to all donors and contributors;

d. disburse money received within 60 days;

e. contact all donors or contributors if restricted giving cannot be used according to its restrictions—if restrictions cannot be met and the donors or contributors do not agree to the use of funds for other purposes, the gifts are to be returned to the donor.

4. *Budgeting and Equalization*

a. Funding of approved budgets is accomplished as follows:

(1) First, restricted funds are applied to the appropriate budget items.

(2) Then, unrestricted funds are applied toward fulfillment of all budget items.

(3) This use of unrestricted funds provides for equalization within a governing body's budget. This process supports the orderly planning and budgeting decisions of governing bodies while honoring appropriate restrictions and designations.

b. Sessions are encouraged to follow the division of mission support commitments adopted by their presbyteries. If a session does not follow these division agreements, a presbytery may seek to fulfill agreements through use of unrestricted funds—provided that such a policy is communicated to its sessions. This use of unrestricted funds provides for equalization among governing bodies. Churchwide special offerings and other specific appeals shall not be used to fulfill mission support commitments and are not subject to equalization.

F. *Collection, Reporting, and Audits*

1. *Collection and Transmittal of Funds*

a. The General Assembly will maintain financial records in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and in compliance with all applicable accounting pronouncements and regulations specific to the not-for-profit industry. Software and systems will be appropriate to support compliance with the requirements stated above.

b. The General Assembly will observe the following minimum standards for its operations. It is expected that presbyteries and synods will also adopt and adhere to these same standards:

(1) Provide a detailed receipt to a contributor or congregation for all money received.

(2) Close monthly and remit funds within sixty days of receipt.

(3) Utilize the Federal Reserve system to expedite the transfer of funds whenever and wherever possible.

(4) Use a standardized, detailed transmittal format for transmitting data and funds electronically between presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly.

(5) Establish and follow cash management policies and procedures that are designed to maximize cash management earnings.

## 2. *Reporting*

The General Assembly will provide financial information quarterly for receipt of funds from all sources, and this information will be posted to the PC(USA) Web site on the financial page.

a. Each presbytery and synod will be responsible for obtaining with remittances the detailed information required for disbursement.

b. Each presbytery and synod will report all giving on an approved information transmittal form to the General Assembly site no later than sixty days after receipt of funds.

c. The General Assembly will furnish to every presbytery and synod an annual information report on a church-by-church basis. This annual report will provide information for churches within a synod or presbytery bounds on all funds received by it for presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.

d. The General Assembly will furnish, in cooperation with the presbyteries, at least quarterly and not more often than monthly, an information report to every presbytery showing the agreed upon distribution of dollars (including the presbytery's mission support commitments) between the presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly as compared to the actual funds received. Should discrepancies exist, the General Assembly site will work with the reporting site to clarify and to effect the necessary changes and/or corrections.

## 3. *Internal Audit*

The General Assembly Council will establish an internal audit function involving a broad variety of audit services. Included among these are:

a. reviewing the reliability and integrity of financial information and how that information is identified, measured, classified, and reported;

b. reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of particular financial management functions;

c. reviewing established internal control systems for efficiency and compliance;

d. reviewing compliance with internal policies and procedures;

e. reviewing financial statements contained in the annual report with management and the independent auditors to determine that the independent auditors are satisfied with the disclosure and content of the financial statements;

f. reviewing and recommending to the General Assembly Council Audit Committee, the independent auditors to be selected to audit the financial statements of the corporation; and

g. reporting of the Internal Audit Committee directly to the General Assembly Council.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

### A. *Mission Budget Cycle*

The Mission Budget will be developed in budget cycles. Each budget cycle will consist of two consecutive calendar years, where the first year is the year following a biennial General Assembly meeting (e.g., 2008 General Assembly, 2009/2010 budget cycle). A separate budget will be developed for each year within the cycle.

### B. *Basic Mission Direction*

1. The Mission Work Plan is adopted by the General Assembly Council and provides the framework for the two-year budget cycle.

2. The ministry areas will develop proposals that will advance the Mission Work Plan.

3. The General Assembly Council will recommend a budget to the General Assembly that will provide the funding to fulfill the goals in the Mission Work Plan for the budget cycle.

C. *The Proposed Budget*

1. At the second General Assembly Council meeting of the year prior to the budget cycle, (e.g., May of 2008 for the 2009/2010 budget cycle), the General Assembly Council will review the budget presented by the Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services and recommend to the General Assembly a proposed budget for the budget cycle that embodies the Mission Work Plan and describing the work to be added or deleted as part of the recommendation. The Executive Committee will recommend a budget if, for any reason, the General Assembly Council does not make a recommendation.

2. At the General Assembly during the year before the budget cycle (e.g., 2008 General Assembly for the 2009/2010 budget cycle), the appropriate assembly committee of the General Assembly will receive the report of the Mission Work Plan and the proposed budget for approval and recommendation to the full assembly.

3. The appropriate assembly committee of the General Assembly will recommend a balanced budget for each year in the budget cycle, incorporating work from the proposed budget and overtures, commissioners' resolutions, and other actions of the General Assembly, for approval as the outline of work for the budget cycle. The General Assembly may make decisions to add or subtract any element to or from proposed budgets. The General Assembly Council will then make appropriate adjustments.

D. *The Detailed Budget*

1. *Detailed Budget Development*

a. Following the General Assembly and under the leadership of the Executive Committee, detailed implementation of the Mission Work Plan as approved by the General Assembly will be outlined, and work responsibility assigned.

b. Under the management of Shared Services and with specific involvement by the Ministry Areas, a detailed budget proposal that encompasses the work approved by the General Assembly will be developed for each year in the budget cycle.

2. *Approval of the Detailed Budget*

At its third meeting of the year prior to each budget cycle (e.g., September 2008 for the 2009/2010 budget cycle), the General Assembly Council will review both the detailed budget for the following year and the most up-to-date financial information. The General Assembly Council will review the adequacy of the Executive Committee's response to the General Assembly directives in the adopted budget and, after any necessary changes, approve the detailed budget for the following year with particular expenditures by organizational entity displaying both budget offices and relatedness to the basic Mission Work Plan.

E. *Budget Monitoring*

1. The General Assembly Council will monitor the accomplishment of the Mission Work Plan and the appropriate expenditure of funds throughout the budget cycle.

2. The General Assembly Council will report to each biennial General Assembly on the results of the work undertaken during the previous two budget years (e.g., 2008 General Assembly for budget years 2006 and 2007), including full disclosure of the financial results of each year and other information related to the financial condition of the church. These two budget years will not be within the same budget cycle.

F. *Roles and Responsibilities in Developing Budgets*

1. The General Assembly does the following:

- a. Determines churchwide mission goals upon which budget development will be based.
- b. Has the authority to institute and terminate programmatic emphases and activity.
- c. Upon recommendation from the General Assembly Council, approves both the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and the Per Capita Budget.

2. The General Assembly Council does the following:

- a. Implements General Assembly decisions regarding (1) Mission Work Plan goals and objectives and (2) programmatic activity.
- b. Recommends a Mission Work Plan for each budget year to the General Assembly, after appropriate consultation.
- c. Presents the budget to the General Assembly.
- d. Approves detailed budgets based upon General Assembly action.
- e. Oversees programmatic activity funded through the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and General Assembly Council related work from the Per Capita Budget.

3. The Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services is responsible for the following:
  - a. Manages the process for budget development.
  - b. Prepares budget presentations for both the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly.
4. The Deputy Executive Director for Mission is responsible for the following:
  - a. Prepare descriptions of programmatic activities in appropriate form for budget consideration, reflecting the adopted Mission Work Plan goals.
  - b. Develop detailed budgets based on budget allocations made by the General Assembly and as instructed by the General Assembly Council.

G. *Per Capita Budget*

The General Assembly Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) jointly have responsibility for developing a per capita budget and apportionment for recommendation to the General Assembly. The per capita budget will be prepared using timelines similar to those for the General Assembly mission budget.

SHARED SERVICES

Shared Services is accountable to the Executive Director and carries out the following responsibilities.

- A. To provide accounting and reporting services for
  1. the General Assembly Council, its Ministry Areas, and certain related bodies and committees;
  2. the Office of the General Assembly;
  3. other entities as requested on a fee-for-service basis; and
  4. synod, presbytery, and session finance officers, as appropriate.
- B. To perform and establish policies and procedures for the following functions of
  1. controller/financial accounting controls, general ledger maintenance, general accounting, financial reporting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, church and student loans, payroll, budgeting, fixed asset management, overseas accounting, inventory control, and project accounting;
  2. treasury/central receiving service, bank relations and services, overseas treasury service (as appropriate), foreign exchange, short-term investments, working capital/cash management, and endowment and revenue accounting;
  3. financial planning, capital planning and economic forecasting, and financial modeling;
  4. property maintenance and management including acquisitions, gifts, leases, and dispositions, purchasing and print services, and mail services;
  5. establishing standards for receiving sites throughout the church in consultation with other parts of the church;
  6. distribution management services, including order processing, customer services, warehousing, and shipping.
- C. To ensure that no payment of any expenditure is made in excess of the total budget approved by the General Assembly Council. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of each Deputy Executive Director to ensure that expenditures for their respective areas are within the approved budget before commitments are made.
- D. To maintain all financial records and prepare monthly reports to the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly Council Executive Staff Leadership.
- E. To prepare and present the annual report of the Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets, and Statement of Cash Flows of the General Assembly that will be audited by a certified public accountant and presented to the General Assembly.

## Item 08-13

[The assembly approved Item 08-13 as amended. See pp. 22, 24.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) set aside a Season of [Mission] Interpretation—a period of time each year, beginning in 2009—for the church to covenant to interpret and

**promote its work in the context of the mission programs of the local, regional, and national governing bodies of the PC(USA). During this season of interpretation, the stories of our ~~participation in~~ **[furthering]** the Realm (Kingdom) of God would be presented as an integrated whole with international, national, regional, and local missions all working together to the glory of God.**

### *Rationale*

A quick analysis of current giving trends reveals that the areas most consistently demonstrating growth are those successfully engaging the giver. The traditional system of Presbyterian mission support relies primarily on appealing to the giver's loyalty to the institution. It says, "Give because you are a Presbyterian!" rather than, "Give because your gifts can change lives and further the Realm (Kingdom) of God here on earth." A new approach would require the church to interpret the mission program of the church for potential givers. This approach would not discount traditional stewardship but would highlight and promote the concept of giving as a form of Christian discipleship. Presbyterians would be reminded of their participation in the eschatological reality of God at work in their lives and in God's world through stories that demonstrate the advance of Christ's mission.

This churchwide period of interpretation and celebration would be a collaborative effort wherein governing bodies would partner across all levels of the church. Each governing body would help promote and interpret not only its particular mission emphasis, but also that of its related governing body partners. For example, during this season, a particular presbytery would not only be promoting its work and mission to its congregations it would participate in facilitating the promotion and celebration of the work and mission of its synod and of the General Assembly.

This season of interpretation should not be confused with earlier patterns of mission interpretation and promotion within the church, such as the Witness Season or the Witness Offering. The Witness Season was an annual period of mission education observed in many congregations, with a different geographical focus on international mission each year. In many congregations this was accompanied by a Witness Offering, a special offering that received funds for international mission, evangelism and new church development, and educational materials for racial ethnic congregations.

The season of interpretation called for in this recommendation will not be part of a special offering, and will not be focused on one specific understanding of mission. Instead, it will focus on the broad sense of mission, defined earlier in this paper: "proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally."

## **Item 08-14**

[The assembly approved Item 08-14. See pp. 22, 24.]

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following General Assembly Council Mission Work Plan for 2009–2012:**

**The Mission Work Plan provides the framework for directing, supporting, and evaluating the ministries of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This plan builds upon the 2007–2008 Mission Work Plan, which was reviewed and assessed through periodic progress reports during 2007. It is intended to encompass the years 2009–2012, be flexible in its application in a rapidly changing church and world, and encourage ongoing conversation with congregations, governing bodies, and other mission partners.**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) offers the world a visible witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With congregations, governing bodies, and other mission partners, we serve the church in mission.

### **CORE VALUES**

Called by our common baptism to faith in and service of our Lord Jesus Christ, and nurtured at his table wherever it is set in the world, we, the General Assembly Council, commit ourselves through the 2009–2012 Mission Work Plan to C.A.R.E., which means to be:

#### **Collaborative**

Calling for continued commitment to our connectional polity by the church at all levels, we will cultivate an inclusive, covenantal community in Christ.

**Accountable**

Addressing our established goals and actively seeking advice and evaluation, we will be aware that we always answer to God and to one another.

**Responsive**

Recognizing our role as servant leaders, we will respond to the voice of the church, fostering strong relationships with congregations, governing bodies, and other partners.

**Excellent**

Exhibiting faithful stewardship through God's empowering grace, we will serve with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

**GOAL AREAS**

**EVANGELISM GOAL AREA**

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8 NRSV*

**STRATEGIC GOALS**

The General Assembly Council will proclaim in word and deed the Gospel of Jesus Christ by:

- Witnessing to the Gospel's transforming power locally and globally with special emphases on people at the margins of society and those with no active church affiliation;
- Working in partnership to nurture healthy congregations, including new church developments, and congregational transformations, and to meet the General Assembly goals for diversifying our membership through multicultural and racial-ethnic congregations and fellowships; and
- Strengthening and discovering new ways to witness faithfully with Presbyterian and ecumenical partners in the United States and around the world.

**DISCIPLESHIP GOAL AREA**

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20a NRSV*

**STRATEGIC GOALS**

The General Assembly Council will equip people, from the youngest of children to the most mature of Christians, to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ and to follow, learn, and live God's new way in the world by:

- Engaging in biblical, theological, ecumenical, interfaith, and ethical study;
- Studying, articulating, and teaching our Reformed tradition;
- Resourcing Christian education, spiritual disciplines, worship, and stewardship; and
- Encouraging bold and inclusive witness to the Gospel in all facets of personal and communal life.

**VOCATION GOAL AREA**

*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NRSV*

**STRATEGIC GOALS**

The General Assembly Council will encourage people to hear and respond to God's call to witness and serve in the church and the world by:

- Assisting all people to discern and respond to vocational call;
- Encouraging and supporting people called to mission service in the United States and around the world;
- Partnering with congregations, governing bodies, seminaries, other educational institutions and entities to cultivate leadership for the church; and
- Supporting pastors, commissioned lay pastors, Christian educators, other church professionals, elders and deacons in service and leadership.

## **JUSTICE GOAL AREA**

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8 NRSV*

### **STRATEGIC GOALS**

The General Assembly Council will join God in transforming societies to reflect God's intention for a just, peaceful, and compassionate world by:

- Bearing prophetic witness to justice and compassion and speaking truth to power on behalf of the General Assembly;
- Equipping and supporting congregations, mission initiators, global partners, and mission personnel as they bear witness to God's intentions;
- Working to alleviate injustice, poverty, hunger, and the effects of illness, disaster and suffering;
- Promoting peace and the resolution of conflict in all aspects of life and community; and
- Fostering cultural sensitivity and welcoming diversity as the church witnesses in the world.

## **STEWARDSHIP GOAL AREA**

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 1 Peter 4:10 NRSV*

### **STRATEGIC GOALS**

The General Assembly Council will commit itself and inspire people to live in grateful response to God's abundant grace and gifts by:

- Professing a common understanding within our Reformed tradition of a theology of abundant living and giving;
- Communicating the vision, mission and ministry of the General Assembly Council within the context of the PC(USA);
- Inviting people into a meaningful response to God's abundance;
- Urging responsible care for God's creative work in the environment; and
- Effectively managing the church's resources while leading the PCUSA with purpose, transparency, integrity and commitment.

## **Glossary of Terms**

**Core Value:** A statement in broad terms of the essential and enduring ethos that permeates all facets of organizational life.

**Goal:** A statement in broad terms of the principal program, development, administrative or other major accomplishments the organization hopes to achieve to realize its vision.

**Goal Area:** A grouping of related goals

**Mission:** Proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

**Mission Work Plan:** The framework for directing, supporting, and evaluating the ministries of the General Assembly Council.

**Objective:** A statement in narrow terms of a milestone to be accomplished, related to operational goals, stated in terms of a result (not an activity) that is time bound and measurable.

**Operational Goal:** A subsidiary goal to a strategic goal that focuses the operations of the organization toward the achievement of strategic goals.

**Strategic Goal:** A high level goal that is formed in response to opportunities and challenges related to achieving the organizational vision that focuses operational activities.

**Vision:** A broad statement of what the organization hopes and dreams of becoming.

**A PLAN FOR SETTING THE DIRECTION FOR MINISTRY AND GUIDING THE WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY COUNCIL**

**In collaboration with staff, and input from across the church the GAC develops the ...**

**VISION**

and from that vision identifies ...



**GOAL AREAS**

then sets ...



**STRATEGIC GOALS**

**Comment:** Goals cascade down and increase in level of detail and specificity from the strategic goals of the GAC to the goals of the individual staff members.

**REVIEW  
EVALUATION  
EXECUTION**

that along with GA referrals guide the staff's development of ...



**OPERATIONAL GOALS**

**Budget**

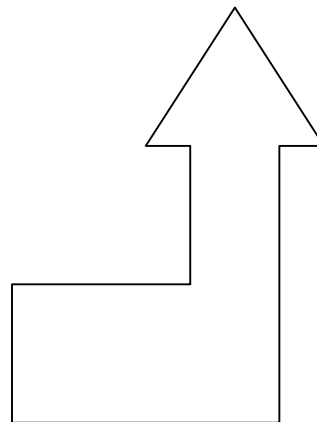
Which are supported by specific, measurable, and attainable ...



**OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

**Office/Team Goals**

**Individual Goals**



**Comment:** Ministry area operational goals complement and support the strategic goals.



## Item 08-15

[The assembly approved Item 08-15. See pp. 22, 23, 24.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) ratify the following recommendation regarding the Church Extension Fund:

That the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Council (hereinafter “GAC”) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) act for the General Assembly between the biennial meetings of the General Assembly to direct the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (hereinafter the “Board or BNM”), a constituent corporation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (hereinafter the “Foundation”), to modify the restriction on a fund of the Board known as the Church Extension Fund, fund number 201330, (hereinafter the “Fund”) to change the restriction for the use of the fund as follows:

**FROM:**

“For grants for new church development or church extension situations involving an expanded community development, to be used for sites, manse, or church aid, with first or second mortgage security, and other terms, comparable to the original terms for which these funds were raised.”

**TO:**

“For church extension purposes which are defined as loans to particular churches and presbyteries for site purchase, building, or renovation purposes and grants to particular churches and presbyteries for projects associated with organizing new congregations, transforming existing congregations, or developing congregational-based ministries that reflect the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to inclusiveness, diversity, and ecumenicity. Salaries of staff at presbyteries and particular churches are included in the definition of church extension to the extent and proportion such staff members are performing this mission. Salaries of staff administering the church extension program at the General Assembly level via the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation in proportion to such staff’s activities to support church extension programs are considered to be operating expenses payable from the Fund.”

*Rationale*

This recommendation was approved by the General Assembly Council Executive Committee during its July 2007 retreat meeting and ratified by the General Assembly Council during its meeting of September 2007.

## Item 08-16

[The assembly approved Item 08-16 with amendment. See pp. 23, 24.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the General Assembly Council to create a review committee, with each agency reviewed having a voice on the review committee, to review the service of the whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees as related to the General Assembly Council, by

1. examining the interaction, cooperation between such committees and commissions, as well as their scope and authority;
2. the collective role each contribute complementing and implementing the General Assembly’s total mission program or directives; and
3. report findings and recommendations to 219th General Assembly (2010).

[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$220; (2009): \$13,980; (2010): \$8,715 (Per Capita-GAC)] [Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$290; (2009): \$18,430; (2010): \$10,960 (Per Capita-GAC)]

*Rationale*

The *Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* sets forth that the permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees and commissions will be reviewed based on a six-year cycle by a review committee of the General Assembly using the Standards for Review of General Assembly Permanent, Advocacy, and Advisory Committees and Commissions in the Guidelines and Policies of the General Assembly (Section IV.D.2). Such reviews focus on the particular mission and responsibilities of the entity under review in each particular year. There is no mechanism in the current system of review that is charged with the responsibility to periodically examine, evaluate, and effect recommendations for overall coordination and effectiveness such entities portray as one part in the whole body of the church in its total mission program.

Such a review should focus broadly on the mission and role of these entities to the whole of the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and determine the degree to which these entities work cooperatively and identify where duplication, gaps, or overlap of responsibilities reside. Upon completion of the review, findings and recommendations shall be reported to a subsequent General Assembly for consideration and approval of remedies.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-16**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-16—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 08-16 on proposing that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the GAC to create a review committee to review GAC's Advisory and Advocacy Committees—From the General Assembly Council.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) respectfully offers its concerned comments as follows:

1. The 205th General Assembly (1993) approved creation of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC). Subsequently, the 206th General Assembly (1994), took confirming and clarifying action regarding the advocacy/advisory committees, which actions provided the basis for ACREC's purpose statement: "To ensure advocacy and monitoring functions in the areas of Racial Ethnic Ministries and Women's Ministries the General Assembly provides for the ACREC and ACWC. These two advocacy committees work in close cooperation with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. All three groups have direct access in the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council." Further, with regard to this direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council (GAC), various editions (including the current form) of the *GAC Manual of Operations* clearly acknowledge: "Access shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, racial involvement reports, a yearly narrative report, Advice and Counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and Counsel Memoranda shall be developed in conversation with the other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate. The Committee (ACREC) shall submit its General Assembly report to the GAC Executive Committee's Procedures Committee for review and possible comments by the GAC."

2. Item 08-16 erroneously seems to assume that the General Assembly's advocacy and advisory committees (including ACREC) are entities of the GAC, and are directly and fully accountable to the GAC. However, such suggestions and assumptions are neither historically nor constitutionally correct, unless or until or if at all the General Assembly should decide to the contrary. Rather than accountability of ACREC to the GAC, what is clear, in ongoing editions of the *GAC and ACREC Manuals of Operation*, is the mutual understanding that these two separate entities should maintain open, two-way lines of connection, communication, coordination, and cooperation. This defines a partnership relation between ACREC and GAC rather than an accountability relationship of ACREC to GAC.

3. The realities of history, constitution, and form and function run counter to and make it inappropriate for a GAC review committee to review the mission and ministries of ACREC or the other advocacy and advisory committees and then to submit to a subsequent General Assembly its findings and recommendations about these mandated committees of the General Assembly. Further, by way of the six-year cycle of reviews conducted by the General Assembly itself, ACREC has submitted its required self-study report, together with its required agency summary, to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

4. The ACREC, ACWC, and ACSWP are each entitled to one, non-voting—with voice—corresponding member at the GAC table. That current arrangement would ultimately restrict ACREC's direct access to and partnership with GAC in the work of the proposed review committee, unless the advocacy and advisory committees were assured of having one member from each entity appointed as participants with full voice and vote on such a review committee.

5. Altogether, Item 08-16 has the potential to contravene and squelch ACREC's General Assembly mandated responsibilities with and for the whole church, namely, to monitor and provide advice and counsel on all racial ethnic matters in the whole life of the whole church. Further, most potentially endangered is ACREC's General Assembly assigned responsibility:

“Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing issues of racial ethnic concerns.” In its wisdom, the General Assembly created ACREC with enough freedom to maintain a strong prophetic witness by being directly and fully accountable to the assembly itself rather than to the GAC or any other agency of the church.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-16

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-16—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) concurs in the advice of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) on Item 08-16, with the following suggestion for a recommendation:

Recommendation: That the 218th General Assembly (2008) authorize the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to combine its self-review with participation in the proposed overall review, if approved, as has been recommended for two other bodies of the General Assembly (the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation and the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.).

#### *Rationale*

Formative understandings of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy’s (ACSWP) role, which would be part of its 2010 review process, go back to the 1936 General Assembly that established a group of “consecrated” advocates for justice from two of the then-multiple boards of the church, the Board of National Missions and the Board of Christian Education, to be elected as a committee on “Social Education and Action.” Later versions of this committee included the Advisory Council on Church & Society; staff have served at different levels in the church’s administrative structure. Thus ACSWP recognizes the wisdom of reviewing periodically the overall work of policy and program-related bodies in the church, acknowledging that a strong component of theological and ethical analysis is needed to evaluate any part of the church’s mission structure. The Presbyterian church’s tradition of social teaching long antedates 1936, of course, but our commitment to be a church that both studies issues carefully and then takes bold action should not be taken for granted.

The General Assembly Council (GAC) recommendation wisely places the General Assembly-related entities in relationship to the whole church, which is properly related to the General Assembly. In practice, over the years, the agencies of the General Assembly have complemented, not duplicated, the work of congregations and other councils of the church. The role of prophetic witness has been institutionalized in most Protestant as well as Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches; what is important in Presbyterian tradition is the independence of voice of the “prophetic” bodies in their relation to our primary representative body, the General Assembly. The mandates of ACSWP and the advocacy committees have also been to work on a collegial basis rather than as an on-staff body of experts, so that there is debate and outreach within the formation of policy by elected members. The 1993 renewed charter, *Why and How the Church Makes a Social Witness*, is in fact based on the concept of discernment and the work of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, it looks at the place of the prophetic in all parts of the church, including the inclusion of prophetic elements in almost all primarily pastoral ministries.

The GAC’s own recent reorganization was aided by secular resources such as the book, *From Good to Great: The Social Sectors*, which recommends that everything done by organizations be measured by appropriate criteria. These criteria or categories for assessment are necessarily theological and ethical when it comes to the church. Yet it is also the calling of the church to apply the teachings of Christ to the larger society; we pray that ACSWP and the advocacy committees may always serve that call.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-16

*Advice and Counsel on Item 08-16—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 08-16 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the General Assembly Council to create a review committee that will review the service of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the General Assembly permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees and commissions.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) concurs with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic (ACREC)’s comments.

## Item 08-17

[The assembly approved Item 08-17. See pp. 22, 24.]

*On Responsible Purchasing—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Affirm the work of the PC(USA) and Presbyterian Women in their efforts to become responsible consumers in the global economy by occasional procurement of sweatshop-free (sweatfree) and fair trade products, despite the lack of a PC(USA) purchasing policy related to sweatshops.
2. Affirm the existing PC(USA) ethical purchasing policies that prioritize procurement from racial ethnic minority and women-led vendors and suppliers.
3. Request that the General Assembly Council formally endorse the formation of the State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium ending taxpayer support for sweatshops.
4. Request that the General Assembly Council encourage congregations and presbyteries to actively lobby their respective state and local governments to join the Sweatfree Consortium.
5. Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to make a good faith effort to purchase products sourced from vendors and manufacturers that observe internationally accepted labor standards, respect internationally established health and safety standards, and provide benefits in accordance with local law or the industry standard (whichever is higher), and a non-poverty wage. Apparel will be the initial focus since it is known for child labor and sweatshop conditions, and accordingly it is a closely studied industry, and should be extended to other products as non-sweatshop sources become available. The Sweatfree Consortium once formed, will generate resources that will help PC(USA) implement and enforce its sweatfree policy.
6. When information assuring compliance with these standards is not readily available from the supplier or independent monitor, request that the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council not contract for goods and services unless the provider is able to demonstrate active pursuit of compliance with the above practices. SweatFree Communities and the Sweatfree Consortium will maintain a list of noncompliant suppliers that fail to meet the criteria. Termination of relationships with vendors or manufacturers should be used only as a final option after thorough efforts to correct violations have failed. At the same time, brands or manufacturers who are unwilling to work towards compliance with such standards should not continue to supply goods to affiliates. Therefore, the consortium will assist affiliates in identifying brands and manufacturers that repeatedly refuse to take appropriate corrective action in response to consortium recommendations. Affiliates may require that bidders for applicable contracts not use companies or facilities on this list to supply goods.
7. Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to, whenever possible, purchase from factories and vendors whose production adheres to U.S. or country-of-origin environmental standards. The National Green Pages and the Responsible Purchasing Network's purchasing guide provide lists of screened and approved 'green' suppliers.
8. Request that the General Assembly Council encourage congregations, presbyteries, camps, conferences, and other entities of the PC(USA) to adopt the responsible purchasing policy or design one of their own that upholds these principles.
9. Request that all Presbyterians practice responsible consumerism, beginning with simplicity and non-acquisition whenever possible and responsible purchasing, including sweatfree and ecologically sound products where purchase is necessary. This would include a preference for locally produced products and food.

### *Rationale*

Our biblical tradition tells story after story of the ethical imperative to stand on behalf of those who are voiceless and who find themselves on the economic margins of society. International partners of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in different parts of the world have expressed concern that multinational corporations move production facilities to areas where labor is cheapest and environmental safeguards are weakest. Production facilities may not stay for long as industry competition and higher profits compel them to shift to other countries. While primarily young women may find temporary employment, local communities often experience negative influences, such as child labor, insufficient or un-enforced worker protec-

tions, forced overtime labor, lack of freedom of association, and short- and long-term environmental degradation and health impacts.

In response, as far back as the 192nd General Assembly 1980, the Presbyterian church has been developing practices that support a safe and just working environment for the workers of the global factory, as evidenced in Theological Affirmations on Labor Relations from Biblical Perspectives, The Principles of Vocation and Work that are a part of “God’s Work in Our Hands” affirmed by the 207th General Assembly (1995), and the Call for a Workplace Code of Conduct by the 209th General Assembly (1997).

The General Assembly also has been a consistent and strong voice for protecting creation. This resolution is in line with that history, as evidenced by documents like the “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” of the 202nd General Assembly (1990), and “Hope for a Global Future: Toward a Just and Sustainable Human Development” of the 208th General Assembly (1996).

During the last decade, many U.S.- and European-based multinational corporations have worked to implement codes of conduct as an expression of their ethical commitment as corporate citizens. They have done this in response to increasing concerns from their customers and shareholders that their products and services represent humane and environmentally sound production processes throughout the supply chain.

Many Presbyterians work within and have leadership positions in multinational corporations, offering the PC(USA) a unique opportunity to encourage the use of standards of conduct that can offer clear guidance to companies desiring to be good corporate citizens in the global community.

Additionally, the PC(USA) and its membership are significant customers of the goods and services of the global economy. The church has already established an effective program called “Enough for Everyone” that encourages Presbyterian entities to be conscientious consumers of responsibly produced products. The Presbyterian Hunger Program of the PC(USA) has worked with Enough for Everyone to develop a public disclosure and code of conduct for the Sweat-Free T component of Enough for Everyone, and this resolution calls on the expansion of this work. This resolution would also support the work already being done by the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to encourage independent monitoring of compliance with business codes of conduct. Good work is already being carried out in this area by many faith communities. For good counsel, refer to Cherokee Presbytery, which has passed a similar sweatfree resolution, or to several Catholic dioceses across the country and in Canada that have already or are developing similar standards to inform their purchasing of school uniforms.

In short, this resolution translates our words and beliefs into actions that demonstrate our Christian values and our individual and corporate attempts to live the Gospel in our everyday lives.

#### *Independent Monitoring*

There are excellent, truly independent monitoring organizations, such as COVERCO in Guatemala, which PC(USA) missionary Dennis Smith has been intimately involved. The formation of the SweatFree Consortium, in particular, by Sweat-Free Communities will advance work in this regard. The Presbyterian Hunger Program has been active on the SweatFree Communities (SFC) board of directors since its establishment in 2003. The SFC is widely respected in the United States and around the world among those working on improving conditions in export processing zones and assembly factories. The Sweatfree Consortium is an important next step in creating greater demand for sweatfree products and ensuring that conditions for workers improve in identified factories.

The SweatFree Consortium will identify and screen potential SweatFree supplier factories using the Designated Suppliers Program as the model. More than thirty public and private universities have issued official policy statements in support of the Designated Suppliers Program. According to the rules of this program, university logo apparel must be sourced from a set of designated supplier factories that have demonstrated full and consistent respect for the rights of their employees.

In addition to respect for the standards currently included in university codes of conduct, these factories are required to meet two additional standards: payment of a living wage—once they receive prices sufficient to make this feasible—and demonstrable respect for the right of association. The latter can be evidenced by the presence of a legitimate, representative union or other representative employee body, or by proactive steps to create an environment in which workers can make a genuinely free choice about unionization. University licensees must pay these factories sufficient prices to allow them to pay living wages to workers and achieve other fair labor standards; licensees are also expected to maintain long-term relationships with these factories in order to create a reasonable degree of financial stability and job security. The factories will produce primarily or exclusively for the university logo goods market. For more information: <http://www.workersrights.org/dsp.asp>

**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-17**

*Comment on Item 08-17—From the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

The General Assembly Council appreciates the concerns about responsible purchasing expressed in this overture. While the PC(USA) has not had a sweatshop-free purchasing policy, it has been the practice of PC(USA) Purchasing Services to purchase sweatshop-free items whenever possible. In 2007, Purchasing Services processed purchases of apparel totaling \$258,804. Of that total \$183,079 was purchased from the Fair Trade Zone (a sweatshop-free women's sewing cooperative) in Nicaragua that partners with Enough for Everyone, a ministry of the Presbyterian Hunger Program, comprising a total of 70 percent of apparel purchases. Purchasing Services will continue its practice of increasing the percentage of sweatshop-free purchases as an annual goal.

Purchasing Services will utilize the resources suggested in this overture to source suppliers that provide sweat free and ecologically sound products. Purchasing Services will also work with Enough for Everyone to provide preferred supplier information to staff at the Presbyterian Center that meet ethical, minority vendor policy, sweat free, and ecologically sound products.

The ministries of the General Assembly Council will continue to encourage Presbyterians to practice responsible consumerism and Enough for Everyone will provide access to sweat free, ecologically sound, and fairly traded products.

**Item 08-18**

[The assembly approved Item 08-18. See pp. 22, 24.]

**The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in concurrence with the GAC Executive Committee, recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) make the following amendments to Section IV. of the *Organization for Mission*:**

**1. Amend Section IV.A.5., Regular Reporting: Accountability of the Moderator and Vice Moderator, as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

***“The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) shall assist the General Assembly in ensuring the accountability of the Moderator and Vice Moderator of the General Assembly by receiving and reviewing, at each of their stated meetings, a written report from the Moderator and Vice Moderator. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall also report at each stated meeting of the General Assembly Council.”***

***Rationale***

This revision reflects the current reality of how the Moderator and the Vice Moderator relate to COGA and GAC. The Vice Moderator of the General Assembly is not a member of the General Assembly Council.

**2. Amend Section IV.B.2.h., Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

***“h. The Stated Clerk shall be a corresponding member of the General Assembly Council, and a nonvoting member of its Worldwide Ministries Division. He or she shall be a member of any other body responsible for coordinating, formulating, or implementing the ecumenical and interfaith policies and programs of the General Assembly.”***

***Rationale***

The Worldwide Ministries Division no longer exists under the new structure. Corresponding members of the General Assembly Council are able to attend any committee meeting that is of interest to them.

**3. Amend Section IV.C.7.b., Committee on Ecumenical Relations, as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

***“b. The Committee on Ecumenical Relations shall be composed of twenty members. Twelve shall be members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) nominated for at-large positions by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) and elected by the General Assembly in as nearly equal classes as possible. Four shall be members of four***

churches invited by the Stated Clerk to appoint one member each from their communion to serve as voting members of the committee. One of the four churches shall be one of our ecumenical church partners. The other three shall be our full communion partners. One member shall be appointed by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. One member shall be appointed by the General Assembly Council. The other members of the committee shall be the Stated Clerk or the Associate Stated Clerk for Ecumenical Relations and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council or ~~the Associate Director of Ecumenical Partnerships of the Worldwide Ministries Division, both serving ex officio with vote designee.~~

~~“In addition, the directors of the three divisions of the General Assembly Council shall be corresponding members without vote. In addition, the following GAC persons may be corresponding members: the Deputy Executive Director for Mission and up to three ministry directors appointed by the Deputy Executive Director for Mission.”~~

#### *Rationale*

The positions listed in these paragraphs no longer exist under the new GAC structure. New wording brings the membership up-to-date with the new structure.

#### *Overall Rationale*

Section IV.E. of the *Organization for Mission* states:

“E. Proposed amendments to this Section IV of the Organization for Mission from related bodies or from within the Office of the General Assembly, shall be submitted to the Committee on the General Assembly (COGA). The COGA shall review these proposed changes and forward those it approves as part of its report to the General Assembly.”

## **Item 08-19 became Item 03-20.**

## **Item 08-20**

[The assembly approved Item 08-20. See pp. 22, 24.]

As a result of the Worldwide Mission Consultation, “Renewed Call to Presbyterian Mission in the World! Dialogue for Our Shared Future” that was held January 16–18, 2008, in Dallas, Texas, the Moderator, together with the Stated Clerk and the General Assembly Council, recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) invite the sessions, middle governing bodies, seminaries, General Assembly Council ministries areas, and all PC(USA)-related mission organizations to affirm and adopt the following invitation:

#### **An Invitation to Expanding Partnership in God’s Mission**

As members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) committed to God’s mission, accompanied by global partners, we gathered together January 16–18, 2008, in Dallas, Texas. We acknowledge the rich Presbyterian heritage in world mission and reaffirm the Presbyterian understanding of God’s mission as it is expressed in “Gathering for God’s Future,”

*The Good News of Jesus Christ is to be shared with the whole world. As disciples of Jesus Christ, each of us in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is sent into the world to join God’s mission. As individuals and as a church, we are called to be faithful in this discipleship. Our mission is centered in the triune God. Our mission is God-called, Christ-centered, and Spirit-led. Our mission is both proclamation and service; it is the reason the church exists. ...*

*Our renewed call from God is to face the challenges of witnessing and evangelizing worldwide, equipping the church for transforming mission, engaging in ministries of reconciliation, justice, healing and grace, and living the Good News of Jesus Christ in community with people who are poor, [persecuted, and living in the midst of violence]...*

*The church is part of God’s plan. We are called into the community of the church, and we call new disciples into that community. With Christ as our head, the church community exists for the sake of God’s mission. We learn to serve in mission in a way that is faithful to the triune God. We are to model the kind of community God intends for all humanity. To be the church is to be one large mission society. [PC(USA), “Gathering for God’s Future: Witness, Discipleship, Community: A Renewed Call to Worldwide Mission,” 2003, pp. 1, 16. Text in brackets is added.]*

Grounded in this theological foundation we realize that God is calling us to new patterns of mission. The world has changed, and the majority of the world’s Christians are now in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The great growth

and mission faithfulness of the Church outside the West invite us into a new posture. We must listen and learn to receive. We must also be open to new patterns of collaboration. These new patterns involve new cooperation and partnerships within the PC(USA).

**I. We recognize that God calls us to mission that is grounded in confession of our sins, grows out of a life of prayer and is sustained in worship. Therefore, we covenant to live and serve together in God's mission according to the following values:**

1. **Trusting in the Holy Spirit and trusting in one another as each discerns how God is moving us in mission. (Acts 10)**
2. **Doing mission in the way of Jesus who humbled himself, showing the way of self-giving and self-emptying. (Philippians 2)**
3. **Seeking to be faithful to God as we live and proclaim the fullness of Jesus Christ's good news; personal witness to those outside the church, justice for the oppressed, and compassion for those in need. We accompany others in their efforts to be faithful. (Luke 4)**
4. **Affirming the complementary nature of God's gifts to all in the one body of Christ and encouraging one another in living out those gifts. (1 Corinthians 12)**
5. **Recognizing our responsibility to each other by communicating openly, acting transparently, and speaking and hearing the truth in love. (Ephesians 4)**
6. **Striving in our mission to be aware of the context out of which we come, to respect the persons with whom we labor, and to honor the context in which they live. In an era of massive global inequalities we commit ourselves to be sensitive to and address the issues of power that result from our differences. (Philippians 2)**
7. **Valuing long-term relationships, partnerships characterized by perseverance and long-term commitments, which support and encourage global partners. (1 Thessalonians 2)**

**II. We seek to live out these mission values with humility, integrity, and steadfastness. Recognizing that God invites us all to be full participants in God's mission, we commit ourselves to work cooperatively with one another in the following ways:**

1. **We will affirm and encourage World Mission as it continues to move from a regulatory role to a more enabling and equipping role.**
2. **We will celebrate and encourage diverse Presbyterian approaches and structures for mission while maintaining the unity of our participation in God's mission.**
3. **We will share responsibility for the education and preparation of all Presbyterians for mission.**
4. **We commit ourselves to seeking more mission personnel who will serve long-term in cross-cultural contexts through the PC(USA), and to supporting them fully.**
5. **We commit ourselves to enabling and supporting our global partners as they send their mission personnel in cross-cultural service.**
6. **We recognize and affirm the growing opportunity for cross-cultural mission in our own increasingly pluralistic and multicultural society, and we receive the global community from near and far as mission partners and God's gift to us. We seek increased integration between local and global mission.**

**III. As we move forward together in God's mission, we commit ourselves to calling the church to ongoing intercessory prayer for God's mission and to the following tasks:**

1. **We will form a coordinating committee to ensure that we will meet together to share and cooperate on a regular basis.**
2. **During the coming year we will work to address two immediate priorities:**
  - a. **to coordinate and collaborate in the sending of mission personnel;**



b. to expand Presbyterian funding for mission personnel.

3. During the next three months we will share this document and invitation with our constituencies.

IV. With bold humility we invite those who would covenant with us to join in this new collaborative model of Presbyterian mission, and we ask for encouragement, for guidance and for prayer, remembering Jesus' own prayer:

*The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (John 17:22-23)*

**Rationale**

This recommendation is in response to the 2006 Referral: Commissioners' Resolution 08-17 On the Moderator Convening a Meeting Regarding the Worldwide Mission work of the PC (USA)—(Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 36-37, 746-47). The Moderator, together with the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, convened a consultation at the Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas, from 16-18 January. The invitations resulted from that consultation. The consultation brought together sixty-four mission leaders from the Outreach Foundation, the Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship, the Medical Benevolence Foundation, other Presbyterian-related mission organizations, global partners, and World Mission, Racial Ethnic, Women and Presbyterian Women, and Relief and Development staff to consider the common values that should characterize Presbyterian mission work around the world and to propose new ways to work together in ways that are more effective and faithful.

The undersigned, as individuals, joined in the covenant, and encouraged the organizations they serve to affirm it as well. Signed January 18, 2008.

Carol Holcomb	Judith Foreman	
Danny L.	Kenneth Matarushima	
Palestine Hoyle	Victor E. Makani	
Susan D'Arcy Fuchs	William C. Frazier	
	Paul A. DeKrom	
William H. Hannon	David W. Moore	
Peter J. Hannon	Jane A. Moore	
MILTON MESTIN	Reedley	
F. Cuyatti	Ann Ferguson	
John W. Daniel	Ann P. Johnson	Marilyn Bost
James H. Kelley	Tricia Kaye Sidle	Paul Frazier
Joan S. Gray	David E. Dawson	Th. Linn
B. Ann Farrell		
Yee Young	Rachel W.	Erick
Bob Linn	Wm. F. Taber	John Bost

Linda Braverman  
 Timmy Hart-Anderson  
 Don Welch  
 Joe E. Holman  
 Barbara Conner Dani  
 Carol J. Clarke  
 Greg Roth  
 Maria Zack  
 Shanon K. George  
 Rob Weingartner  
 JH

Anne Barstow  
 Rashell D. Hunter  
 Kara Ann Hall  
 Bill Young  
 Scott H. Sunquist  
 Barbara D. Innes  
 D. Scott Weimer  
 Nancy H. Conal canto  
 Rick Ufford-Chase  
 Kathleen Ockel  
 Donald J. Dawson  
 Elinor J. H. Stock  
 James B.

CONSULTATION ON WORLDWIDE MISSION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
**Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church**  
**Dallas, Texas, 16-18 January 2008**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

**Non-Staff Participants**

*Convener:*

Moderator Joan Gray

*Facilitator:*

Maria Zack

*Mission Networks:*

Anne Barstow

Sue Fricks

Kathy Matsushima

*Validated Mission Support Groups:*

Will Browne

Dale Stanton-Hoyle

Bill Young

Greg Roth

Rob Weingartner

John W. Daniel

*GAC:*

Carol Adcock

Francie Erwin

Rick Ufford-Chase

*Mission Professors:*

Scott Sunquist

*Presbytery Partnerships:*

Barbara Campbell-Davis

Dave Dawson

Dave Moore

*Mission Pastors:*

Jim Milley

Carol Clarke

*Presbyterian Global Fellowship:*

Scott Weimer

*Presbyterian Peace Fellowship:*

Rick Ufford-Chase\*

08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

*Witherspoon Society:*

Jake Young

*Immigrant Churches:*

Tae Su Cheong

James Oudom

*World Mission Initiative:*

Don Dawson

*Advisory Committee on the Constitution:*

Jim Wilson

*Young Adult Volunteers:*

Rachel Morris

Mike McCormick Huentelman

*Presbyterian Women:*

Judia Foreman

Ann Ferguson

*Large Church:*

Marilyn Borst

Enock De Assis

*Joining Hands Against Hunger:*

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*Global Partners:*

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Milton Mejia Colombia

Enos Das Pradhan India

David Kpobi Ghana

Patricia Cuyatti Peru

Lien Nguyen Vietnam

*MISSION CO-WORKERS*

Sherron George

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Karla Koll

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Linda Valentine

Clifton Kirkpatrick

Tom Taylor

Nancy Cavalcante

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Vernon Broyles

Tim Hart-Andersen

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*Media/Press*

Toya Richards Hill

Leslie Scanlon

## Item 08-21

[In response to Item 08-21, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 22, 24–25.]

*Inquiry from the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

[The advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk is attached hereto, as Appendix A.]

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 08-21 with the following response:

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the advisory opinion issued by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, July 2, 2007, Re. Modification of Restrictions of Funds is in accordance with the general principles set forth in the above Findings and correctly details the responsibilities and authority of the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Foundation with respect to the handling of restricted funds of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and disbursements from those funds. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) should:

1. Approve the advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, dated July 2, 2007, titled “Re: Modifications of Restrictions on Funds.”

2. Reaffirm the Joint Report—General Assembly Council and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 617–18, paragraphs 39.001–.020) with the following amendment to paragraph 39.019: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“39.019

“C. Once the documentation is complete, the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council and the president/chief executive officer of the Foundation will review the situation, bringing in appropriate staff and elected persons as required. It is expected that this review process will lead to a joint determination as to whether or not a proper expenditure has been made. If this process does not result in a joint determination, the ~~Foundation board~~ *General Assembly or its designee* will make the final determination.”

3. Designate the General Assembly Council to make the “final determination” on its behalf in the interim between meetings of the General Assembly.

### Alternate Resolution Approved

#### *“Introduction*

**“The purpose of the General Assembly Council (the “GAC”), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) A Corporation, and the Presbyterian Foundation (the “Foundation”) is to serve our Lord by strengthening the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).**

**“The GAC and the Foundation have presented to this General Assembly their disagreement on issues concerning the appropriate expenditure of restricted funds for the mission of the church. The GAC and the Foundation have come to the General Assembly seeking direction and the hope for reconciliation.**

**“The Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets, with the concurrence of the General Assembly Council and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, recommends that General Assembly answer Item 08-21 by providing a mechanism to resolve disputes and enhance collaboration between the two agencies as follows:**

#### *“A. The Foundation and the GAC*

**“1. The Foundation and the GAC covenant to work together in good faith to continue to resolve disputes with respect to the restricted nature of particular funds or other disputes pertaining to intended or planned use and expenditures of restricted funds in compliance with the procedures set forth in Section 39.019 of the 1996 Joint Report. The final sentence of Section C of 39.019 shall not apply. If the process set forth in Section 39.019 does not result in resolution, then the issue shall be promptly referred by the Foundation president or the Executive Director of the GAC to the Restricted Funds Resolution Committee (RFRC) as defined below. Both agencies**

will be afforded the opportunity to present information in support of their respective positions to the Restricted Funds Resolution Committee for its consideration. The RFRC will analyze the issue raised and will have the ability to seek the input of outside resources. The Foundation and the GAC shall each bear their own expenses associated with the RFRC process and shall equally share the expenses of the committee's work.

**"2. It is essential for the agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to model Christ-like behavior for the church. Requiring the General Assembly to make broad policy decisions to manage discrete and particular issues is not healthy or appropriate. We instruct both boards to thoroughly explore ways to improve collegiality and require that the staff of both agencies honor the jointly agreed business processes.**

**"B. *The Restricted Funds Resolution Committee (RFRC)***

**"1. The Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) shall appoint a Restricted Funds Resolution Committee (RFRC) comprised of:**

- "• two representatives designated by the Foundation Board;**
- "• two representatives designated by the General Assembly Council; and,**
- "• three persons appointed by the Moderator who are not involved in either agency, and have an understanding of the applicable principles in both Reformed theology and civil law.**

**"2. Guiding Principles: In conducting its review, the Restricted Fund Resolution Committee will be guided by the following principles. Pursuant to the 1986 Deliverances, the missional responsibility and the fiduciary responsibility under civil law rests with the General Assembly. Thus, all the agencies of the General Assembly (GA) are bound to follow the directives and priorities of the GA. The GA vests the responsibility for implementation of program-related mission with the GAC, and the Foundation pledges to respect that role. The GA vests the responsibility for fiduciary review in the Foundation, and the GAC pledges to respect that role. Both the Foundation and the GAC must comply with applicable laws.**

**"3. The Foundation and the GAC recognize and celebrate that the substantial majority of funds which they together disburse to beneficiaries for the mission of the church are handled cooperatively, collegially, and efficiently and without disagreement.**

**"4. The RFRC shall create a process to be used should an issue not be resolved in accordance with the 1996 agreement. The RFRC shall specifically recognize and address the fiduciary responsibilities by which the Foundation and the GAC are required to operate under civil law, and where issues remain disputed, the Foundation and the GAC shall file a cy pres or other equivalent action in the appropriate court.**

**"C. The need for the RFRC to continue, the resolution of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Foundation and the GAC, as well as the manner in which they are carried out shall be included as items of business for the Six Agency Review Committee (see Item 08-22) to handle.**

**"D. The Foundation and GAC, with the RFRC, shall jointly report their progress in reconciling these issues to the 219th General Assembly (2010)."**

*Question Received*

**To:** Advisory Committee on the Constitution  
**From:** Linda Valentine  
**Date:** February 22, 2008  
**RE:** Question \_\_\_\_\_

Over the course of my time as Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, my office has regularly corresponded with the Presbyterian Foundation regarding the appropriate use of a number of types of restricted funds. One of those conversations resulted in both entities requesting an opinion from the Stated Clerk. I would appreciate the Advisory Committee reviewing the Clerk's Advisory Opinion (attached) and either confirming his determinations or propose what the Committee determines to be the roles each of the entities plays in making decisions regarding appropriate uses of the various types of restricted funds. While the question posed to the Stated Clerk referred to one particular fund, the Church Extension Fund, I ask that the Advisory Committee give its guidance as the general principles that the Stated Clerk applies to the three categories of funds he names: restrictions imposed by the original donor, restrictions imposed by the General Assembly itself, and restrictions imposed by an entity of the General Assembly.

If you need further clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Attachment (Advisory Opinion) [See Appendix A.]

### *Rationale*

The General Assembly (GA) is ultimately responsible for determining and directing the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (G-13.0103a). The Presbyterian Foundation (Foundation) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) are entities of the GA, subject to its direction, oversight, and control (G-13.0103h). The members of the Foundation and the GAC are elected by the GA. The GA sets policy for church mission and determines how mission funds should be spent (G-13.0103b). The authority for making such decisions may be delegated by the GA to a GA entity (G-9.0403). The authority to determine mission policy and direction carries with it ultimate authority over mission funds.

The role of the Foundation is to manage funds of the GA entrusted to the Foundation. Those funds are to be used to support the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Foundation has the fiduciary responsibility to see that the funds entrusted to it are protected and productive. The responsibility for managing funds does not by itself grant authority to determine how or for what purposes those funds are dispersed. The Foundation may be likened to the treasurer of an organization who can tell the directors of that organization how much money they have to spend. The treasurer can write checks upon orders from the directors but has no authority to spend the funds of the organization without such orders. Another analogy may be that of a separate board of trustees and a session. It is the obligation of the board of trustees to manage the church's money, but the session has the authority to determine the mission of the congregation and to direct how the money of the church shall be spent in support of that mission. The trustees can only disburse funds placed in their care at the direction of the session.

Some funds held by the Foundation are restricted, others are not. Funds may have been restricted by the donor, by the GA, or by an entity of the GA. Restrictions by the donor may be accomplished by the directive of the donor or by the terms of the solicitation of the funds. When funds are restricted, they may be spent only for the purposes stated in the restriction. Funds may be donated or solicited for general purposes, in which case they may be spent for any purpose that fulfills the mission of the church. Restrictions may be determined by the GA or by an entity of the GA upon delegation of authority.

The Stated Clerk obtained legal advice from counsel, which is set forth, in part, as follows: Both the Foundation and the GAC are incorporated as Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporations and as such are governed by the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law. All charitable funds of the corporations are also governed by Pennsylvania law, not by the law of the state where they happen to be administered. The Pennsylvania Uniform Trust Act provides that “property committed to charitable purposes shall not, by any proceeding under Chapter 59 (relating to fundamental changes) or otherwise, be diverted from the objects to which it was donated, granted or devised, unless and until the board of directors or other body obtains from the court an order under 20 Pa. C.S.A. Ch. 61 (relating to estates) specifying the disposition of the property” [15 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 5547(b)]. Additionally, as a general rule, “if a particular charitable purpose becomes unlawful, impracticable or wasteful: (1) the trust does not fail, in whole or in part; (2) the trust property does not revert to the settlor or the settlor's successors in interest; and (3) the court shall apply *cy pres*<sup>1</sup> to fulfill as nearly as possible the settlor's charitable intention, whether it be general or specific” (20 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 7740.3).

Therefore, any funds that are restricted by the donor, either by the donor's directive or by the terms of the solicitation, must be applied only to the purposes of the restriction. They may not be spent for any other purpose, even if the funds on hand may exceed the needs of the stated purpose or if the stated purpose for any reason ceases or disappears. In order to apply such funds to other purposes, permission to do so must be obtained from the court.

On the other hand, funds that are received or obtained without restriction may be spent for general purposes unless they have been subsequently restricted. When funds are restricted by the recipient, rather than the donor, the restriction may be lifted or altered by such recipient at any time, but such restrictions may not be lifted or altered by anyone other than the recipient. The fact that a particular party may have the responsibility for managing a fund does not by itself give that party the authority to lift or alter the restriction. The recipient who has the authority to lift or alter the restriction may delegate such authority to another party of its choice.

In 1996, the GAC and the Foundation made a joint report (sometimes referred to as a Deliverance) to the 208th General Assembly (1996), setting forth an agreement between the parties as to their responsibilities and authority with respect to restricted funds. The General Assembly's response to that Deliverance was that it “recognizes, endorses, and celebrates that understanding” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p. 72, paragraphs 21.090–.091). Whether that language is the equivalent of adoption, the GA's response clearly indicates agreement with the Deliverance, which sets forth the principles upon which the Foundation would manage and the GAC oversee restricted funds held by the Foundation.

There is one part of the Deliverance that has caused some tension between the Foundation and the GAC. That is the sentence at the end of 39.019. The paragraph calls for a consultation between the Executive Director of GAC and the president of the Foundation about whether a proper expenditure has been made. The final sentence says, “if this process does not result

in a joint determination, the Foundation board will make the final determination.” The second recommendation addresses this tension and proposes resolving it in a way that is consistent with the General Assembly’s responsibility for mission.

The Advisory Opinion of the Stated Clerk sets forth in more detail the issues raised by this request. The first recommendation is that this advisory opinion be approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008).

#### Endnote

1. “As nearly as possible”—a legal doctrine for the interpretation of documents having specific terms that cannot be carried out literally, whereby the court attempts to reform the instrument in accordance with the general intent of the settlor rather than have it fail.

### Appendix A

#### ADVISORY OPINION OF THE STATED CLERK Re: MODIFICATION OF RESTRICTIONS ON FUNDS

July 2, 2007

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly has been asked to render an opinion on the following question submitted by the General Counsels’ Offices of the Presbyterian Foundation and General Assembly Council. I am offering this opinion and understand it to constitute an advisory opinion given under the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, section M.2.b. (2)

*Does the GAC have the authority to act for the General Assembly between the biannual meetings of the General Assembly regarding the modification of restrictions on a permanent endowment fund of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) known as the Church Extension Fund?*

**The Foundation holds at least three types of restricted funds: restrictions imposed by the original donor, restrictions imposed by the General Assembly (GA) itself, and restrictions imposed by an entity of the General Assembly.**

**The type of restriction that requires the Foundation to take part in changing the restrictions on a fund are those cases where the restrictions are donor imposed; otherwise it is the General Assembly Council (GAC) that has that responsibilities between meetings of the General Assembly.**

**For Donor restricted funds, the only way to modify restrictions on a fund would be for the Board of National Missions (constituent corporation of the Foundation) to file a secular *cy pre* action. In such situations, it will usually be necessary for the GAC to join the Foundation (Board of National Missions) in filing such actions.**

**For restrictions imposed by the Board of National Missions (a GA entity) that did not originate from an external donor, my research and understanding of the history, structure, polity, and theology of the PCUSA, leads me to believe that the GA has effectively delegated the GAC the responsibility and authority to modify criteria and definitions for use in making determinations of how to administer the Board of National Mission Funds. This delegation is consistent with historic practice.**

**For restrictions imposed by action of a General Assembly, the GAC is the entity responsible for making “mission allocation decisions”. The GAC is the “mission decision maker.”**

**While the Foundation and the GAC will need to ascertain the exact sources of restrictions in the Church Extension Fund, it is my understanding that they are primarily restrictions that have been made by the Board of National Missions or other General Assembly agencies or by that General Assembly itself. If that is the case, the General Assembly Council has the authority to modify these restrictions.**

I begin my analysis with the following observations:

Presbyterian Theology and Polity presume checks and balances and dispersion of power.

G-4:0302 notes: “The nature of Presbyterian order is such that it shares power and responsibility.”

We give Moderators the most power, but limit their term of office. We give Clerks multiple terms, but we limit their power (G-9.020 1, SR H. 1 .a (5), H.2.b (1))

In local congregations (presbyteries) one person(s) collects the money, another is responsible for dispersing it.

The “normal” practice of General Assemblies is to issue general directives and grant general responsibilities to agencies and GA corporations. It rarely, but occasionally, gives specific instructions.

G-13.0103a sets the criteria for the GAC as “keeping with the church’s mission under Christ”

Historically the General Assembly Council, and its predecessor organizations, has been the body that acts between Assemblies in making interim decisions.

The GAC remains the omnibus recipient of GA authority, even after its most recent reorganization and accompanying Form of Government Amendments.

The Foundation has responsibility regarding the compliance of the use of restricted funds with donor imposed restrictions. The GAC has the corresponding responsibility for GA entity or GA restricted funds.

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#### Analysis

In both of the last two major reunions (1958, 1983) the reunion Assemblies adopted implementing agreements that merged the structures of the two denominations in broad strokes

-“to make recommendations to the reconstitution and consolidation of the several boards and entities belonging to the two General Assemblies into such boards and entities as may be required to administer the interests and work of missions...”(1958 Concurrent Declarations 7. d)

-“The General Assembly Council shall develop and propose to subsequent General Assemblies a design for the work of the General Assembly which will effectively relate the functions, divisions, agencies, councils, commissions and institutions of the General Assemblies of the two Churches...” (explicitly excluded BOP from this instead provided separate article [#11] sec 5-4 of Articles of Agreement (1983)

The GAC did provide such recommendations in the Organization for Mission proposed to the 1986 GA and subsequently modified (as in Appendix B below)

The 1986 Deliverance (Appendix “B” to the Design for Mission) notes that the 1972 Deliverance is “inconsistent with the policy and structure recommended by the GAC” to the 1986 GA.

At section 2.d of that deliverance notes at “functions”:

“Subject to any inconsistent provisions of the Articles of Agreement or the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and subject to the lawful directions from time to time of the General Assembly or the General Assembly Council or any officer or agency thereof hereunto duly authorized, the Central Treasury Corporation shall from and after January 2, 1987:

(4) Act as disbursing agent for the funds and property held by the corporation or the Fiduciary Corporation as provided by Section 3 (d) (4) of this deliverance...”

The relevant section of Section 3 (d) (4) says: “Designate the Central Treasury Corporation as attorney-in-fact of the Fiduciary Corporation and each of the Foundation Constituent Corporations for the purpose of disbursing unrestricted income or unrestricted principal of invested funds (and restricted income or restricted principal to the extent authorized by the Board of Trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation) pursuant to the appropriations made by the General Assembly or any officer or agency thereunto duly Authorized.”

The deliverance is silent on decisions regarding dispersal of income in regard to restricted funds, but the language is otherwise quite broad.

The 1996 adopted explanatory statements in relation to this topic:

*“... the GAC is the responsible body for mission allocation decisions, while providing a framework and structure that will focus on agreed upon uses and eliminate the need for after-the-fact determinations..”*

*“... the Foundation has the non-delegable fiduciary responsibility regarding the compliance of the use of restricted funds with donor instructions ...” and states that [rm] mission funding disbursements from restricted funds will be made only after the mission decision maker has reviewed donor instructions on the fund. In areas where there is any question or uncertainty as to the proper scope, use, or nature of the restriction, consultation with the Foundation Gift Compliance staff will be held to specifically defined parameters. After consultation the appropriately adopted Foundation decision as to use restrictions will be effective. Before disbursements are made, the GAC financial staff will validate that the disbursements requested by mission decision makers are in compliance with the use restrictions.”*

It is also consistent with the GA’s action in the 1972 Reorganization where it placed investment and fund management responsibilities with the Foundation (p. 642) and assigned disbursement responsibilities to the Support Agency (now GAC).

In 1969 the GA likewise followed its typical approach when it acted on guidelines suggested by the Board of National Missions. It deals with the substantive question asked below. It laid out General Principles. Interestingly those principles recognized the heart of the current questions, namely the Board’s modified criteria were accepted:

5. The changing nature of contemporary society renders predictions concerning the long-range future of particular congregations or institutions extremely difficult. Responsible administration of Building Aid funds therefore requires:

- A. Avoidance of rigid judgment (either positive or negative) concerning future prospects of congregations or institutions.
- B. A willingness to revise and renegotiate the terms of loans in accordance with changed conditions.

The above GA actions demonstrate the traditional approach taken by General Assemblies, namely giving broad authority and depending on entities and committees to determine specific criteria and policies. The GAC’s current approach is consistent with its historic role. The Foundation is the custodian of the Funds, but has no Church Authority to make interpretations or decisions regarding the mission criteria to be utilized in carrying out the General Assembly’s historic intent in new circumstances. The *Book of Order*, the Deliverances, and the



GA minutes reviewed confirm that historic relationship.

The current G-13.0201 power says that the GAC has the following relevant responsibilities:

To act in those specific matters assigned to the General Assembly Council by the General Assembly, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions;

Finally, our Polity distinguishes between donor-imposed restrictions and governing bodies imposing restrictions upon previously unrestricted funds. (PCUSA, 1954, pp. 170–175, *Von Norman v. Synod of California*). The Foundation has clear responsibility to be certain that donor imposed restrictions are honored but does not have responsibility for deciding mission priorities or restrictions on funds that did not originate from donors outside of the governing body of the General Assembly or one of the entities accountable to it. That is the responsibility of the General Assembly Council.

In reaching the forgoing conclusion I have reviewed the following documents:

*The Book of Order* (including revisions approved by the 217th GA and affirmed by the presbyteries) The 1972 Deliverance, The Deliverances of the 1986, 1995, 1998, 1999,2000 General Assemblies The Design for Mission (as modified) Appendix “F” of the Design for Mission The Articles of Agreement for the 1983 Reunion, The Concurrent Declarations of the 1958 merger between the UPC and UPNA

I have also reviewed relevant sections of GA minutes (UPCUSA) from 1951 to Reunion (1983)

Finally, I have reviewed the following correspondence:

3/2/06 Memorandum by April Davenport to Alex Say  
 6/1/07 Draft Memorandum by Alex Say on Church Extension Fund  
 3/22/07 Memorandum by Alex Say on the Special Church Extension Fund  
 3/22/07 Memorandum by Alex Say on Loan Fund A  
 3/22/07 Memorandum by Alex Say on Loan Fund X  
 3/22/07 Memorandum Alex Say RE Ely Fund  
 3/22/07 Memorandum Alex Say RE Hoyt Fund  
 3/22/07 Memorandum Alex Say RE Manse Fund  
 3/22/07 Memorandum Alex Say RE Smith Fund  
 3/22/07 Memorandum Alex Say RE Special Church Extension Fund  
 3/22/07 Memorandum Alex Say RE Van Meter Fund

The Executive Director of the General Assembly Council has requested that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution review an advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. Over time the General Assembly Council has had regular correspondence with the Presbyterian Foundation regarding the relationship of the two organizations to various restricted funds managed by the Foundation. The two have had differences of opinion on who has the authority to modify such funds. The Stated Clerk, on July 2, 2007, issued an advisory opinion on the matter. The General Assembly Council wants the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to review that opinion and to give advice regarding the roles of the two organizations.

The issue of authority relates two three types of funds managed by the Foundation, namely:

1. Funds with restrictions imposed by the donor,
2. Funds with restrictions imposed by the General Assembly, and
3. Funds with restrictions imposed by an entity of the General Assembly.

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### PC(USA) FOUNDATION COMMENT ON ITEM 08-21

*Comment on Item 08-21—From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) Foundation (the “Foundation”) expresses its deep concern about the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s (“ACC”) recommendation and the advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk and respectfully opposes their approval.

If approved, the recommendation would fundamentally alter the systems of checks and balances within the denomination between the Foundation, as the agency charged with observing donor restrictions on funds, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (“A Corp.”), the agency charged with spending funds for mission. Also, the recommendation would jeopardize adherence to donor restrictions on any funds held by the Foundation for any beneficiary—General Assembly (“GA”) related or not. This is because while the language of the ACC findings and the advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk discusses honoring donor restrictions, Recommendation 2 of the ACC would permit the General Assembly Council (the “GAC”) to interpret all restrictions, whether donor created or board created, and whether the restricted fund pays to a GA entity or to a local congregation, college, or Presbyterian retirement home.

The system of checks and balances established within the denomination dates back to 1799 when the GA decided to separate the trustee functions from the commissioner functions and create the Foundation. Since that time, the Foundation has been charged by the denomination to act as a fiduciary and has had the responsibility to ensure that endowment funds were administered properly. The Foundation's basic duties have remained the same since its creation—through the reorganizations of 1923, 1958, 1972, and 1986 and should not be changed lightly.

The 198th General Assembly (1986) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) implemented a “Deliverance Implementing a Design for the Corporate Structure of Certain Agencies of the General Assembly” (the “Deliverance”). The Deliverance created the Foundation (the “Fiduciary Corporation”) and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (the “Central Treasury Corporation” or “CTC”), by virtue of a division of the Foundation and established the responsibilities of each entity relative to restricted funds. A division of responsibilities within agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is consistent with Presbyterian ecclesiology and theology in our recognition of different gifts manifested in different service, under the common call to serve and to love the one Lord Jesus Christ in mission and ministry (1 Cor. 12:4–31).

The Deliverance clearly established the Foundation's two primary functions as oversight of the medium- and long-term investments for the Denomination and the oversight of the disbursement of restricted funds. A Corp. has the responsibility to receive, hold, and maintain nonfiduciary property of the denomination, act as the disbursing agent for the Foundation for unrestricted GA funds, and may act as an agent for restricted funds as designated by the Foundation. A Corp. also has reporting responsibilities to the GAC. Over time, the Central Treasury Corporation/A Corp. came to be known as the General Assembly Council because of an overlapping board and officers between GAC and A Corp.

According to Section 3(d) of the Deliverance, the Foundation was charged to:

1) Receive and hold all monies and other intangible property, other personal property, real property and income thereon, as may be owned, given to or otherwise acquired or held by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or by either of the reuniting Churches for investment, whether restricted or unrestricted by trust, will or otherwise as to use or disposition, except such as is held by or hereafter given to a particular church, a presbytery, a synod or another agency as contemplated by Chapter VIII and other provisions of the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or by the Pension Corporation. See Section 4(b) of this deliverance which specifies the manner in which certain funds and other assets shall be characterized as investment assets for the purposes of this deliverance. ...

3) In every case where a donor has specified that the principal of the gift be invested and that only the income be expended, refrain from making any expenditure of principal, and in every case where a donor has specified the purposes for which principal or income may be expended, refrain from making any expenditure inconsistent with the terms of the gift.

4) Designate the Central Treasury Corporation as attorney-in-fact of the Fiduciary Corporation and of each of the Foundation Constituent Corporations for the purpose of disbursing unrestricted income or unrestricted principal of invested funds (and restricted income or restricted principal to the extent specifically authorized by the board of trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation) pursuant to appropriations made by the General Assembly or any officer or agency thereof thereunto duly authorized. In the case of disbursements of unrestricted income or unrestricted principal, the personnel of the Central Treasury Corporation, and not the board of trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation and the Foundation Constituent Corporations, shall be accountable and responsible for such disbursements. [Emphasis added]

The Foundation also has another source of fiduciary responsibility: civil law. The Foundation's charge from the denomination in the Deliverance is to follow the direction of the GA to the extent it is lawful in recognition of the Foundation's parallel responsibility as a trustee of endowment funds at civil law. The findings of the ACC and the advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk are in conflict with the Deliverance and its recognition that the Foundation must follow its civil law responsibilities.

In 1996, questions arose between A Corp/GAC and the Foundation as to who had the authority to interpret restricted funds. At that time, the ACC refused to hear the matter, holding that this was not a matter of constitutional interpretation over which the ACC had jurisdiction. (A conclusion that the Foundation submits should have been reached in this instance as well). As a result, the Foundation and A Corp/GAC engaged in dialogue between the agencies that was memorialized in the 1996 Joint Report of the GAC and the Foundation (“Joint Report”), addressing issues not unlike ones currently facing the Foundation and A Corp. The Joint Report was affirmed by the GA and is a statement of the “... understandings and agreements ...” reached between the Foundation and the GAC regarding each entities “... related but separate, responsibilities regarding restricted funds held by the Foundation for the benefit of the General Assembly's mission program...” confirming the fiduciary obligations of the Foundation in three sections.

The ACC recommends modification of one portion of that 1996 Joint Report. As agreed to by the GAC and the Foundation in 1996, Paragraph 39.019 (which was drafted to address questions regarding disputed expenditures from restricted funds made by the GAC) states that when a question is raised as to whether or not the GAC made an expenditure in accordance with donor restrictions, the Foundation and GAC shall conduct a review process to lead to “... a joint determination as to whether or not a proper expenditure has been made.” However, in preserving the fiduciary responsibility of the Foundation, Paragraph 39.019 goes on to state that “... [i]f this process does not result in a joint decision, the Foundation Board of Trustees will make the final determination.” The reason the Foundation's board is responsible for making the final decision is because of its non-delegable duties at law as a fiduciary.

The ACC recommends that Paragraph 39.019 of the Joint Report be amended to provide the GAC, as designee for the GA, the authority to finally interpret restrictions in circumstances where the Foundation and A Corp./GAC disagree as to expenditures made from restricted funds. It is difficult for the Foundation to understand how an agreement set forth in the Joint Report can be recommended for change by the ACC over the objection of one of the parties to that original agreement. Simply put, the Foundation has the fiduciary responsibility for funds entrusted to it and that fiduciary responsibility includes making sure the terms of trusts and endowments (including restrictions) are followed. The Foundation would be unable to fulfill that fiduciary responsibility should the GAC be given the authority to determine whether restricted funds have been or are being used in accordance with their restrictions.

Importantly, the ACC recommendation that Paragraph 39.019 of the Joint Report be amended to provide the GAC as designee the authority to finally interpret restrictions is expressly prohibited by the 1986 Deliverance. Section 5 of the Deliverance states that:

....The General Assembly Council may interpret with binding effect any provision of this deliverance except Section 3(d)(2) and 3. [Emphasis added.]

Section 3(d) 3 reads as follows:

In every case where a donor has specified that the principal of the gift be invested and that only the income be expended, refrain from making any expenditure of principal, and in every case where the donor has specified the purposes for which principal or income may be expended, refrain from making any expenditure inconsistent with the terms of the gift. [Emphasis added.]

Thus, the ACC's recommendation is clearly in conflict with the thoughtful and intentional structure of checks and balances set forth in the Deliverance, which prohibits the GAC from interpreting whether an expenditure is inconsistent with the terms of a gift (the restriction).

The ACC also recommends the approval of the advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk. Unfortunately, both the ACC recommendation and the advisory opinion of the Stated Clerk misunderstand the duties of a fiduciary, likening those duties to a "treasurer" or a "custodian" in conflict with settled Trust law on the matter; and also are not in alignment with process for modifying restrictions on funds or resolving choice of law questions under civil law.

For all these reasons, and most importantly because the Foundation does not wish to find itself in a position where a direction for the interpretation of a restricted fund from the GAC (should this recommendation be approved) is inconsistent with its duty under fiduciary law, the Foundation urgently requests this 218th General Assembly (2008) decline the advice of the ACC by answering the following:

That the General Assembly disapprove Item 08-21 from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

## Item 08-22

[The assembly approved Item 08-22 with amendment. See pp. 23, 25.]

**The Committee on Review of the General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) create a review committee to review the service of the whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its six agencies in implementing the General Assembly's mission directives. This review committee should be nominated according to procedures articulated in the *Organization for Mission* at section IV.D.1. "Committees of the Assembly." [See Item 08-D, Report of the General Assembly Committee on Review of the General Assembly Council at Recommendation 10 under the section "Recommendations for Change or Further Consideration."] [This report shall be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).]**

### *Rationale*

While the separate review of each of the six agencies is a helpful practice and has fostered improvements, this Review Committee observed that no one in the current system is charged with looking at the overall effectiveness of the whole. Coordination among the six agencies is voluntary and not always effective. Such a review should focus broadly on the effectiveness of the six agencies and other governing bodies in implementing the General Assembly's mission directives and should not duplicate the more detailed work of the individual agency review committees. Particular attention should be given to how or if these agencies work cooperatively and where or if there is duplication of services in the system. This review committee observed that some agencies are not working well together, but also that there are some beneficial cooperative efforts. These happen on a voluntary basis with no recommendation that this occur regularly throughout the system. This re-

view committee also heard some people questioning the rationale of the separation of the GAC and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

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### **BOP, FOUNDATION, GAC, OGA, PILP, AND PPC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-22**

*Comment on Item 08-22—From the Six Agencies [Board of Pensions (BOP), PC(USA) Foundation (Foundation), General Assembly Council (GAC), Office of the General Assembly (OGA), Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC)] of the PC(USA).*

The six agencies of PC(USA) are working together to be the best stewards of the resources given to them and to fulfill the specific mandate given to them by the church. The agency executives and the agency board chairs are meeting regularly to facilitate coordination and cooperation. Collaboration tables among staff are working across the agencies. Specifically those collaborations center on funds development, communication, and church relations.

These efforts are producing much fruit and increasing efficiencies. An alternative to suspending the regular review process of the next two agencies would be to assign a higher priority to the evidence of cooperation among the agencies than already exist in the review standards.

Should the assembly desire to conduct such a review, we believe it would be wise to delay the review of PPC and PILP until 2010 and expedite the process if the assembly directed the agencies to conduct a joint self-review of their cooperation and that the basis of the review committee's work should be the agency self-studies and review reports completed over the past six years. We further advise that the review committee focus on:

- The effectiveness of the six agencies in implementing the overall mission directives of the General Assembly, with recommendations for possible changes in their respective mission directives in light of current financial and other issues of concern to the denomination;
- Identification of (a) possible ways to achieve operating synergies among the six agencies, (b) current areas of collaboration among the six agencies, (c) likely areas for future collaboration and synergy, and (d) identification of specific areas of duplication among or between the six agencies with a rationale for acceptable duplication or a recommendation for change with a view to avoidance of unnecessary duplication.

Having a specific focus helped the previous agencies reviews. The referral of additional recommendations to this committee may decrease the effectiveness of the proposed review process.

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## **Item 08-23**

[The assembly approved Item 08-23. See pp. 23, 25.]

**Pending acceptance of the recommendation from the GAC Review Committee seeking a joint review of all the agencies, the Committee on Review of the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following:**

- 1. That the review process of individual agencies be delayed until 2010 and that the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), in consultation with the agencies, evaluate the "Standards of Review" and the manual built on these standards before the next cycle of review commences.**
  - 2. That the revised manual specify that each agency be required to complete its self-study and present it to its review committee within 120 days of the close of the General Assembly at which that committee is elected. [Our committee was not able to begin its work until more than nine months after it was elected.] [See in the Report of the Committee on Review on the Office of the General Assembly, Section V, Recommendations.]**
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## Item 08-24

[The assembly approved Item 08-24. See pp. 23, 25.]

### *Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church*

#### **A. *Relating to Budgets for General Assembly Mission Program***

##### **1. Presbyterian Mission Program—General Assembly Mission Program Receipts and Expenditures Actual Compared to Budget for 2006 and 2007.**

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) incorporate into the *Minutes* the report of the General Assembly Mission Program Receipts and Expenditures Actual Compared to Budget for 2006 and 2007.**

#### *Rationale*

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted policy governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly level. That policy provides that:

B. The General Assembly Council shall:

1. Report to each General Assembly:

a. Actual total financial resources used to support the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and the expenditures during the most recently completed year. (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 375)

The display that is presented below is the report of actual revenue and expenditures for the years 2006 and 2007.

**General Assembly Mission Program Receipts  
Actual Compared to Budget as of December 31, 2006**

Receipts	MISSION BUDGET								
	Unrestricted			Restricted			Grand Total		
	Ann Bgt	YTD Act	2005 Actual	Ann. Bgt.	YTD Act	2005 Actual	Ann. Bgt.	YTD Act	2005 Actual
<b>I. Support from Congregations &amp; Presbyteries</b>									
<b>Basic Mission Support</b>									
Shared Mission Support	16,000,000	13,320,583	13,914,889	-	-	-	16,000,000	13,320,583	13,914,889
Directed Mission Support	-	-	-	5,500,000	4,474,514	5,187,681	5,500,000	4,474,514	5,187,681
	<b>16,000,000</b>	<b>13,320,583</b>	<b>13,914,889</b>	<b>5,500,000</b>	<b>4,474,514</b>	<b>5,187,681</b>	<b>21,500,000</b>	<b>17,795,097</b>	<b>19,102,570</b>
<b>Ch.wide Spec. Offerings</b>									
Christmas Joy	-	-	-	5,500,000	4,927,405	5,240,914	5,500,000	4,927,405	5,240,914
One Great Hour of Sharing	-	-	-	9,700,000	9,465,261	9,326,914	9,700,000	9,465,261	9,326,914
Peacemaking	-	-	-	1,100,000	1,108,097	1,040,997	1,100,000	1,108,097	1,040,997
Pentecost	-	-	-	680,000	799,561	788,148	680,000	799,561	788,148
Witness	-	-	-	-	29,652	45,139	-	29,652	45,139
	-	-	-	<b>16,980,000</b>	<b>16,329,976</b>	<b>16,442,112</b>	<b>16,980,000</b>	<b>16,329,976</b>	<b>16,442,112</b>
<b>II. Supplementary Support (Beyond Budget) From Congregations &amp; Presbyteries &amp; Individuals</b>									
<b>Other Specific Appeals</b>									
Emergency and Disaster Relief	-	-	-	2,500,000	3,678,235	38,519,320	2,500,000	3,678,235	38,519,320
Add'l Giving Offering, ECO	-	-	-	8,800,000	7,233,916	7,228,798	8,800,000	7,233,916	7,228,798
Mission Initiative Joining Hearts & Hands	-	-	-	1,500,000	1,274,032	1,108,759	1,500,000	1,274,032	1,108,759
Hunger	-	-	-	600,000	502,877	541,619	600,000	502,877	541,619
Theological Education Fund	-	-	-	2,600,000	2,108,616	2,195,768	2,600,000	2,108,616	2,195,768
	-	-	-	<b>16,000,000</b>	<b>14,797,676</b>	<b>49,594,264</b>	<b>16,000,000</b>	<b>14,797,676</b>	<b>49,594,264</b>
<b>Add'l Forms of Giving</b>									
Presbyterian Women	1,600,000	1,336,691	1,458,912	450,000	55,367	422,744	2,050,000	1,392,058	1,881,656
Bequests and Annuities	2,420,000	13,114,451	3,834,578	350,000	407,427	14,223	2,770,000	13,521,878	3,848,801
Other Gifts	-	-	-	90,000	46,211	64,900	90,000	46,211	64,900
Validated Mission Support	-	-	-	850,000	245,622	670,501	850,000	245,622	670,501
Grants from Outside Fdns.	-	-	-	200,000	147,944	71,618	200,000	147,944	71,618
	<b>4,020,000</b>	<b>14,451,142</b>	<b>5,293,490</b>	<b>1,940,000</b>	<b>902,571</b>	<b>1,243,986</b>	<b>5,960,000</b>	<b>15,353,713</b>	<b>6,537,476</b>
<b>III. Interest and Dividends</b>									
PC (USA) Restr. Endow. Fds.	-	-	-	7,387,538	8,501,950	8,278,888	7,387,538	8,501,950	8,278,888
PC (USA) Unres. Endow. Fds.	8,959,587	8,495,391	9,231,855	-	-	-	8,959,587	8,495,391	9,231,855
Pby. Mission Program Fund	350,000	500,269	1,163,507	-	-	-	350,000	500,269	1,163,507
Outside Trusts	1,300,000	719,414	1,143,459	135,000	154,460	-	1,435,000	873,874	1,143,459
Jarvie Commonweal Fund	150,000	150,000	200,000	-	-	-	150,000	150,000	200,000
Jinishian Fund	-	-	-	1,944,123	2,201,909	2,305,859	1,944,123	2,201,909	2,305,859
Short Term Investment	700,000	853,809	761,992	600,000	1,394,303	263,336	1,300,000	2,248,112	1,025,328
	<b>11,459,587</b>	<b>10,718,883</b>	<b>12,500,813</b>	<b>10,066,661</b>	<b>12,252,622</b>	<b>10,848,083</b>	<b>21,526,248</b>	<b>22,971,505</b>	<b>23,348,896</b>
<b>IV. Other</b>									
Conference Ctr. Oper. Rcpts.	-	-	-	5,600,000	5,753,785	5,734,319	5,600,000	5,753,785	5,734,319
Partner Churches and Other	-	-	-	800,000	1,530,482	991,382	800,000	1,530,482	991,382
Hubbard Press	30,000	35,000	25,000	-	-	-	30,000	35,000	25,000
Sales: Curriculum/MEP/Other CMP	-	-	-	4,232,714	6,831,236	6,351,463	4,232,714	6,831,236	6,351,463
Sales: Program Services	-	-	-	7,200,000	7,464,780	7,595,285	7,200,000	7,464,780	7,595,285
Sales: Resources	-	47,353	26,815	3,100,000	2,209,550	1,856,308	3,100,000	2,256,903	1,883,123
Per Capita Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Income	-	-	146,596	-	-	-	-	-	146,596
	<b>30,000</b>	<b>82,353</b>	<b>198,411</b>	<b>20,932,714</b>	<b>23,789,833</b>	<b>22,528,757</b>	<b>20,962,714</b>	<b>23,872,186</b>	<b>22,727,168</b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>31,509,587</b>	<b>38,572,961</b>	<b>31,907,603</b>	<b>71,419,375</b>	<b>72,547,192</b>	<b>105,844,883</b>	<b>102,928,962</b>	<b>111,120,153</b>	<b>137,752,486</b>
<b>V. Prior Year Accumulations</b>	<b>1,449,343</b>	<b>(8,165,626)</b>	<b>(1,802,184)</b>	<b>8,623,342</b>	<b>5,399,915</b>	<b>(26,003,848)</b>	<b>10,072,685</b>	<b>(2,765,711)</b>	<b>(27,806,032)</b>
<b>VI. Admin. Cost Allocation</b>	<b>900,000</b>	<b>706,770</b>	<b>808,427</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>900,000</b>	<b>706,770</b>	<b>808,427</b>
<b>TTL RCPTS, PY ACCUM &amp; ADJS</b>	<b>33,858,930</b>	<b>31,114,105</b>	<b>30,913,846</b>	<b>80,042,717</b>	<b>77,947,107</b>	<b>79,841,035</b>	<b>113,901,647</b>	<b>109,061,212</b>	<b>110,754,881</b>

**General Assembly Mission Program Expenditures  
Actual Compared to Budget as of December 31, 2006**

BUDGETED ENTITY	MISSION BUDGET								
	Unrestricted			Restricted			Grand Total		
	Ann Bgt.	YTD Actual	2005 Actual	Ann. Bgt.	YTD Actual	2005 Actual	Ann. Bgt.	YTD Actual	2005 Actual
<b>I. Pgms. of the Executive Director</b>									
Research Service	453,298	477,281	412,723	635,472	386,875	485,008	1,088,770	864,156	897,731
Legal Services and Risk Mgmt	-	161,400	37,068	299,135	297,447	295,401	299,135	458,847	332,469
Mission Initiative Joining Hearts & Hands	-	-	-	900,000	682,979	847,124	900,000	682,979	847,124
	<b>453,298</b>	<b>638,681</b>	<b>449,791</b>	<b>1,834,607</b>	<b>1,367,301</b>	<b>1,627,533</b>	<b>2,287,905</b>	<b>2,005,982</b>	<b>2,077,324</b>
<b>II. Pgms. of the Deputy Exec Dir</b>									
Communications	1,325,247	862,732	1,138,811	1,409,272	967,526	1,138,099	2,734,519	1,830,258	2,276,910
Human Resources	574,752	605,421	634,678	46,018	47,398	46,007	620,770	652,819	680,685
Social Witness Policy	345,057	313,266	324,866	-	2,535	14,555	345,057	315,801	339,421
Stewardship and Mission Funding	1,077,615	1,039,269	812,625	839,450	873,116	780,322	1,917,065	1,912,385	1,592,947
Contingency	26,867	6,068	33,848	-	-	-	26,867	6,068	33,848
Funds Development	-	-	12,576	-	-	-	-	-	12,576
Mission Partnership Funding	3,412,208	3,379,544	3,489,342	37,965	64,393	35,041	3,450,173	3,443,937	3,524,383
	<b>6,761,746</b>	<b>6,206,300</b>	<b>6,446,746</b>	<b>2,332,705</b>	<b>1,954,968</b>	<b>2,014,024</b>	<b>9,094,451</b>	<b>8,161,268</b>	<b>8,460,770</b>
<b>III. Congregational Ministries</b>									
Presbyterian Peacemaking Program	-	-	-	1,619,542	1,342,767	1,479,853	1,619,542	1,342,767	1,479,853
Congregational Ministries Publishing	1,399,677	421,212	1,514,738	5,791,095	6,831,236	6,351,465	7,190,772	7,252,448	7,866,203
Conference Centers	-	-	-	5,600,000	6,179,474	5,833,729	5,600,000	6,179,474	5,833,729
Theology Worship and Discipleship	1,472,976	1,400,187	975,935	3,957,460	3,356,434	3,377,713	5,430,436	4,756,621	4,353,648
CMD Division Administration	464,414	605,455	268,842	149,638	35,830	65,290	614,052	641,285	334,132
	<b>3,337,067</b>	<b>2,426,854</b>	<b>2,759,515</b>	<b>17,117,735</b>	<b>17,745,741</b>	<b>17,108,050</b>	<b>20,454,802</b>	<b>20,172,595</b>	<b>19,867,565</b>
<b>IV. National Ministries</b>									
Leadership & Vocations	1,988,938	1,804,272	1,832,461	1,742,057	1,607,491	1,881,347	3,730,995	3,411,763	3,713,808
Evangelism & Witness	2,935,797	2,769,078	2,780,892	3,687,137	3,281,816	3,577,203	6,622,934	6,050,894	6,358,095
Justice and Compassion	2,516,828	2,363,778	2,208,199	3,831,509	3,157,668	3,536,444	6,348,337	5,521,446	5,744,643
Ministries of Enrichment	1,154,591	1,072,757	1,084,965	112,472	102,268	98,832	1,267,063	1,175,025	1,183,797
NMD Division Administration	422,009	323,162	383,656	92,751	81,456	52,292	514,760	404,618	435,948
	<b>9,018,163</b>	<b>8,333,047</b>	<b>8,290,173</b>	<b>9,465,926</b>	<b>8,230,699</b>	<b>9,146,118</b>	<b>18,484,089</b>	<b>16,563,746</b>	<b>17,436,291</b>
<b>V. Worldwide Ministries</b>									
Ecumenical Partnership	2,145,819	2,154,287	2,027,543	6,043,441	4,402,623	4,476,578	8,189,260	6,556,910	6,504,121
Global Service and Witness	-	-	-	-	23,817,103	23,794,457	19,938,906	23,817,103	23,794,457
				19,938,906					
People in Mutual Mission	2,989,302	3,021,385	2,978,002	12,180,367	11,039,394	12,138,173	15,169,669	14,060,779	15,116,175
WMD Division Administration	626,663	537,490	547,214	107,120	253,235	207,905	733,783	790,725	755,119
	<b>5,761,784</b>	<b>5,713,162</b>	<b>5,552,759</b>	<b>38,269,834</b>	<b>39,512,355</b>	<b>40,617,113</b>	<b>44,031,618</b>	<b>45,225,517</b>	<b>46,169,872</b>
<b>VI. Mission Support Services</b>									
Finance & Accounting	1,892,233	1,517,864	1,634,454	1,084,440	1,173,024	1,086,355	2,976,673	2,690,888	2,720,809
Office of Information Services	2,634,668	2,401,316	2,106,133	398,874	340,709	385,473	3,033,542	2,742,025	2,491,606
Mail, Print Services	146,951	127,143	123,801	427,434	572,854	559,245	574,385	699,997	683,046
Presbyterian Distribution Services	698,985	737,682	730,766	669,851	592,208	600,469	1,368,836	1,329,890	1,331,235
MSS Division Administration	227,272	177,338	218,586	21,489	21,318	20,260	248,761	198,656	238,846
	<b>5,600,109</b>	<b>4,961,343</b>	<b>4,813,740</b>	<b>2,602,088</b>	<b>2,700,113</b>	<b>2,651,802</b>	<b>8,202,197</b>	<b>7,661,456</b>	<b>7,465,542</b>
<b>VII. Shared Expenditures</b>									
Insurance	1,037,660	790,338	742,149	1,373,065	1,384,601	1,206,116	2,410,725	2,174,939	1,948,265
Presbyterian Center Services	905,734	935,539	980,333	284,811	302,358	279,103	1,190,545	1,237,897	1,259,436
Audit Costs	60,000	64,000	81,316	-	-	-	60,000	64,000	81,316
Replacement Reserve Furniture & Equip	250,000	250,000	250,000	-	-	-	250,000	250,000	250,000
Replacement Reserve Systems & Bldg	250,000	250,000	250,000	-	-	-	250,000	250,000	250,000
Contingency	223,369	186,418	220,165	-	-	-	223,369	186,418	220,165
	<b>2,726,763</b>	<b>2,476,295</b>	<b>2,523,963</b>	<b>1,657,876</b>	<b>1,686,959</b>	<b>1,485,219</b>	<b>4,384,639</b>	<b>4,163,254</b>	<b>4,009,182</b>
<b>VIII. Related Mission Funding</b>									
Board of Pensions	-	-	-	2,761,946	2,284,238	2,431,476	2,761,946	2,284,238	2,431,476
ECO Agency	-	-	-	3,600,000	2,408,832	2,599,022	3,600,000	2,408,832	2,599,022
Short Term Investments Mgmt Fees	200,000	358,423	77,159	-	-	-	200,000	358,423	77,159
Restr. Fd. Allocated to Oth.Gov. Bodies	-	-	-	400,000	55,901	160,678	400,000	55,901	160,678
	<b>200,000</b>	<b>358,423</b>	<b>77,159</b>	<b>6,761,946</b>	<b>4,748,971</b>	<b>5,191,176</b>	<b>6,961,946</b>	<b>5,107,394</b>	<b>5,268,335</b>
<b>Total MSS, Shared &amp; Other</b>	<b>8,526,872</b>	<b>7,796,061</b>	<b>7,414,862</b>	<b>11,021,910</b>	<b>9,136,043</b>	<b>9,328,197</b>	<b>19,548,782</b>	<b>16,932,104</b>	<b>16,743,059</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>33,858,930</b>	<b>31,114,105</b>	<b>30,913,846</b>	<b>80,042,717</b>	<b>77,947,107</b>	<b>79,841,035</b>	<b>113,901,647</b>	<b>109,061,212</b>	<b>110,754,881</b>

**General Assembly Mission Program Receipts  
Actual Compared to Budget as of December 31, 2007**

Receipts	MISSION BUDGET								
	Unrestricted			Restricted			Grand Total		
	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2006	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2006	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2006
<b>I. Support from Congregations &amp; Presbyteries</b>									
<b>Basic Mission Support</b>									
Shared Mission Support	12,900,000	12,932,359	13,320,583	-	-	-	12,900,000	12,932,359	13,320,583
Directed Mission Support	-	-	-	5,000,000	4,791,612	4,474,514	5,000,000	4,791,612	4,474,514
	<b>12,900,000</b>	<b>12,932,359</b>	<b>13,320,583</b>	<b>5,000,000</b>	<b>4,791,612</b>	<b>4,474,514</b>	<b>17,900,000</b>	<b>17,723,971</b>	<b>17,795,097</b>
<b>Churchwide Spec. Offerings</b>									
Christmas Joy	-	-	-	4,800,000	5,215,040	4,927,405	4,800,000	5,215,040	4,927,405
One Great Hour of Sharing	-	-	-	9,400,000	8,989,242	9,465,261	9,400,000	8,989,242	9,465,261
Peacemaking	-	-	-	1,100,000	1,361,494	1,108,097	1,100,000	1,361,494	1,108,097
Pentecost	-	-	-	650,000	842,483	799,561	650,000	842,483	799,561
Witness	-	-	-	-	32,609	29,652	-	32,609	29,652
	-	-	-	<b>15,950,000</b>	<b>16,440,868</b>	<b>16,329,976</b>	<b>15,950,000</b>	<b>16,440,868</b>	<b>16,329,976</b>
<b>II. Supplementary Support (Beyond Budget) From Congregations &amp; Presbyteries &amp; Individuals</b>									
<b>Other Specific Appeals</b>									
Emergency and Disaster Relief	-	-	-	2,500,000	3,222,791	3,678,235	2,500,000	3,222,791	3,678,235
Add'l Giving Offering, ECO	-	-	-	7,500,000	6,768,900	7,233,916	7,500,000	6,768,900	7,233,916
Mission Initiative Joining Hearts & Hands	-	-	-	1,500,000	1,450,939	1,274,032	1,500,000	1,450,939	1,274,032
Special Missionary Support	-	-	-	-	331,317	-	-	331,317	-
Hunger	-	-	-	600,000	625,392	502,877	600,000	625,392	502,877
Theological Education Fund	-	-	-	2,200,000	2,071,902	2,108,616	2,200,000	2,071,902	2,108,616
	-	-	-	<b>14,300,000</b>	<b>14,471,241</b>	<b>14,797,676</b>	<b>14,300,000</b>	<b>14,471,241</b>	<b>14,797,676</b>
<b>Add'l Forms of Giving</b>									
Presbyterian Women	1,274,450	1,042,450	1,336,691	450,000	42,000	55,367	1,724,450	1,084,450	1,392,058
Bequests and Annuities	2,500,000	2,917,043	13,114,451	150,000	473,119	407,427	2,650,000	3,390,162	13,521,878
Other Gifts	-	-	-	90,000	-	46,211	90,000	-	46,211
Validated Mission Support	-	-	-	850,000	1,780,828	245,622	850,000	1,780,828	245,622
Grants from Outside Fdns.	-	-	-	1,500,000	122,450	147,944	1,500,000	122,450	147,944
	<b>3,774,450</b>	<b>3,959,493</b>	<b>14,451,142</b>	<b>3,040,000</b>	<b>2,418,397</b>	<b>902,571</b>	<b>6,814,450</b>	<b>6,377,890</b>	<b>15,353,713</b>
<b>III. Interest and Dividends</b>									
PC (USA) Restr. Endow. Fds.	-	-	-	7,495,276	8,168,777	8,501,950	7,495,276	8,168,777	8,501,950
PC (USA) Unres. Endow. Fds.	8,260,657	7,869,845	8,495,391	-	-	-	8,260,657	7,869,845	8,495,391
Pby. Mission Program Fund	340,000	611,067	500,269	-	-	-	340,000	611,067	500,269
Outside Trusts	1,200,000	872,309	719,414	135,000	155,901	154,460	1,335,000	1,028,210	873,874
Jarvie Commonweal Fund	100,000	-	150,000	-	-	-	100,000	-	150,000
Jinshian Fund	-	-	-	2,274,539	2,148,233	2,201,909	2,274,539	2,148,233	2,201,909
Short Term Investment	600,000	759,883	853,809	1,200,000	1,165,567	1,394,303	1,800,000	1,925,450	2,248,112
	<b>10,500,657</b>	<b>10,113,104</b>	<b>10,718,883</b>	<b>11,104,815</b>	<b>11,638,478</b>	<b>12,252,622</b>	<b>21,605,472</b>	<b>21,751,582</b>	<b>22,971,505</b>
<b>IV. Other</b>									
Conference Ctr. Oper. Rcpts.	-	-	-	-	-	5,753,785	-	-	5,753,785
Partner Churches and Other	-	-	-	800,000	725,922	1,530,482	800,000	725,922	1,530,482
Hubbard Press	35,000	35,000	35,000	-	-	-	35,000	35,000	35,000
Sales: Curriculum	-	-	-	4,250,000	3,361,477	4,695,012	4,250,000	3,361,477	4,695,012
Sales: Program Services and MEP	-	-	-	8,849,350	11,256,491	9,601,004	8,849,350	11,256,491	9,601,004
Sales: Resources	-	20,158	47,353	2,000,000	1,560,251	2,209,550	2,000,000	1,580,409	2,256,903
Per Capita Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Income	-	50,020	-	-	-	-	-	50,020	-
	<b>35,000</b>	<b>105,178</b>	<b>82,353</b>	<b>15,899,350</b>	<b>16,904,141</b>	<b>23,789,833</b>	<b>15,934,350</b>	<b>17,009,319</b>	<b>23,872,186</b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>27,210,107</b>	<b>27,110,134</b>	<b>38,572,961</b>	<b>65,294,165</b>	<b>66,664,737</b>	<b>72,547,192</b>	<b>92,504,272</b>	<b>93,774,871</b>	<b>111,120,153</b>
<b>V. Prior Year Accumulations</b>	<b>2,566,443</b>	<b>1,389,703</b>	<b>(8,165,626)</b>	<b>7,393,854</b>	<b>4,243,286</b>	<b>5,399,915</b>	<b>9,960,297</b>	<b>5,632,989</b>	<b>(2,765,711)</b>
<b>VI. Admin. Cost Allocation</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>788,655</b>	<b>706,770</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>788,655</b>	<b>706,770</b>
<b>TTL RCPTS, PY ACCUM &amp; ADJS</b>	<b>30,576,550</b>	<b>29,288,492</b>	<b>31,114,105</b>	<b>72,688,019</b>	<b>70,908,023</b>	<b>77,947,107</b>	<b>103,264,569</b>	<b>100,196,515</b>	<b>109,061,212</b>



**GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
MISSION PROGRAM  
EXPENDITURES BY ENTITY  
For the Period Ended December 31, 2007  
MISSION BUDGET**

BUDGETED ENTITY	UNRESTRICTED		RESTRICTED		GRAND TOTAL	
	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	Annual Budget	YTD Actual
<b>I. Executive Director</b>						
Executive Administrator	821,862	1,022,335	1,007,436	598,232	1,829,298	1,620,567
	<b>821,862</b>	<b>1,022,335</b>	<b>1,007,436</b>	<b>598,232</b>	<b>1,829,298</b>	<b>1,620,567</b>
<b>II. Communication and Funds Dev.</b>						
Deputy Executive Director Office	48,021	172,593	162,085	115,588	210,106	288,181
Communication	2,248,361	1,705,462	990,712	1,284,920	3,239,073	2,990,382
Funds Development	1,035,672	904,368	3,795,786	3,232,691	4,831,458	4,137,059
	<b>3,332,054</b>	<b>2,782,423</b>	<b>4,948,583</b>	<b>4,633,199</b>	<b>8,280,637</b>	<b>7,415,622</b>
<b>III. Mission</b>						
Deputy Executive Director Office	150,864	159,810	248,289	162,038	399,153	321,848
Military Chaplains	250,000	250,000			250,000	250,000
Theology Worship and Education	2,138,442	1,659,076	10,150,986	8,562,840	12,289,428	10,221,916
Evangelism and Church Growth	2,581,989	2,471,922	5,338,273	5,008,632	7,920,262	7,480,554
Peace and Justice	895,390	709,322	1,480,329	1,587,051	2,375,719	2,296,373
Relief and Development	199,501	57,351	20,508,370	24,828,853	20,707,871	24,886,204
World Mission	5,790,400	5,739,510	15,663,267	13,157,929	21,453,667	18,897,439
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,370,737	2,235,322	2,596,588	2,477,532	4,967,325	4,712,854
	<b>14,377,323</b>	<b>13,282,313</b>	<b>55,986,102</b>	<b>55,784,875</b>	<b>70,363,425</b>	<b>69,067,188</b>
<b>IV. Shared Services</b>						
Human Resources	522,304	535,684	156,092	158,016	678,396	693,700
Finance and Accounting	1,694,629	1,472,418	1,128,616	1,108,140	2,823,245	2,580,558
Information Technology	2,532,304	2,325,347	405,731	415,777	2,938,035	2,741,124
Presbyterian Distribution Services	697,971	781,571	605,880	1,412,391	1,303,851	2,193,962
Mail, Print Services	153,972	161,113	557,233	488,199	711,205	649,312
Facilities	751,659	939,341	283,744	353,195	1,035,403	1,292,536
	<b>6,352,839</b>	<b>6,215,474</b>	<b>3,137,296</b>	<b>3,935,718</b>	<b>9,490,135</b>	<b>10,151,192</b>
<b>V. Other</b>						
Shared Expenses	750,053	775,596	80		750,133	775,596
Insurance	921,884	764,915	1,571,995	1,245,826	2,493,879	2,010,741
Restricted Fund Allocation				378,984		378,984
Investment Management Fees	150,000	262,888			150,000	262,888
Presby Fdn Investment Management Fees		4,951		78,054		83,005
Board of Pensions			2,147,306	2,388,891	2,147,306	2,388,891
ECO Agency			3,600,000	1,627,754	3,600,000	1,627,754
Mission Partnership	3,333,387	3,417,617		30,783	3,333,387	3,448,400
Reduction in Force	537,148	759,980	289,221	205,707	826,369	965,687
	<b>5,692,472</b>	<b>5,985,947</b>	<b>7,608,602</b>	<b>5,955,999</b>	<b>13,301,074</b>	<b>11,941,946</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>30,576,550</b>	<b>29,288,492</b>	<b>72,688,019</b>	<b>70,908,023</b>	<b>103,264,569</b>	<b>100,196,515</b>

*Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church (continued)*

**A. *Relating to Budgets for General Assembly Mission Program (continued)***

**2. *Presbyterian Mission Program—Revised General Assembly Mission Budget and Program 2008***

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) receive the revised report of the 2008 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program in the total amount of \$103,041,915.**

***Rationale***

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

- B. The General Assembly Council shall:
  - 1. Report to each General Assembly: ...
    - b. Adjustments, if any approved by the General Assembly Council for the current budget year.
  - 2. Adjust if necessary the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program as adopted by the General Assembly.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
REVISED 2008 MISSION BUDGET BY ENTITY**

BUDGETED ENTITY	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	GRAND TOTAL
<b>I Executive Director</b>			
Executive Administrator	799,462	1,017,072	1,816,534
<b>Total Executive Director</b>	<b>799,462</b>	<b>1,017,072</b>	<b>1,816,534</b>
<b>II Communication and Funds Development</b>			
Deputy Executive Director Office	280,384	0	280,384
Communication	2,797,091	1,199,034	3,996,125
Funds Development	1,367,043	3,429,965	4,797,008
<b>Total Communication and Funds Development</b>	<b>4,444,518</b>	<b>4,628,999</b>	<b>9,073,517</b>
<b>III Mission</b>			
Deputy Executive Director Office	243,724	171,446	415,170
Military Chaplains	230,000	0	230,000
Theology Worship and Education	2,239,228	8,221,552	10,460,780
Evangelism and Church Growth	2,613,151	5,328,082	7,941,233
Peace and Justice	965,503	1,372,742	2,338,245
Relief and Development	231,363	21,165,535	21,396,898
World Mission	6,107,657	15,665,978	21,773,635
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,419,943	2,555,789	4,975,732
<b>Total Mission</b>	<b>15,050,569</b>	<b>54,481,124</b>	<b>69,531,693</b>
<b>IV Shared Services</b>			
Human Resources	671,867	12,188	684,055
Finance and Accounting	1,828,216	1,104,312	2,932,528
Information Technology	2,638,445	404,655	3,043,100
Presbyterian Distribution Services	717,351	1,394,918	2,112,269
Mail, Print Services	166,640	555,384	722,024
Facilities	742,469	282,803	1,025,272
<b>Total Shared Services</b>	<b>6,764,988</b>	<b>3,754,260</b>	<b>10,519,248</b>
<b>V Other</b>			
Shared Expenses	600,000	0	600,000
Insurance	921,884	1,571,995	2,493,879
Investment Management Fees	250,000	0	250,000
Board of Pensions	0	2,147,306	2,147,306
ECO Agency	0	3,600,000	3,600,000
Mission Partnership	3,009,738	0	3,009,738
Reduction in Force Carryover 2007	0	0	0
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>4,781,622</b>	<b>7,319,301</b>	<b>12,100,923</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>31,841,159</b>	<b>71,200,756</b>	<b>103,041,915</b>

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
REVISED 2008 MISSION BUDGET BY GOAL**

BUDGETED GOAL	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	GRAND TOTAL	% OF MISSION WORK
<b>I Evangelism</b>				
Evangelism	5,393,542	12,789,316	18,182,858	26.1%
Multi-Cultural	2,104,168	595,215	2,699,383	3.9%
Total Evangelism	7,497,710	13,384,531	20,882,241	30.0%
<b>II Justice and Compassion</b>				
Poverty	1,501,642	24,790,483	26,292,125	37.7%
Peace	1,004,174	2,245,249	3,249,423	4.7%
Total Justice and Compassion	2,505,816	27,035,732	29,541,548	42.4%
<b>III Spirituality and Discipleship</b>				
Reformed Identity	1,698,471	5,040,531	6,739,002	9.7%
Families	118,418	471,881	590,299	0.8%
Total Spirituality and Discipleship	1,816,889	5,512,412	7,329,301	10.5%
<b>IV Leadership and Vocation</b>				
Vocation	2,834,717	8,597,144	11,431,861	16.4%
Small Churches	395,437	128,594	524,031	0.8%
Total Leadership and Vocation	3,230,154	8,725,738	11,955,892	17.2%
<b>Total Mission Work</b>	<b>15,050,569</b>	<b>54,658,413</b>	<b>69,708,982</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>V Support Services</b>				
Executive Administrator	799,462	1,017,072	1,816,534	
Communication and Funds Development	4,444,518	4,451,710	8,896,228	
Shared Services	6,764,988	3,754,260	10,519,248	
Total Support Services	12,008,968	9,223,042	21,232,010	
<b>VI Other</b>				
Other	4,781,622	7,319,301	12,100,923	
Reduction in Force	0	0	0	
Total Other	4,781,622	7,319,301	12,100,923	
<b>Total Forecasted Expenditures</b>	<b>31,841,159</b>	<b>71,200,756</b>	<b>103,041,915</b>	

*Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church (continued)*

**A. Relating to Budgets for General Assembly Mission Program (continued)**

**3. Presbyterian Mission Program—General Assembly Mission Budget and Program 2009 and 2010.**

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the 2009 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program in the total amount of \$110,311,281 and the 2010 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program in the total amount of \$107,623,073.**

***Rationale***

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy Governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

B. The General Assembly Council shall: ...

3. Recommend to the General Assembly the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program for the next succeeding budget cycle. Displayed in the recommendation shall be:

- a. All projected financial sources; and
- b. Anticipated uses of financial resources in light of mission objectives.

The General Assembly Council is required by the Constitution to “prepare and submit a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly” (G-13.0202f).

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2009 MISSION BUDGET BY ENTITY**

BUDGETED ENTITY	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	GRAND TOTAL
<b>I Executive Director</b>			
Executive Administrator	1,006,409	1,530,505	2,536,914
Total Executive Director	1,006,409	1,530,505	2,536,914
<b>II Communications and Funds Development</b>			
Deputy Executive Director	356,716	0	356,716
News Service	295,287	2,915	298,202
General Assembly Communication	0	0	0
Executive Communication	604,464	0	604,464
Creative Services	1,464,270	32,850	1,497,120
Mission Communication	1,516,240	0	1,516,240
Mission Interpretation	77,092	3,981,303	4,058,395
Funds Development	359,825	1,825,903	2,185,728
Total Communications and Funds Development	4,673,894	5,842,971	10,516,865
<b>III Mission</b>			
Deputy Executive Director	205,464	174,192	379,656
Military Chaplains	226,000	0	226,000
Theology Worship and Education	2,538,556	7,595,498	10,134,054
Evangelism and Church Growth	2,731,866	5,559,202	8,291,068
Compassion Peace and Justice	963,671	24,219,609	25,183,280
World Mission	3,609,391	22,080,328	25,689,719
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,491,193	3,086,126	5,577,319
Total Mission	12,766,141	62,714,955	75,481,096
<b>IV Shared Services</b>			
Human Resources	667,774	49,920	717,694
Finance and Accounting	1,650,677	1,128,724	2,779,401
Information Technology	3,004,287	226,427	3,230,714
Presbyterian Distribution Services	822,651	1,448,139	2,270,790
Mail, Print Services	179,549	489,000	668,549
Facilities	773,454	233,784	1,007,238
Total Shared Services	7,098,392	3,575,994	10,674,386
<b>V Other</b>			
Shared Expenses	640,000	0	640,000
Insurance	942,607	1,733,491	2,676,098
Investment Management Fees	250,000	0	250,000
Board of Pensions	0	2,251,911	2,251,911
ECO Agency	0	2,500,000	2,500,000
Mission Partnership	2,784,011	0	2,784,011
Reduction in Force Carryover 2007	0	0	0
Total Other	4,616,618	6,485,402	11,102,020
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>30,161,454</b>	<b>80,149,827</b>	<b>110,311,281</b>

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2009 RECEIPTS PROJECTION**

SOURCE OF FUNDING	MISSION BUDGET		GRAND
	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
<b>I BASIC MISSION SUPPORT</b>			
Shared Mission Support	12,700,000		12,700,000
Directed Mission Support		4,700,000	4,700,000
<b>II CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL OFFERINGS</b>			
Christmas Joy		5,000,000	5,000,000
One Great Hour of Sharing		9,200,000	9,200,000
Peacemaking		1,100,000	1,100,000
Pentecost		775,000	775,000
<b>III OTHER SPECIFIC APPEALS</b>			
Emergency and Disaster Relief		2,500,000	2,500,000
Extra Commitment		11,100,000	11,100,000
Mission Initiative-MIJHH		202,950	202,950
Special Missionary Support		437,047	437,047
Hunger		625,000	625,000
Theological Education Fund		2,000,000	2,000,000
<b>IV ADDITIONAL FORMS OF GIVING</b>			
Presbyterian Women	1,100,000	52,000	1,152,000
Bequests & Annuities	2,500,000	400,000	2,900,000
Other Gifts		300,000	300,000
Validated Mission Support		949,172	949,172
Grants from Outside Foundations		1,400,000	1,400,000
<b>V INTEREST &amp; DIVIDENDS</b>			
PC(USA) Restricted Endowment Funds		7,912,661	7,912,661
PC(USA) Unrestricted Endowment Funds	7,424,341		7,424,341
Presbyterian Mission Program Fund	450,000		450,000
Outside Trusts	800,000	135,000	935,000
Jarvie Commonweal Fund	0	0	0
Jinishian		2,087,037	2,087,037
Short Term Investments	700,000	1,000,000	1,700,000
<b>VI OTHER</b>			
Enterprise Fund, Hubbard	35,000		35,000
Partner Churches and Other		800,000	800,000
Sales: Curriculum		2,792,500	2,792,500
Sales: Program Services		8,400,000	8,400,000
Sale: Resources		2,000,000	2,000,000
PMPF Allocation		261,500	261,500
<b>TOTAL CURRENT RECEIPTS</b>	25,709,341	66,129,867	91,839,208
<b>UTILIZATION OF PRIOR YEAR ACCUM'N</b>	3,452,113	14,019,960	17,472,073
<b>ADMIN COST ALLOCATION</b>	1,000,000	0	1,000,000
<b>UTILIZATION OF BEQUEST</b>			0
<b>TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>	30,161,454	80,149,827	110,311,281

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2010 MISSION BUDGET BY ENTITY**

BUDGETED ENTITY	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	GRAND TOTAL
<b>I Executive Director</b>			
Executive Administrator	1,040,362	1,060,438	2,100,800
<b>Total Executive Director</b>	<b>1,040,362</b>	<b>1,060,438</b>	<b>2,100,800</b>
<b>II Communications and Funds Development</b>			
Deputy Executive Director	362,460	0	362,460
News Service	305,522	0	305,522
General Assembly Communication	208,500	0	208,500
Executive Communication	612,855	0	612,855
Creative Services	1,506,004	26,500	1,532,504
Mission Communication	1,451,478	0	1,451,478
Mission Interpretation	79,514	4,115,504	4,195,018
Funds Development	366,518	1,839,323	2,205,841
<b>Total Communications and Funds Development</b>	<b>4,892,851</b>	<b>5,981,327</b>	<b>10,874,178</b>
<b>III Mission</b>			
Deputy Executive Director	217,236	174,192	391,428
Military Chaplains	226,000	0	226,000
Theology Worship and Education	2,429,945	9,688,308	12,118,253
Evangelism and Church Growth	2,773,166	5,304,148	8,077,314
Compassion Peace and Justice	1,050,977	18,548,194	19,599,171
World Mission	3,961,697	22,549,037	26,510,734
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,525,884	3,060,075	5,585,959
<b>Total Mission</b>	<b>13,184,905</b>	<b>59,323,954</b>	<b>72,508,859</b>
<b>IV Shared Services</b>			
Human Resources	692,107	50,450	742,557
Finance and Accounting	1,736,408	1,133,140	2,869,548
Information Technology	3,116,489	229,708	3,346,197
Presbyterian Distribution Services	844,924	1,474,060	2,318,984
Mail, Print Services	187,780	489,000	676,780
Facilities	763,528	240,504	1,004,032
<b>Total Shared Services</b>	<b>7,341,236</b>	<b>3,616,862</b>	<b>10,958,098</b>
<b>V Other</b>			
Shared Expenses	640,000	0	640,000
Insurance	984,566	1,763,304	2,747,870
Investment Management Fees	250,000	0	250,000
Board of Pensions	0	2,251,325	2,251,325
ECO Agency	0	2,500,000	2,500,000
Mission Partnership	2,791,943	0	2,791,943
Reduction in Force Carryover 2007	0	0	0
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>4,666,509</b>	<b>6,514,629</b>	<b>11,181,138</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>31,125,863</b>	<b>76,497,210</b>	<b>107,623,073</b>



**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2010 RECEIPTS PROJECTION**

	SOURCE OF FUNDING	MISSION BUDGET		GRAND TOTAL
		UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	
<b>I</b>	<b>BASIC MISSION SUPPORT</b>			
	Shared Mission Support	12,800,000		12,800,000
	Directed Mission Support		4,700,000	4,700,000
<b>II</b>	<b>CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL OFFERINGS</b>			
	Christmas Joy		5,000,000	5,000,000
	One Great Hour of Sharing		9,200,000	9,200,000
	Peacemaking		1,100,000	1,100,000
	Pentecost		775,000	775,000
<b>III</b>	<b>OTHER SPECIFIC APPEALS</b>			
	Emergency and Disaster Relief		2,500,000	2,500,000
	Extra Commitment		11,100,000	11,100,000
	Mission Initiative-MIJHH		152,350	152,350
	Special Missionary Support		448,652	448,652
	Hunger		625,000	625,000
	Theological Education Fund		2,000,000	2,000,000
<b>IV</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL FORMS OF GIVING</b>			
	Presbyterian Women	1,100,000	52,000	1,152,000
	Bequests & Annuities	2,500,000	400,000	2,900,000
	Other Gifts		300,000	300,000
	Validated Mission Support		952,148	952,148
	Grants from Outside Foundations			
<b>V</b>	<b>INTEREST &amp; DIVIDENDS</b>			
	PC(USA) Restricted Endowment Funds		8,230,456	8,230,456
	PC(USA) Unrestricted Endowment Funds	7,778,554		7,778,554
	Presbyterian Mission Program Fund	450,000		450,000
	Outside Trusts	800,000	135,000	935,000
	Jarvie Commonweal Fund			
	Jinishian		2,178,832	2,178,832
	Short Term Investments	700,000	1,000,000	1,700,000
<b>VI</b>	<b>OTHER</b>			
	Enterprise Fund, Hubbard	35,000		35,000
	Partner Churches and Other		800,000	800,000
	Sales: Curriculum		3,334,500	3,334,500
	Sales: Program Services		9,500,000	9,500,000
	Sale: Resources	455,477	2,000,000	2,455,477
	PMPF Allocation		156,000	156,000
	<b>TOTAL FROM CURRENT RECEIPTS</b>	<b>26,619,031</b>	<b>66,639,938</b>	<b>93,258,969</b>
	<b>UTILIZATION OF PRIOR YEAR ACCUM'N</b>	<b>3,506,832</b>	<b>9,857,272</b>	<b>13,364,104</b>
	<b>ADMIN COST ALLOCATION</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>		<b>1,000,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>	<b>31,125,863</b>	<b>76,497,210</b>	<b>107,623,073</b>

*Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church (continued)*

**B. *Relating to Reserved or Committed Funds***

**1. *Unrestricted and Committed Funds***

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) receive the report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, regarding unrestricted and committed funds as of December 31, 2007.**

***Rationale***

The report of the unrestricted funds is divided between uncommitted and committed funds. The following display indicates those funds as well as the activity of those funds and the status of the total reserves as of closing December 31, 2007. The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted the following policy:

A. Presbyterian Mission Program Fund

1. A fund composed of all unrestricted and uncommitted receipts and assets intended for the support of the General Assembly mission program.
2. Sources to maintain this fund shall include all unified revenue available for the General Assembly Mission Program, including but not limited to:
  - a. unified income including receipts from congregations, presbyteries, or individuals;
  - b. unrestricted gifts, legacies, bequests
  - c. unrestricted investment income;
  - d. gift annuity excess reserves;
  - e. such nonrecurring income as the General Assembly Council shall direct by general or specific policy statement; and
  - f. under expenditure of the unified portion of the General Assembly Mission Budget.
3. The Uncommitted Funds portion of the Presbyterian Mission Program Fund at year end must be equal to at least 30% of the Unified portion and direct mission support of the General Assembly Mission Budget, which minimum provides for:
  - a. Cash flow needed for mission purposes;
  - b. Guarantee of the current unified budget.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
 PRESBYTERIAN MISSION PROGRAM FUND  
 FUNDS COMMITTED FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS  
 AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2007**

		<b>UNRESTRICTED</b>			
		<b>UNCOMMITTED</b>	<b>COMMITTED</b>	<b>PROGRAMMATIC</b>	<b>COMBINED</b>
		<b>FUNDS</b>	<b>FOR SPECIAL</b>	<b>LOAN FUND</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
			<b>PROJECTS</b>		
1	Balance as of 1/1/07	25,783,336	6,820,799	2,381,268	34,985,403
2	Market value adjustment in investments	699,122			699,122
3	Net increase (decrease) in loans/receivables	282,059		(282,059)	-
4	Net (increase) decrease in provision for uncollectible loans			30,000	30,000
5	New allocation	(7,732,619)	7,740,187		7,568
6	Use of allocations		(4,879,032)		(4,879,032)
7	Unused allocations restored	3,237,769	(3,237,769)		-
8	Increase (Decrease) YTD	(3,513,669)	(376,614)	(252,059)	(4,142,342)
9	Subtotal	22,269,667	6,444,185	2,129,209	30,843,061
10	Excess unrestricted revenues/(expenditures) from GA Mission Budget	-			-
11	<b>Balance December 31, 2007</b>	22,269,667	6,444,185	2,129,209	30,843,061
12	Excess unrestricted revenues/(expenditures) from GA Mission Budget	0			0
13	<b>Balance December 31, 2003</b>	22,269,667	6,444,185	2,129,209	
12	Reserve requirement:				
	Unrestricted receipts	\$ 27,110,134			
	Directed mission support receipts	<u>4,791,612</u>			
	Total	<u>\$31,901,746</u>			
	30% Reserve requirement		9,570,524		



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**



**PRESBYTERIAN MISSION PROGRAM FUND  
FUNDS COMMITTED FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2007**

<b>GRANTS</b>		<b>Original Designation</b>	<b>Balance 1/01/07</b>	<b>Designated</b>	<b>Payments</b>	<b>Balance</b>
1	Balance of Designation of \$2,185,123 for bequest received (4/03)					
a.	Allocation for funding the Mission Initiative for 2005 (12/04)	450,000	26,438			26,438
b.	Allocation for the remaining bequest to balance the 2007 Mission Budgets (4/06)	835,123	438,973		(438,973)	-
2	Balance of allocations of \$1,093,000 (4/03), \$814,210 (2/04), \$150,000 (12/04), and reallocation (9/06) to support the Independent Abuse Review Panel					
a.	2006	284,000	20,218			20,218
b.	2007	336,600	333,600		(220,334)	113,266
c.	2008	336,800	336,800			336,800
d.	2009	216,520	216,520			216,520
e.	2010	125,000	125,000			125,000
f.	2011	100,000	100,000			100,000
g.	2012	71,693	71,693			71,693
3	Balance of allocation of \$175,000 for the Incubator Fund (Funds Development) (1/02)					
a.	Allocation for Older Adult Ministries Capital Campaign	75,000	25,000			25,000
4	Allocation of \$130,000 to fund the Israel/Palestine Peace Project (12/04)	130,000	34,475		(14,961)	19,514
5	Sales of Resources		1,035,905	297,635	(290,318)	1,043,222
6	Additional allocations of \$1,031,725 (6/06), \$377,357 (9/06), and \$718,390 (3/07) to balance the 2007 Mission Budget	1,409,082	1,409,082	718,390	(1,389,703)	737,769
7	Restore unused balance of allocations to balance the 2007 Mission Budget			(737,769)		(737,769)
8	Allocations of \$1,252,812 (4/06), \$1,385,000 (6/06), \$9,283 (9/06), and \$686,382 (3/07) to balance the 2008 Mission Budget	2,647,095	2,647,095	686,382		3,333,477
9	Alloc of \$1,250,000 to fund the Mission Co-Workers 2007 Budget (3/07)			1,250,000		1,250,000
10	Restore allocation of \$1,250,000 to fund the Mission Co-Workers 2007 Budget			(1,250,000)		(1,250,000)
11	Alloc of \$1,250,000 to fund the Mission Co-Workers 2008 Budget (3/07)			1,250,000		1,250,000
12	Restore allocation of \$1,250,000 to fund the Mission Co-Workers 2007 Budget			(1,250,000)		(1,250,000)
13	Alloc of \$286,200 for the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks (3/07)			286,200	(280,910)	5,290
14	Alloc of \$95,400 for the First Presbyterian Church of Yuma, CO (3/07)			95,400	(93,637)	1,763
15	Alloc of \$95,400 for the Synod of Rocky Mountains (3/07)			95,400	(93,637)	1,763
16	Alloc of \$996,653 for the National Mission Partnership Funds (3/07)			996,653		996,653
	Interest Earned on National Mission Partnership Funds (12/07)			7,568		7,568
17	Alloc of \$1,500,000 to fund the Capital Replacement Reserve Account (3/07)			1,500,000	(1,500,000)	-
18	Alloc of \$556,559 to fund the 2007 World Mission Directed Giving Shortfall (9/05)			556,559	(556,559)	-
19	<b>TOTAL</b>		6,820,799	4,502,418	(4,879,032)	6,444,185



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**  
**PRESBYTERIAN MISSION PROGRAM FUND**  
**PROGRAMMATIC LOAN FUND**  
**AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2007**

	<b>RECEIVABLE</b>	<b>Balance 1/01/07</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>Balance</b>
1	Receivable from PILP	259,035	(103,614)	155,421
2	Sheldon Jackson College	130,000	(30,000)	100,000
3	Receivable from Congregational Ministries Publishing	2,122,233	(148,445)	1,973,788
4	Provision for Uncollectible Loans	(130,000)	30,000	(100,000)
5	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,381,268</b>	<b>(252,059)</b>	<b>2,129,209</b>



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
 SELF INSURANCE FUND  
 AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2007**

1	Balance as of 1/01/07		6,237,471
2	<b>Revenues:</b>		
3	Income from investments	134,192	
4	Unrealized gain (loss)	<u>190,103</u>	
5	<b>Total revenues</b>		324,295
6	<b>Expenditures:</b>		
7	Foundation investment fees	(220)	
8	Shared Services management fees	(5,525)	
9	Risk Management recoveries	(135,303)	
10	Insurance claims paid	<u>(169,656)</u>	
11	<b>Total expenditures</b>		<u>(310,704)</u>
12	<b>Funds available 12/31/07</b>		<u><u>6,251,062</u></u>

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Sales of Resources  
As of December 31, 2007

	Balance 1/01/07	Transfers/ Additions	Payments	Balance 12/31/07
Executive Administrator				
Social Witness Policy	10,610.39	2,147.60	-	12,757.99
Research Services	106,083.60	-	-	106,083.60
Total	116,693.99	2,147.60	-	118,841.59
Deputy Executive Director Communications and Development				
Media Services	318,118.30	190,961.12	(232,892.29)	276,187.13
Mission Education & Promotion	247,278.52	94,215.22	-	341,493.74
Presbyterians Today	143,227.66	16,853.65	(24,841.00)	135,240.31
Funds Development	-	23,858.65	-	23,858.65
Total	708,624.48	325,888.64	(257,733.29)	776,779.83
Deputy Executive Director – Mission	171,561.42	8,722.15	(32,584.86)	147,698.71
Office of the General Assembly				
Church Leadership Connection	52.70	(52.70)	-	-
Ministry Support	17,958.19	(17,958.19)	-	-
Preparation for Ministry	5,092.63	(5,092.63)	-	-
Vocation Director	15,921.72	(16,020.32)	-	(98.60)
Total	39,025.24	(39,123.84)	-	(98.60)
TOTAL	1,035,905.13	297,634.55	(290,318.15)	1,043,221.53

*Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church (continued)***B. Relating to Reserved or Committed Funds (continued)****2. Report of Contingent Liabilities, December 31, 2007**

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) incorporate into its *Minutes* the following list of contingent liabilities: Reserve funds are required to cover self-insurance for General Assembly owned property. A separate Self-Insurance Fund has been established, the balance of which was \$6,251,062.02 as of December 31, 2007.

*Rationale*

The 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (UPCUSA) received from the General Assembly Mission Council a financial plan for supporting minority education during 1977–79 and a status report of minority education institutions (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1978, Part I, pp. 189–90).

**C. Relating to Support for General Assembly Mission****1. John C. Lord and Edmund P. Dwight Funds**

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) allocate the annual income realized in 2007 from the John C. Lord and Edmund P. Dwight Funds in support of the budget for the general mission work of the General Assembly.

*Rationale*

Current practice is to recommend to each General Assembly the allocation of annual income from these two funds in light of wording in the donors' wills, which requires this annual process.

Portion of the will of Edmund P. Dwight (May 23, 1903):

I will and bequeath to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, to be used for the establishment of the Christian Religion, that the light of the gospel may be made to join more perfectly ...

Portion of the will of John C. Lord (January 2, 1873):

... to the Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., for religious and charitable uses, to be called the John C. Lord Fund, the annual interest of which is to be disposed of and distributed by the said General Assembly at each annual meeting for the furtherance of the Gospel of our Blessed Saviour, at home or abroad, as the Assembly may deem best. ...

The applicable provisions of the two wills facilitate the annual income realized from these funds to be used in the General Assembly's General Mission Budget.

It is projected that the income from these funds in 2008 is approximately \$29,811.68.

**2. Special Offerings 2007**

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) incorporate into its *Minutes* the following summary of receipts from Special Offerings for the year 2007.

*Rationale*

Special Offerings enable an important part of the General Assembly Mission Program. In 2007, income from these offerings totaled approximately 21.3 percent of total income for the mission program of the church and 33.8 percent of the mission gifts from congregations.



**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**SPECIAL OFFERINGS**  
**Years Ending December 31, 2005, 2006 & 2007**

	2005	2006	%	2007	%
<b>One Great Hour of Sharing</b>					
Presbyterian World Service	2,683,916	2,761,115	2.88%	2,588,146	-6.26%
Self Development of People	2,678,108	2,776,718	3.68%	2,587,445	-6.82%
Presbyterian Hunger Program	3,091,124	3,103,816	0.41%	2,898,181	-6.63%
Promotion	407,417	351,798	-13.65%	466,006	32.46%
Contribution to Shared Mission Cost	<u>466,349</u>	<u>471,814</u>	<u>1.17%</u>	<u>449,465</u>	<u>-4.74%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>9,326,914</u></u>	<u><u>9,465,261</u></u>	<u><u>1.48%</u></u>	<u><u>8,989,242</u></u>	<u><u>-5.03%</u></u>
<b>Christmas/Joy Offering</b>					
Board of Pensions	2,435,462	2,284,238	-6.21%	2,388,891	4.58%
Minority Education	2,361,116	2,218,098	-6.06%	2,350,790	5.98%
Promotion Cost	186,415	178,770	-4.10%	214,750	20.13%
Contribution to Shared Mission Cost	<u>257,921</u>	<u>246,299</u>	<u>-4.51%</u>	<u>260,609</u>	<u>5.81%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>5,240,914</u></u>	<u><u>4,927,405</u></u>	<u><u>-5.98%</u></u>	<u><u>5,215,040</u></u>	<u><u>5.84%</u></u>
<b>Peacemaking Offering</b>					
Peacemaking	778,042	879,964	13.10%	1,096,472	24.60%
Promotion Cost	210,908	172,726	-18.10%	199,218	15.34%
Contribution to Shared Mission Cost	<u>52,047</u>	<u>55,408</u>	<u>6.46%</u>	<u>65,804</u>	<u>18.76%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>1,040,997</u></u>	<u><u>1,108,098</u></u>	<u><u>6.45%</u></u>	<u><u>1,361,494</u></u>	<u><u>22.87%</u></u>
<b>Witness Offering</b>					
Global Mission Unit	21,441	14,085	-34.31%	15,742	11.76%
Education & Congregational Nurture	8,576	5,634	-34.31%	5,944	5.50%
Evangelism & Church Development	12,865	8,451	-34.31%	9,294	9.98%
Promotion Cost	0	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Contribution to Shared Mission Cost	<u>2,257</u>	<u>1,483</u>	<u>0.00%</u>	<u>1,630</u>	<u>100.00%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>45,139</u></u>	<u><u>29,653</u></u>	<u><u>-34.31%</u></u>	<u><u>32,610</u></u>	<u><u>9.97%</u></u>
<b>Pentecost Offering</b>					
Receipts	607,922	693,474	14.07%	687,653	-0.84%
Promotion Costs	140,818	66,108	-53.05%	112,674	70.44%
Contribution to Shared Mission Cost	<u>39,408</u>	<u>39,979</u>	<u>1.45%</u>	<u>42,156</u>	<u>5.45%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>788,148</u></u>	<u><u>799,561</u></u>	<u><u>1.45%</u></u>	<u><u>842,483</u></u>	<u><u>5.37%</u></u>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<u><u>16,442,112</u></u>	<u><u>16,329,978</u></u>	<u><u>-0.68%</u></u>	<u><u>16,440,869</u></u>	<u><u>0.68%</u></u>
<b>Designations</b>					
Hunger	541,619	502,877	-7.15%	529,136	5.22%
Emergency Relief	38,519,320	3,678,235	-90.45%	2,687,294	-26.94%

Note: This report reflects actual receipts and all related adjustments and pass through donations.

## Item 08-25

[The assembly disapproved Item 08-25 with comment. See pp. 23, 25.]

*On Investigating Opportunities for Group Wind and Hail Insurance Policies for Presbyteries Located on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana.*

The Presbytery of South Louisiana respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the appropriate agency (1) to investigate the opportunities for group wind and hail insurance policies and to report those opportunities to each presbytery situated on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, and (2) if possible to negotiate with an insurance provider the terms of such policies.

[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$15,000; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-GAC)]

[Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-GAC)]

**Comment:** Although the committee wished to respond with compassion to the needs expressed in the overture from the Presbytery of South Louisiana, the overture advocate asked us to defeat their overture because the presbyteries mentioned have agreed to work together and take the lead in discovering solutions for these problems and bringing these proposed resolutions to the next General Assembly. We appreciate their willingness to do this, and we continue to pray for all those affected by natural disasters and the resulting human and financial costs.

### *Rationale*

The intense Atlantic storm activity of the last five years has caused unprecedented damage to churches in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association predicts that this cycle of intense storms will continue for another decade. The insurance industry has responded by making it difficult for churches to obtain property insurance and wind and hail insurance. Congregations situated “east of I 95” in Florida and “south of I 10” on the Gulf Coast find it almost impossible to obtain adequate coverage with affordable premiums. Many of the policies offered to these congregations include deductibles of up to \$250,000 making them irrelevant. The premiums for such policies often are the equivalent of a pastor’s salary. Many congregations therefore have chosen to forgo wind and hail insurance as a reasonable but painful stewardship decision. Even though the decisions are reasonable, the congregations remain at serious risk for catastrophic loss. Such a loss would necessitate the closing of the congregation and result in significant loss to the presbytery.

### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-25

*Comment on Item 08-25—From the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

The GAC is sympathetic to the serious impact the hurricanes caused in this region and the affect this has had on those seeking affordable insurance coverage. Unfortunately, many areas of the country have experienced and will continue to experience an extensive number of hurricanes, tornadoes, and other disasters. The GAC suggests that, due to the specialized needs of areas affected by such disasters, affected presbyteries would be better served by a local consultant hired by these presbyteries to conduct the desired investigation of availability of group insurance and negotiate with an insurance provider the terms of coverage. This local consultant would be better situated to identify possible insurance providers and to obtain the necessary level of detailed knowledge about the value of properties to be insured than someone at the national level. The GAC staff will continue to provide resources and information to presbyteries as requested and to provide assistance to the local consultant should one be hired. Because this group hail and wind insurance need of the presbyteries situated in the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts can more effectively be addressed locally rather than at the national level, the GAC urges disapproval of this overture.

## Item 08-1NB

[The assembly approved Item 08-1NB. See p. 62.]

The Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the General Assembly Council to make the adjustments necessary to incorporate into the General Assembly Mission budgets for 2009 and 2010 the items with financial implications that have been approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008). The necessary adjustments may include identifying additional sources of revenue, redirecting existing budget; or a combination of both.

## Item 08-D

[The Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets approved Item 08-D. See pp. 23, 25.]

### *Report of the General Assembly Committee on Review of the General Assembly Council to the 218th General Assembly (2008)*

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#### Introduction

The General Assembly Committee on Review (Review Committee) presents to the 218th General Assembly (2008) this written review of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the years 2001–2006. In the balance of the report, the initials GAC will be used to refer to the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This review process resulted from the action of the 213th General Assembly (2001) that put in place a regular review of agencies related to the General Assembly. The purpose of the review process is "to evaluate the relationship of their individual [agency] ministry with the mission of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 67, addition of Standing Rule E.10, Agency Review). The instructions to the General Assembly Committee on Review were that the committee must conduct the process according to predetermined standards and present a written report to the next General Assembly (*Manual of the General Assembly*, pp. 71–72). In 2006, the General Assembly reformatted the Standing Rules and the section regarding committees of the assembly was taken out of the Standing Rules and put into the *Organization for Mission* at section IV.D.1.

Fundamental to the review process is that each agency of the General Assembly shall participate in a self-study review process with a Committee on Review (hereafter Review Committee) elected by the General Assembly. The Review Committee will then interact with the agency in a study and evaluation process to determine how the agency is related to and contributing to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The review process is not an attempt to look for problems, but to evaluate current practices and offer affirmations and recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

In accordance with the *Organization for Mission*, individuals with broad experience and love for the church were elected by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to serve as the Review Committee. These individuals included elders, clergy, and lay persons; a banker, a presbytery stated clerk, a certified Christian educator, an engineer, a presbytery resource center coordinator, a clerk of session, a synod executive, and a presbytery executive and others; and former members of the boards of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Foundation. Each member of the Review Committee approached the review process with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. All of the members were united in a common faith and desire for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to advance the mission of Jesus Christ.

This report was prepared at the end of 2007 and does not reflect any developments beyond that date. We are pleased that the GAC agreed to all recommendations for change or further consideration that specifically pertained to it and concurred with Overarching Recommendation #10. During the course of the review, the GAC made significant progress in implementing many of the Review Committee's recommendations; however, specific areas of challenge remain.

#### Acknowledgements

Individual members included: the Reverend Judy R. Fletcher, who served as moderator; Elder Janis Alling Adams; the Reverend Mary Gene Boteler; the Reverend K. Edward Brandt; the Reverend Art Canada; the Reverend Clark Cowden;

Elder Dietmar Fritsch; Elder Leah H. Johnson; Joseph M. Kinard; Elder William A. Longbrake; Stephanie Middleton; the Reverend Kevin Porter; the Reverend Richard A. Ray; and the Reverend Mary Robinson-Mohr.

This report is the result of numerous meetings of the Review Committee, onsite and telephone interviews with GAC staff and elected members of the GAC, an examination of the self-study conducted by the GAC as well as other written materials of the GAC, review of the results of survey research, interviews with General Assembly Council Executive Director Linda Valentine and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly the Reverend Clifton Kirkpatrick, and the guidance of our resource people from the Office of the General Assembly: the Reverend Gradye Parsons and Kay Moore. We would like to express our deep appreciation to Gradye and Kay for orientating us to the task and providing us with timely help when we needed it.

The GAC prepared an instructive self-study that benefited this review. We especially wish to thank Executive Director Linda Valentine and the entire staff of the GAC and elected members of the GAC for their cooperation and help in the development of this report and for their ongoing service to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### Executive Summary

This report includes the findings and recommendations of the General Assembly Committee on Review (Review Committee) for the General Assembly Council (GAC).

Significant change is underway within the GAC. With the approval of the 217th General Assembly (2006), the GAC has adopted a new mission strategy that focuses its work on achieving objectives (currently there are eight). In the past, the GAC organized its work around specific programs and its organizational and committee structure reinforced that focus. The intent of these changes is to improve the GAC's effectiveness in carrying out its mission as articulated in the *Book of Order*.

The extensiveness of the change underway, as well as many new faces in senior GAC positions, made the review process challenging.

Review criteria are described in the Agency Review Manual and include evaluation of "Church Relatedness," "Policies and Practice," and "Program Effectiveness." Given this guidance and the extent of the changes underway at the GAC, the Review Committee determined that the best way to conduct its review and assessment was to organize the report around the recently discontinued organizational structure of the GAC—Congregational, National, and Worldwide Ministries—recognizing that the GAC is pursuing a new mission strategy.

The review process began with a "self-study," which departed in some respects from a standard presentation format because of the changes underway. The Review Committee examined the self-study and other written materials, conducted survey research for eleven church constituencies, and interviewed numerous past and present GAC staff and elected members. The intent of the Review Committee's work was to evaluate current practices and offer affirmations and recommendations for improvement.

Based upon our review, we have several general observations:

- Staff appears to be committed enthusiastically to the new mission strategy and believes that its effective implementation will make a significant difference for the better for the church.
- While staff is searching for ways to carry out an imposing array of responsibilities with fewer resources, executives came to their positions, in some instances, with limited prior administrative experience in their particular areas of responsibility. Nevertheless, their commitment to place the Christian gospel at the core of their work is compelling.
- Staff members expressed an assuring spirit of cooperation, diligence, and calling for their work. The Review Committee observed that in as much as their learning curve could be steep, the church's patience and encouragement would be important.
- The staff expressed a promising interest in developing new ways of communicating with congregations as well as with synods and presbyteries.

It became clear to us that the GAC no longer has the resources to operate in the ways it has in the past. It became equally clear from interviews and the survey research that synods, presbyteries, and congregations feel that the GAC has often been ineffective and they expressed a desire for a different kind of relationship with the GAC. The new mission strategy and the reorganization of the GAC recognize both realities and appear to be responsive in concept. We came away from these interviews with a sense of hopefulness and cautious optimism realizing that there is much to be done and the challenge of successful implementation of the new mission strategy will be enormous.

The Review Committee made several recommendations for change or further consideration. We are pleased that the GAC agreed to all recommendations that specifically pertained to it and concurred with Overarching Recommendation #10 in which the Review Committee recommends that the General Assembly create a review committee to review the service of the whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its six agencies in implementing the General Assembly's mission directives.

### **Recommendations for Change or Further Consideration**

#### Overarching Recommendations

1. *We strongly encourage the General Assembly to rename the GAC to identify its primary purpose in coordinating the church's mission programs.*

Comment: Names of organizations are important in conveying a clear and unambiguous sense to others of the organization's primary purpose. While the GAC engages in activities that support other church agencies and middle governing bodies, its primary purpose is to coordinate the church's mission programs. With this in mind we felt that the present name does not clearly communicate the primary role of the GAC within the church.

2. *We recommend that the GAC communicate systematically the new mission strategy and organizational structure and introduce the new leadership team to the church.*

Comment: Many in the church have only limited awareness of the new mission strategy the GAC is implementing and changes in its organizational structure. The GAC developed a new mission strategy, which is an objective-centered approach rather than a program-centered approach, to achieve more effectively its mission of offering to the world a visible witness of Jesus Christ through (1) the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; (2) the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; (3) the maintenance of divine worship; (4) the preservation of the truth; (5) the promotion of social righteousness; and (6) the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world. With the approval of the 217th General Assembly (2006), the GAC implemented the new mission strategy by reorganizing its former three divisions—Congregational, National, and Worldwide Ministries—into seven ministry areas under a Deputy Executive Director for Mission and is focusing its work around four goal areas (evangelism & witness, justice & compassion, spirituality & discipleship, and leadership & vocation) currently spanning eight objectives. Many GAC executives, including the Executive Director Linda Valentine, are new to their positions of responsibility.

3. *The GAC must assign a high priority to developing, adopting, and implementing promptly a comprehensive and disciplined program evaluation and prioritization process.*

Comment: The GAC has been slow to develop a program evaluation process that would enable it to discern the movement of God's spirit and establish clear criteria for determining program priorities and for allocating resources to areas of greatest importance. Effective organizations regularly and routinely assess what they are doing to determine whether the various activities and programs remain relevant to needs and whether resources are being deployed in ways that achieve the greatest benefit. While the importance of this is recognized by the GAC, there has been failure to follow through on initial attempts to establish such a methodology. This is an urgent undertaking that needs to be pursued without further delay.

4. *The GAC must integrate systematically the program evaluation and prioritization methodology (Recommendation #3) in allocating limited staff resources.*

Comment: While staff appears to have been encouraged by new leadership and they are optimistic about the new mission strategy, staff workloads in many areas have not been adjusted systematically in response to staffing reductions. Work overload can lead to loss of effectiveness and frustration. The GAC leadership must move immediately to match program work requirements with resource availability. We heard repeatedly in virtually every area of the GAC that staff are often being asked to carry on former workloads with fewer resources. Of necessity, shrinking financial resources have forced staff reductions in recent years. However, it did not appear to us that the GAC leadership has given the same urgency to reducing staff workloads. Further delay in attending to this need will inhibit effective implementation of the GAC's new mission strategy. The Review Committee wishes to emphasize that urgent implementation of Recommendations #3 and #4 is essential to avoid a pattern of decay and delayed response and to ensure improvement of trust (see Recommendation #9).

5. *We recommend that the GAC commit to be in conversations with synods and presbyteries with the intent to develop jointly specific initiatives as the GAC relates to and works with congregations.*

Comment: This recommendation promotes constructive partnering. It was clear from interviews and from survey research responses that synods, presbyteries and congregations feel that the GAC has often been ineffective. For example, the GAC solicitation of direct funding of mission from congregations has occurred with little or no conversations with synods and presbyteries and has created confusion and led to anger. Synods, presbyteries, and congregations expressed a desire for a

different kind of relationship with the GAC. That relationship needs to go beyond simply one of enhanced communication to one of joint action. Without action conversation only will lead to a decrease in trust and an increase in cynicism.

6. *We endorse the value of developing new possibilities for comprehensive, churchwide plans for communication and stewardship and encourage the GAC to develop and implement such a plan expeditiously.*

**Comment:** The GAC is developing a comprehensive communications plan that would establish a clear “Identity” for the GAC, which over the longer run might be applicable also for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and all of its constituencies. Such a plan would follow with an affirmative “Call” for support in ways that provide people choices to give of their time, talent, and treasure. The GAC recognizes that accomplishing this task will be difficult and will require intense collaborative effort. Because of the importance of this to the church, this undertaking needs to be pursued as expeditiously as possible.

7. *We encourage the GAC to make the necessary infrastructure investments and to move forward as expeditiously as possible in developing a comprehensive stewardship plan that addresses program needs as well as mission giving in collaboration with other church agencies and middle governing bodies. We further encourage the GAC to employ theological language, such as stewardship development and mission giving, which supports and encourages the use of the church’s theology of stewardship.*

**Comment:** GAC funds development [sic] historically has been reactive. The GAC recognizes that the church needs to develop a giving culture that reaches out and cultivates relationships. This will require investment in funds development infrastructure. Moreover, funds development will need to be integrated with a comprehensive communications plan (Recommendation #6). While members of the church expect to be asked to give of their time, talent, and treasure, it is important that a comprehensive stewardship plan for mission giving be developed and that the timing of multiple solicitations be coordinated.

8. *We recommend that the GAC, in consultation with other church governing bodies, develop a funding methodology that supports the work of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission workers and communicate the methodology clearly in a way that eliminates the current confusion about whether or to what extent mission workers are expected to raise funding for their own support.*

**Comment:** In our interviews, the Review Committee was told that newly appointed mission workers are expected to raise funding for their support. We were also told that, while crucial mission positions are being filled with qualified people, their deployment is being put on hold until funding is available. However, we were also advised that our mission workers are not expected to raise their own funds, but they are being asked to help the GAC raise funds for their own support and the support of other mission workers. This nuanced communication has created confusion. The confusion has been further reinforced by a decision not to recruit for positions that are not already fully funded. We recognize the reality of limited funding dictates hard decisions. However, decisions have been made and then revised without clear explanation. No broadly shared funding methodology has been developed, which serves only to exacerbate the level of mistrust (Recommendation #9).

9. *We recommend the GAC seek ways to listen carefully to its constituencies and develop additional ways to increase trust throughout the church.*

**Comment:** One of the most important intangibles in the life of the church is the issue of trust. We applaud the listening model that John Detterich, former GAC director, and Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk, pursued in their visits to presbyteries and synods in recent years. While the Review Committee has been encouraged by some new developments, we realize many promising ideas might be quickly derailed by inadequate trust across the church. We believe it is important that the GAC exercise leadership to find ways to increase the level of trust in the church. This is not a technical problem to be fixed, but an adaptive challenge to be managed. We must work on this together, but someone must take the lead. We encourage the GAC and its staff, to take the lead. Creating trust throughout the church should be seen as a GAC and staff responsibility. With trust, there is a lot of ministry we can do together. Without trust, we will fragment and splinter. Trust will grow to the extent that the GAC says, “These are the limited things that we can do and we will do them well.” Trust is a boundary issue. The middle governing bodies have a clear idea of their needs, but have no easy way to communicate those to the GAC. Priorities for the GAC also come from General Assembly enactments. The GAC needs to exert action in the limited number of areas where it can do so well and do so effectively. The trust issue will be resolved in conjunction with executive action in priority setting (Recommendation #3) and resource management (Recommendation #4). Above all trust begins with active listening.

10. *We recommend that the General Assembly create a review committee to review the service of the whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its six agencies in implementing the General Assembly’s mission directives. This review committee should be nominated according to procedures articulated in the Organization for Mission at Section IV.D.1. “Committees of the Assembly.”*

Comment: While the separate review of each of the six agencies is a helpful practice and has fostered improvements, this Review Committee observed that no one in the current system is charged with looking at the overall effectiveness of the whole. Coordination among the six agencies is voluntary and not always effective. Such a review should focus broadly on the effectiveness of the six agencies and other governing bodies in implementing the General Assembly's mission directives and should not duplicate the more detailed work of the individual agency review committees. Particular attention should be given to how or if these agencies work cooperatively and where or if there is duplication of services in the system. This Review Committee observed that some agencies are not working well together, but also that there are some beneficial cooperative efforts. These happen on a voluntary basis with no recommendation that this occur regularly throughout the system. This Review Committee also heard some people questioning the rationale of the separation of the GAC and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

### Congregational Ministries

1. Staff Workloads. The ministries of the former Congregational Ministries Division (CMD) are a clear example of a dynamic with which many of our congregations are also familiar: grappling with the dilemma of trying to meet the same or greater expectations with fewer human and other resources. The Review Committee heard the frustration of some staff who perceived that their attempts to articulate and solve the problem of limited resources were heard as complaints. We support a process by which the staff could identify and/or acknowledge the aspects of their work that are no longer feasible for them to accomplish. If this work were not able to be accomplished by others within the division or elsewhere in the national structure, this information needs to be explicitly communicated to the constituencies affected.

2. Publishing. In the area of production of published resources, we believe further consideration needs to be given to shared production across divisions (the term "ministries" has now replaced the term "divisions") and agencies.

3. Information Sharing. Although there has been increased conversation at the staff level within areas of the former CMD, greater effort needs to be devoted to sharing information and engaging in cooperative work at senior levels within the GAC and other agencies.

4. Principles Guiding Sale of Curriculum Materials. Because of the complexities involved in the sale and distribution of curriculum in particular, the GAC should evaluate whether this aspect of its work should reflect, as one interviewee described, "a corporation that functions like a Church or a Church that needs to apply some corporate principles in order to be a sound organization." Consideration needs to be given to a perceived tension between the relative profitability of curriculum and its fidelity to mission in its quality and content. We encourage further conversation within the GAC regarding the implications of decisions as the GAC seeks to manage this tension effectively.

5. Commitment to Publishing Curriculum. Similarly, further consideration needs to be given by the Presbyterian Church of its commitment to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) curriculum as an essential tool for the formation of denominational identity, particularly for youth and young adults.

### National Ministries

1. Paradigm shift. It is time for a paradigm shift in much of what we do and how we function. A paradigm shift refers to the models, frameworks, and assumptions that help us understand our world and how we organize ourselves to engage in it. Previous models of ministry that were highly effective in an earlier era are not always appropriate or recommended for today. We want to make sure that we are offering training in the best, most recent, most cutting edge evangelism models, as well as what continues to be effective from historical methods. We do not want the strengths of our Presbyterian Women to miss being passed on to a new generation of women. We want to see effective ministry continue in ways that are meaningful to younger women. While the Washington Office has been around for a long time, we want to consider new ways of engaging government and politics. Ways of doing advocacy that are more appropriate to current times need to be explored. As a new church emerges, we need the national office to emerge not only with it, but also to lead us in expanded and different ways of being the church.

3. Prioritization. As funding levels and staff have been reduced, we simply cannot afford to keep putting the same level of work on the backs of fewer people. As much as we would like, we simply cannot keep doing everything we have done in the past. It is time for us to set some priorities for what the GAC will do. We must say what we will do and what we will no longer do. We must do the hard work of setting priorities. Even though this process will not make everyone happy, it is essential. We must prioritize both tasks and funding. As a denomination that has been losing members for over forty years, should not the funding of new church developments, evangelism, and church growth be at least one of our top priorities?

4. Communication and Technology. We discovered many good things happened through the former national ministries division (NMD) of the GAC that we did not know about. We need to find more and better ways of communicating with the

church what we are actually doing. We are glad to see the hiring of a new Deputy Executive Director for Communication and Funds Development, and want to affirm that communication must be a high priority. While the staff has struggled to find ways to communicate with all the congregations in the denomination, are there not technologically savvy people who know how to set this up for us? In this day and age, with computer and Internet capabilities, we believe that regular communications with every church in the denomination could happen.

#### Worldwide Ministries

1. Supporting and Promoting Mission Work. We recommend that the General Assembly support the document “A Church-wide Design for Funding Christ’s Work Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” which will establish a period of time called “A Season of Giving” to interpret and promote the mission work of the church.

2. Communicating Mission Stories. Establish a program for effectively communicating the mission stories of the church in a way that will ignite this church’s passion for and commitment to the missionary task of the church.

3. Reaffirm Commitment to Ecumenical Vision. We recommend that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirm its historic commitment to the ecumenical vision of the church and call on the GAC to evaluate yearly the way in which its programs reflect and promote that ecumenical vision.

#### Shared Services and Other GAC Responsibilities

1. Conference Centers. During the review period changing utilization patterns and GAC subsidies put both of the church’s conference centers—Stony Point and Ghost Ranch—under financial stress. The advisory board for Ghost Ranch has addressed the challenge and Ghost Ranch is currently operating at a small surplus and has no accumulated deficit. The advisory board for Stony Point has been slower to respond and, as a consequence, Stony Point is currently operating at a substantial annual deficit. The Stony Point advisory board is planning to address the situation with a plan to be presented to the GAC at the February 2008 GAC meeting. In addition, the advisory boards for both Ghost Ranch and Stony Point are considering other long-term alternatives, such as separate incorporation. The GAC should expedite the development of options to improve the financial viability of Stony Point and consider possible alternatives over a longer time horizon that make the most effective use of mission funds.

2. Unutilized Space. The GAC should consider how to utilize the excess space in the Presbyterian Center to support most effectively its new mission strategy.

3. Budget Preparation. We recommend that the GAC continue to be charged with the responsibilities of budget preparation that were formerly assigned to it by G-13.0201(f). While it was obvious that the GAC is continuing with this function, this responsibility needs to be included in the as yet to be released GAC manual of operations.

4. Transactions Involving the GAC and Presbyterian Foundation. The GAC and the Presbyterian Foundation should work together to resolve cash transactions reconciliation and other financial management issues involving both organizations.

5. GAC and Presbyterian Foundation Coordination. The Review Committee heard that the GAC and the Presbyterian Foundation had worked together in solving some but not all overlapping problems. Both agencies should continue seeking every opportunity for communication and collaboration, such as providing representation at board meetings, and should continue to work together on matters of mutual interest.

6. Cash Reserves Policy. The GAC should review its cash reserves policy and determine what constitutes a reasonable amount.

7. Compensation Policies and Administration. The GAC should completely implement the revised compensation system or consider revising it so that it is commensurate with financial limitations. The fully implemented system should include either effective merit and promotion compensation administration or controls to ensure fair administration of compensation for all GAC employees.

8. Order Fulfillment. The GAC should explore alternatives, including web-enabled methods, to streamline order fulfillment in a manner that contains or reduces costs.

9. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund. The GAC should review the funds disbursement policy and address administrative issues.

10. Partnership with Middle Governing Bodies. Continue to develop the partnership role of the GAC with middle governing bodies and congregations.



11. Communications Plan. The GAC is on the right track in developing a comprehensive communications plan that establishes a clear “Identity” for the GAC, which over the longer run might be applicable also for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and all of its constituencies. Such a plan would follow with an affirmative “Call” for support in ways that provide people choices to give of their time, talent and treasure. The GAC recognizes that accomplishing this task will be difficult and will require intense collaborative effort. Because of the importance of this to the church, this undertaking needs to be pursued as expeditiously as possible.

12. Stewardship Development Plan. Stewardship development currently is reactive. The GAC recognizes that the church needs to develop a giving culture that reaches out and cultivates relationships. This will require investment in funds development infrastructure. Moreover, funds development will need to be integrated with a comprehensive communications plan. It is important that funds development initiatives be coordinated and that the risk of potentially counter-productive multiple solicitations be recognized and addressed. The Review Committee encourages the GAC to make the necessary infrastructure investments and to move forward as expeditiously as possible in developing a comprehensive stewardship development plan that addresses program needs as well as mission giving in collaboration with other church agencies and middle governing bodies.

13. Research Services. In recognition of the influential way in which Research Services serves the church, it should regularly consult with division (the term “ministry” has now replaced the term “division”) leaders concerning the ways in which surveys are prepared and reported to the church.

**Chapter 1—General Assembly Council’s Self-Study**  
**“Refining the Mission: *Journey to a New Mission***  
***Strategy for the General Assembly Council*”**

The GAC’s self-study departed in some respects from a standard presentation format because at the time of its preparation the GAC was mid-course in establishing a new mission strategy and new organizational structure. In addition, many GAC executives, including the Executive Director Linda Valentine, are new to their positions of responsibility. In the letter transmitting the self-study to the Review Committee, Mary Lynn Walters, chair of the GAC Review Steering Committee, wrote: “The report ... is a historical document, one that chronicles the reflections, deliberations and actions of the Council in establishing a new mission strategy. The Council is proud of its achievements and confident it has made the right choices, but it is also aware that this is a work in progress. Indeed, there were times we were in a quandary about what tense to use since many of the things we were writing about were occurring as we were preparing the report. While it is accurate to say the ink is still wet on much of the information conveyed here, it is equally accurate to say that all of the changes that have been made benefited from extensive study and reflection.”

Fundamental to the new mission strategy is a shift from a program-centered to a goal and objective-centered focus in organizing the work of GAC elected members and staff.

Goal: Evangelism & Witness—The GAC is called to invite all people to faith, repentance, and the abundant life of God in Jesus Christ, to encourage congregations in joyfully sharing the Gospel, and through the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in membership and discipleship.

- Objective—Equip Presbyterians, governing bodies and others to witness locally and globally to the Gospel of Jesus Christ with an emphasis on those with no active church affiliation.
- Objective—Support presbyteries’ efforts to develop congregations and fellowships that will enable them to reflect on the multicultural makeup of our society.

Goal: Justice & Compassion—The GAC is called to address wrongs in every aspect of life and the whole of creation, intentionally working with and on behalf of the poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people as did Jesus Christ, even at risk of our corporate and personal lives.

- Objective—Enable partnerships with governing bodies and others to actively address the causes and effects of poverty locally, nationally and globally.
- Objective—Encourage and support presbyteries and congregations to be active in seeking non-violent solutions to conflict in their own communities and in the communities of the world.

Goal: Spirituality & Discipleship—The GAC is called into deeper discipleship through Scripture, worship, prayer, study, stewardship, and service, and to rely on the Holy Spirit to mold our lives more and more into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

- Objective—Encourage and support presbyteries and congregations to further develop their member’s ability to appreciate and understand their Reformed identity and apply it in today’s world.
- Objective—Enable presbyteries and congregations to ground families, in all their manifestations, in Christian discipleship that helps them confront and resist the idolatries of society today.

Goal: Leadership & Vocation—The GAC is called to lead by Jesus Christ’s example, to identify spiritual gifts, and to equip and support people for faithful and effective servant leadership in all parts of the body of Christ.

- Objective—Equip presbyteries and congregations to help members discern that their vocation is a call from God to Christian witness in society and the church.
- Objective—Facilitate the exchange and development of alternative models for pastoral and mission leadership in small churches.

These eight objectives are anchored by a purpose statement, a vision statement, a mission statement and a set of core commitments (See Appendix A). The objectives are intended to be dynamic, not static and are reviewed and updated annually by the GAC.

To implement the new mission strategy and assure appropriate structural alignment, the GAC has reorganized its governance into five committees—one for each of the four goal areas and a fifth for Shared Support, which covers communication, finance, funds development and other services. In addition, the former Congregational, National and Worldwide Ministries Divisions were consolidated into a single division headed by Tom Taylor, Deputy Executive Director for Mission. Work of the Mission Division focuses on achievement of the eight objectives and is staffed by six directors: Joseph Small (Theology Worship and Education), Eric Hoey (Evangelism and Church Growth), Sara Lisherness (Peace and Justice), Sara Lisherness-interim (Relief and Development), Hunter Farrell (World Mission), and Rhashell Hunter (Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women). (Appendix B contains a chart of GAC’s current organization structure.)

## **Chapter 2—The Emergence of a New Approach—“A New Way for a New Day”**

The Review Committee interviewed many former and current GAC employees, as well as elected members of the GAC. The former employees were consulted sometimes by telephone and sometimes in person. They consistently reported a sense of gratitude for their opportunities to serve the church and a cautiously optimistic view of the organizational changes. Such interviews were interesting but frequently quite limited in terms of detailed analysis.

Interviews with newly appointed staff, marked by similar limitations, were also brief. Nevertheless, they did lead to some preliminary observations:

- a. Staff appears to be enthusiastically committed to the new mission strategy and believes that its effective implementation will make a significant difference for the better for the church.
- b. While staff is searching for ways to carry out an imposing array of responsibilities with fewer resources, executives came to their positions, in some instances, with limited prior administrative experience in their particular areas of responsibility. Nevertheless, their commitment to place the Christian gospel at the core of their work is compelling.
- c. Staff members expressed an assuring spirit of cooperation, diligence, and calling for their work. The Review Committee observed that in as much as their learning curve could be steep, the church’s patience and encouragement would be important.
- d. The staff expressed a promising interest in developing new ways of communicating with congregations as well as with synods and presbyteries.

It is clear that the GAC no longer has the resources to operate in the ways it has in the past. It is equally clear from interviews and the survey research that synods, presbyteries, and congregations feel that the GAC has often been ineffective and they expressed a desire for a different kind of relationship with the GAC. The new mission strategy and the reorganization of the GAC recognize both realities and appear to be responsive in concept. We came away from these interviews with a sense of hopefulness and cautious optimism, realizing that there is much to be done and the challenge of successful implementation of the new mission strategy will be enormous.

### Chapter 3—Organization of Review Committee Report

The new mission strategy with its change in focus from program-centered to objective-centered and reorganization of GAC governance and staff to align with the new mission strategy posed a challenge to the Review Committee as how best to conduct its responsibilities pursuant to the *Organization for Mission*. Reviews of other General Assembly entities—the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Board of Pensions—each focused on evaluating the activities of these agencies over the previous six years. It was clear to the Review Committee that given the substantial change underway at the GAC, a backward looking assessment would have limited value. The GAC, in its self-study, suggested that the Review Committee “... assess the appropriateness of the changes being implemented.”

Review criteria are described in the Agency Review Manual and include evaluation of “Church Relatedness,” “Policies and Practice,” and “Program Effectiveness.” Given this guidance and the extent of the changes underway at the GAC, the Review Committee determined that the best way to conduct its review and assessment was to organize the report around the recently discontinued organizational structure of the GAC—Congregational, National, and Worldwide Ministries—recognizing that the GAC is pursuing a new mission strategy. The Review Committee’s assessment of GAC is divided into four sections—Congregational Ministries, National Ministries, Worldwide Ministries, and Shared Services and other GAC responsibilities. Each section that follows begins with an introduction that is followed by three sections—“Key Observations,” “Affirmations,” and “Recommendations for Change or Further Consideration.”

### Chapter 4—Congregational Ministries

#### A. Introduction

“The primary purpose of the Congregational Ministries Division (CMD) is to resource and nurture the witness to Jesus Christ in local settings in cooperation with other governing bodies” (from the PC(USA) *Planning Calendar*). Prior to the reorganization of the GAC, this purpose was carried out through the following subdivisions:

1. Church Leader Support, including Youth and Young Adult Ministries, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Presbyterian United Nations Office;
2. Theology Worship and Discipleship, including Theology and Worship, Spiritual Formation, the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, and Stewardship;
3. Congregational Ministries Publishing, including Curriculum Development, Mission Interpretation and Promotion, Production, and Marketing.

Theological Education and Conference Ministries were also part of the former CMD.

The financial pressures and a shortage of funds led to various restructurings during the 2001 to 2006 period. As with the rest of the GAC, the CMD reorganization was done with the goal of making the structure more responsive to input and energy from the congregations and middle governing bodies. In the current GAC structure, the majority of the ministries previously accomplished through the former CMD are now assigned to the Theology Worship and Education, Peace and Justice, and Communication and Funds Development.

#### B. Key Observations

##### 1. Church Relatedness

The number and depth of structural changes involving the former CMD have created both stresses and opportunities in the division’s internal relatedness and its relatedness to the larger church. It is our view that the staff of the former CMD has exhibited an awareness of their servant role in the life of the church. As the lack of resources has forced cuts in staffing, it has become increasingly challenging for the staff to provide the level of service to their constituents that they have been accustomed to providing. Staff of the former CMD report receiving inquiries that suggest many of their former constituents are unaware that there are ministries for which there is no longer direct staff support.

One noteworthy response to this overall challenge has been the development of covenant partner groups (e.g. Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network, Presbyterian Association of Resource Centers) who carry out or help carry out the work that once was primarily the responsibility of former CMD staff.

While the leadership development undertaken by CMD in the past on behalf of these networks is commendable, the decrease in direct staff support currently raises questions about the potential loss of a sense of connection with the denomina-

tion these covenant group ministries may experience in the future. An example of a creative idea we heard in this regard explores how the denomination could initiate a mission travel program for “baby boomers” seeking meaningful engagement in a global context. The older participants could then have a greater understanding of (and hopefully a greater commitment to) the interpretation and stewardship of the mission of the PC(USA) as a result of interactions with those engaged in “hands on” mission.

While in the formation stage, the Mission Education and Promotion area of the former CMD (which is moving to the Communications and Funds Development Division) has been instrumental in the development of the Mission Challenge 2007 initiative that is already underway. Through Mission Challenge 2007, more than 140 presbyteries have invited international mission personnel to interpret GAC mission to them through sharing their own stories. We hope that this effort will be a vehicle to communicate to the church the transformational successes of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission, thereby garnering broader support for the whole mission of the church.

Particularly at the staff level, we heard many examples of healthy collaboration and communication among staff and between staff and constituents on behalf of furthering the mission of the church. Staff members, as well as others, thought that it would be helpful for the church’s two major publishing programs, the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) and the Office of Theology, Worship, and Education, to provide clear descriptions of their distinctive responsibilities. In past years, it was suggested that as PPC became a self-sufficient agency, the need for it to base decisions on financial considerations became more pressing. In contrast, curriculum in the former CMD was developed with a high value placed on its (1) affordability for small congregations, and (2) an editorial sensitivity to the mandates from the General Assembly to the GAC regarding curriculum content. As a result of these and other factors, the two publishing entities sometimes found themselves in competition with each other. This changed after PPC decided to cease publishing curriculum several years ago.

Many of those we interviewed expressed hope that the new GAC structure will provide an opportunity for there to be greater cooperation between PPC and the curriculum development area of the GAC. It also seemed evident that good opportunities for mutual cooperation and support in other activities, wherever possible, would continue to serve the church well.

## 2. *Policies and Practices*

Although the staff of the former CMD expressed an understanding that its responsibility is to manage its assets for the good of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we also heard examples where the scarcity of funds over the review period led to behavior that may not have been in the best interest of the entire denomination. For example, it was reported to us, without substantiation, that former CMD staff was instructed not to promote anything at denominational gatherings that was not published by Congregational Ministries Publishing, even to the exclusion of other appropriate resources in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) family. Apparently there has been a shift in this dynamic over time and staff reports greater support for being able to help the former CMD’s constituents know about all resources that may be helpful to them. In fact, staff of the former CMD advises their constituents as to how non-Presbyterian resources can be modified to ensure they are consistent with Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theology and values.

As access to denominational funding has decreased, the Theology and Worship area of the former CMD has secured funding from the Lilly Foundation to enable programs such as “Reforming Ministry,” which provides a forum for pastors, middle governing body staff, and seminary professors to examine the culture and communication between the three entities that share the teaching office in the Reformed tradition. Whereas this funding from outside the denomination enables this rich and dynamic conversation to exist, it raises questions about the program’s accountability to the denomination and its sustainability after the grant period.

As with other areas within GAC, CMD administrators expressed frustration at the inability to develop and implement long-range plans due to the constant organizational restructures during the review period. It is hoped that the new mission strategy and the change in the GAC’s organizational structure will support the new objectives-centered focus rather than the former programmatic focus and will facilitate more adequately long range planning.

Likewise, staff of the former CMD reported that the change to biennial General Assemblies has provided it more time to implement assembly mandates. But, given the longer time interval between assemblies, a question was raised whether accountability of staff performance should take primary direction from the General Assembly or from the GAC. A corollary question is whether the new GAC organizational structure, with its objectives-centered focus, rather than program-centered focus, might inadvertently lead to lack of clarity in direction for national staff vis-à-vis General Assembly guidance.

## 3. *Program Effectiveness*

The Mission Education and Promotion (MEP) area of the former CMD has been successful in promoting the Special Offerings of the denomination and is making use of newer technologies such as PowerPoint CDs to interpret these offerings with even greater effectiveness. Through the “bundling” of promotions for all four Special Offerings with basic mission support in the “five for five” campaign and the institution of “standing orders” for its promotional materials, MEP hopes to increase the effectiveness of its program. The favorable response to the development of *Ideas!* magazine from Congregational

Ministries Publishing represents another example of enhanced program effectiveness as a byproduct of collaboration between previously distinct program areas within the division.

However, an example of how reductions in staff can threaten program effectiveness can also be seen in the former CMD as well. In a denomination that has articulated valuing multicultural ministries in general and Hispanic and Korean ministries in particular, it is significant that Hispanic and Korean staff of the former CMD find themselves not just writing, translating, and promoting resources, but also tracking orders through the Presbyterian Distribution System for Spanish-speaking constituents. This specific scenario is characteristic of a larger concern we heard among staff of the former CMD that personnel reductions without changes in organizational expectations will inevitably lead to unclear job responsibilities and/or burnout—both of which are bound to impact program effectiveness over time.

### C. *Affirmations*

By all reports, it would seem that the commitment and sense of call of the staff of the former CMD remained high during the period under review, even in the midst of difficult reductions in force that were sometimes perceived as an indictment of the importance of their work from the larger church. Our interviews suggested that staff is generally hopeful about the “New Way for a New Day” ethos that is informing decisions regarding ongoing restructuring within the division.

Staff of the former CMD recognizes the importance of engaging middle governing bodies, congregations, seminaries, covenant ministry groups, and others in the church in two-way communication and collaboration/partnership. We were struck by the example of a curriculum development staff member who engaged a constituent in conversation who had contacted her to complain about an aspect of curriculum. That constituent now participates in curriculum development. Staff also provided numerous examples of intra-division communication that has led to the identification and reduction of duplication of services.

We are also heartened by the creativity and passion certain staff of the former CMD have brought to the task of promoting the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Speaking to the trend toward designated giving to mission causes outside the denomination, a staff member of the former CMD described “Mission Challenge 2007” as an opportunity to make the case to the church that its 170 years of experience in mission has value and is good stewardship in the cause of transforming lives in Christ.

### D. *Recommendations for Change or Further Consideration*

1. Staff Workloads. The ministries of the former CMD are a clear example of a dynamic with which many of our congregations are also familiar: grappling with the dilemma of trying to meet the same or greater expectations with less human and other resources. The Review Committee heard the frustration of some staff who perceived that their attempts to articulate and solve the problem of limited resources were heard as complaints. We support a process by which the staff could identify and/or acknowledge the aspects of their work that are no longer feasible for them to accomplish. If this work were not able to be accomplished by others within the division or elsewhere in the national structure, this information needs to be explicitly communicated to the constituencies affected.

2. Publishing. In the area of production of published resources, we believe further consideration needs to be given to shared production across divisions (the term “ministries” has now replaced the term “divisions”) and agencies.

3. Information Sharing. Although there has been increased conversation at the staff level within areas of the former CMD, greater effort needs to be devoted to sharing information and engaging in cooperative work at senior levels within the GAC and other agencies.

4. Principles Guiding Sale of Curriculum Materials. Because of the complexities involved in the sale and distribution of curriculum in particular, the GAC should evaluate whether this aspect of its work should reflect, as one interviewee described, “a corporation that functions like a Church or a Church that needs to apply some corporate principles in order to be a sound organization.” Consideration needs to be given to a perceived tension between the relative profitability of curriculum and its fidelity to mission in its quality and content. We encourage further conversation within the GAC regarding the implications of decisions as the GAC seeks to manage this tension effectively.

5. Commitment to Publishing Curriculum. Similarly, further consideration needs to be given by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of its commitment to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) curriculum as an essential tool for the formation of denominational identity, particularly for youth and young adults.

## Chapter 5—National Ministries

### A. Introduction

The former National Ministries Division (NMD), through the GAC, was charged with advising and responding to the General Assembly on priorities, programs, and strategies for addressing matters of national concern for ministry in church and society. The primary purpose of the former NMD was to develop and implement programs that are national in scope and expressive of the denomination's mission priorities, including:

- The challenge of evangelism and church development,
- The promise of racial ethnic and women's ministries,
- The summons of a compassionate search for social justice,
- The grounding of all its work in theological and ethical discernment,
- The responsibility to witness in and through educational institutions, and
- The cultivation and nurture of volunteer and professional leadership for the church.

The program areas in the former NMD included:

- Churchwide Personnel Services,
- Evangelism and Church Development,
- Higher Education,
- Racial Ethnic Ministries,
- Social Justice, and
- Women's Ministries.

The Washington Office also was supervised by the director of the former NMD.

### B. Key Observations

What does the denomination as a whole need to understand about how the former National Ministries Division (NMD) of the GAC functioned from 2001-2006? Here are the key messages:

1. Budget constraints. The unrelenting reduction in financial resources was a constant factor that influenced the morale of the staff and the ability to do the work assigned. This contributed to a difficult and challenging work environment. Due to budget reductions staff was not sure what they could actually do and how much they actually had to spend, because the amount of funds kept decreasing.

2. Work environment. The ethos of the work environment was that of a corporate culture rather than that of an ecclesiastical culture. The prevailing mood seemed to be more about efficient business processes than effective ministry.

3. Workloads. Because of budget and staff reductions, workloads seemed to increase drastically for the remaining staff. Rather than reducing the workload along with the reduced number of staff people, employees were asked to do the same amount of work that had been handled by more workers previously. Because of this, staff could respond to requests from churches and individuals, but normally focused their contacts on presbyteries and synods, so that the tasks would not overwhelm the small number of staff.

4. Evaluations of program and staff did take place, although a more effective method of program evaluation is needed.

5. An unwillingness to work together—"silo effect"—seemed to exist between division directors as declining funds forced difficult decisions, but other staff managed to keep working together in positive and collegial ways.

6. Presbyterian Women continues to support the mission of the church through prayers, interest, and finances in very significant ways. Their financial donations are a tangible gift to our church.

### C. Affirmations

As a result of our conversations with former and present staff, we offer several affirmations:

1. The staff that has served our denomination for the past six years has been a very dedicated and hard working group of people. Staff members have served very well during extraordinarily difficult times. In a period of uncertainty and instability, they continued to perform the tasks requested of them by the church, even when there was little feedback or encouragement. We want the church to know that we have had many persevering servants working for us behind the scenes.

2. A new, more hopeful environment appears to be emerging as a result of the new mission strategy and new leadership that was put in place in late 2006 and early 2007. The removal of uncertainties and the provision of greater clarity are helping to create a more positive culture in the workplace. While we sense that anxieties remain, staff appears to have new levels of hope and optimism about its work that has been missing in recent years. It was reported to us that people enjoy coming to work, they enjoy whom they work with, and they feel they are once again a part of a meaningful ministry. We came away with the sense that the ethos and culture is changing for the better. This is very constructive and it is our hope that these positive trends continue to develop.

#### *D. Recommendations for Change or Further Consideration*

As we met with staff and got a better picture of how the former NMD functioned, we began to see the need for change in how we function as a denomination. We were encouraged to see some changes already taking place, and want to encourage the church to consider the following:

1. **Paradigm shift.** It is time for a paradigm shift in much of what we do and how we function. A paradigm shift refers to the models, frameworks, and assumptions that help us understand our world and how we organize ourselves to engage in it. Previous models of ministry that were highly effective in an earlier era are not always appropriate or recommended for today. We want to make sure that we are offering training in the best, most recent, most cutting edge evangelism models, as well as what continues to be effective from historical methods. We do not want the strengths of our Presbyterian Women to miss being passed on to a new generation of women. We want to see effective ministry continue in ways that are meaningful to younger women. While the Washington Office has been around for a long time, we want to consider new ways of engaging government and politics. Ways of doing advocacy that are more appropriate to current times need to be explored. As a new church emerges we need the national office not only to emerge with it, but to lead us in expanded and different ways of being the church.

2. **Prioritization.** As funding levels and staff have been reduced, we simply cannot afford to keep putting the same level of work on the backs of fewer people. As much as we would like, we simply cannot keep doing everything we have done in the past. It is time for us to set some priorities for what the GAC will do. We must say what we will do and what we will no longer do. We must do the hard work of setting priorities. Even though this process will not make everyone happy, it is essential. We must prioritize both tasks and funding. As a denomination that has been losing members for more than forty years, should not the funding of new church developments, evangelism, and church growth be at least one of our top priorities?

3. **Communication and Technology.** We discovered many good things happened through the former National Ministries Division (NMD) of the GAC that we did not know about. We need to find more and better ways of communicating with the church what we are actually doing. We are glad to see the hiring of a new Deputy Executive Director for Communication and Funds Development, and want to affirm that communication must be a high priority. While the staff has struggled to find ways to communicate with all the congregations in the denomination, are there not technologically savvy people who know how to set this up for us? In this day and age, with computer and Internet capabilities, we believe that regular communications with every church in the denomination could happen.

## **Chapter 6—Worldwide Ministries**

### *A. Introduction*

The former Worldwide Ministries Division (WMD), during the years prior to the restructuring of the GAC, consisted of 100 tethered staff members, 50 deployed staff, as well as 350 mission workers. It worked with a budget of \$45 million. The culture of the division was that every staff member understood herself or himself as a mission worker; that ethos continues today.

Although the work of the former WMD has been reorganized and the budget has been dispersed throughout the present structure, much remains to be done. We heard consistently in nearly all areas of the GAC that while staffing has been greatly reduced most of the original program work still remains. This is also true for programs and staff of the former WMD. This reflects the classic shortcoming of attempting to do “more with less,” which usually eventually leads to reduced effectiveness and frustration.

The 215th General Assembly (2003) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved *Gathering for God's Future*, which was a renewed call to worldwide mission. The opening paragraph states: “The Good News of Jesus Christ is to be shared with the whole world. As disciples of Jesus Christ, each of us in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is sent into the world to join God’s mission. As individuals and as a church, we are called to be faithful in this discipleship. Our mission is centered in the triune God. Our mission is God-called, Christ-centered, and Spirit-led. Our mission is both proclamation and service; it is the reason the church exists.”

The mission story of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is an amazing story that touches every corner of the world. It involves hundreds of networks, thousands of partners, and innumerable faithful workers both near and far. It includes diverse patterns of sending and receiving. The result is that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been proclaimed in ways that have been life-changing. Hospitals and schools have been built and churches have been planted. Relief has been provided in the midst of catastrophic destruction and hope has been restored to communities in despair. The daily reality of partners around the world has been lifted up and the church has been challenged to provide a prophetic witness.

Mission is at the very heart of who we are as Presbyterians. In the midst of unsettled times, it is often the mission mandate that reminds us that what holds us together is always stronger than that which would rend us asunder. While Presbyterians might deeply disagree in governing body debate, they will readily work together in projects that bring healing and hope.

Working together is essential in our understanding of how we do mission. Presbyterians have always understood that “they can do more in mission and do mission more effectively, when they do it together.”<sup>3</sup>

## B. *Key Observations*

Through the review of written materials and reports from the former WMD and lengthy discussion with its staff, the committee developed a deep appreciation for the commitment and faithfulness of those serving in this area of the church’s work. Out of our conversations, we share these key insights:

1. The period covered by this review has been a challenging and difficult period both for our staff and our partners around the world. The restructuring of our denomination has been jarring to our ecumenical partners. It has not only been confusing and unsettling but, in some situations, it has been threatening to the well-being of those with whom we are in covenant relationship. With humility we need to recognize that the decisions we make in our denomination are far-reaching—calling us to be sensitive in times of change to the very real concerns of our brothers and sisters around the world.

2. We were surprised and chagrined to learn that newly appointed mission workers had been told that they must raise their own support. In addition, while crucial mission positions had been filled with qualified candidates, their deployment was put on hold until funding was available. Presbyterians can do better. There are several trends in mission support that exacerbated this situation (see 3. and 4. below). We have been told that this issue is being addressed and that changes are being implemented that will return us to a funding pattern that will take funding off the backs of mission workers and make that support the responsibility of the entire church.

3. The embrace of mission at the local level has been both a gift and a challenge. The commitment to local mission at the congregational level ideally should ignite a greater interest in worldwide mission carried out by our denomination. Sadly, this has not always been the case. Some congregations have adopted ambitious local projects and have funded multiple mission trips for members of their congregation while forgetting that our mission personnel need continued support.

We must not confuse “mission trips” with mission. The most valuable aspect of a mission trip is its ability to shape participants’ hearts for the greater mission of the church. Those who have received “new eyes” through participation in these short-term efforts should have deepened appreciation for the life, service, and witness of those who make longer-term commitments. These efforts should not replace sustained support of long-term mission commitments.

4. The loss of a specific period during the year when the mission stories of the church are lifted up, missionaries itinerate, and the church is called to sacrificial giving on behalf of our mission effort, has been detrimental to our understanding of and support for unified mission. In addition, while our mission stories are compelling, they are not being shared effectively with the whole church in a way that would deepen our members’ commitment to the mission of the church. It is imperative that the church place a high priority on effective communication.

5. While our Constitution (*Book of Order*, G-15.0100–.0105) clearly affirms that to be Presbyterian is to be ecumenical, there is a decreasing commitment to that ecumenical vision. People interpret cooperative efforts as ecumenical efforts. While the first may be a noble calling, the second is a high calling. There is not sufficient ecumenical formation taking place.

<sup>3</sup> “Churchwide Design for Funding Christ’s Work Throughout the PC(USA)”, page 4.



There is concern that in cutting the staff responsible for ecumenical programming and dispersing the responsibility for the nurturing of the ecumenical vision throughout the GAC, we will further dilute this historic commitment.

6. The funding system that allows us to carry out our mission is sometimes confusing to both staff and our members. It is widely believed that a more transparent funding system will result in greater revenues for mission personnel and projects. Another funding concern is that Interfaith Relations, which is especially critical in this ever-shrinking world, is funded through endowed funds that will soon be expended. There are a number of programs in World Mission that are facing the same challenge.

### C. *Affirmations*

1. The former WMD had various program areas that now reside in the current World Mission unit: Ecumenical and Mission Partnerships, Interfaith Relations, Global Education and International Leadership Development, and International Evangelism programs. We were impressed with the talent and expertise of those who have worked in those areas and will continue the work in the new structure.

We received a response to submitted questions from the following: *Iranian Ministry Planning Group, Northern Ireland Working Group, Sudan Working Group, and Czech Working Group*. Three of these working groups have become Mission Networks. The Mission Networks have served as models for twenty-four additional Mission Networks that have been formed.

2. The former WMD had a number of programs that now reside in the new Relief and Development unit. Some of those programs have wide familiarity throughout the denomination; others are lesser known. In reviewing the programs it was important to us to discern if each program demonstrated fidelity to the mission of the church, if its practices and procedures were transparent and in line with its mandate, and if the program was effective.

We reviewed responses to submitted questions from the following programs:

a. Jinishian Memorial—which provides relief, development, and spiritual support for Armenians in seven countries. This program is administered through a \$40 million endowment—the second largest endowment fund of the Presbyterian Foundation. It was created by a \$9.2 million bequest from Vartan Jinishian, an Armenian who immigrated to New York from Turkey in 1905.

b. Presbyterian Hunger Fund—which supports programs to alleviate hunger. Specific programs reviewed were *Enough for Everyone*, *Campaign for Fair Food*, and PHF International. The PHF programs receive the largest part of their funding through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. Of all of the programs reviewed, this program had the most effective system of communicating its story to the larger church through Hunger Action Enablers.

c. Self-Development of People—which works to provide opportunities for economically poor, oppressed and disadvantaged people. This program had a well-defined process of evaluation.

We found that all of these groups were working within the parameters of their official mandates. We were pleased to learn that all of the programs, from their inception, have worked cooperatively and/or ecumenically.

While there are numerous stories that attest to the success of their efforts, we believe that some of these programs lack an adequate process for measuring their effectiveness. We hasten to add that a process for evaluating and goal-setting with staff is in place, and turning attention to program evaluation is the logical next step.

3. The Review Committee was buoyed by the deep faith, renewed energy, and hopefulness expressed by the staff of the former WMD, now World Mission and Relief and Development. When asked what they might wish that the Review Committee would share with the larger church, one staff member responded: “God has called the church to be an agent of reconciliation in the world and reconciliation includes all of these programs in which we are involved. The promises of God stand, but we need to be proactive about it. Programmatically, that means we need to steady the course and keep doing what God is calling us to do every day. We need to live in to who we are. We are connectional. We must carry out the tasks together.”

### D. *Recommendations for Change or Further Consideration*

1. Supporting and Promoting Mission Work. We recommend that the General Assembly support the document “A Church-wide Design for Funding Christ’s Work Throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” which will establish a period of time called “A Season of Giving” to interpret and promote the mission work of the church.

2. Communicating Mission Stories. Establish a program for effectively communicating the mission stories of the church in a way that will ignite this church's passion for and commitment to the missionary task of the church.

3. Reaffirm Commitment to Ecumenical Vision. We recommend that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirm its historic commitment to the ecumenical vision of the church and call on the GAC to evaluate yearly the way in which its programs reflect and promote that ecumenical vision.

### **Chapter 7—Shared Services and Other GAC Responsibilities**

#### *A. Introduction*

Shared services include information technology, distribution, human resources, finance and accounting, and facilities management under the direction of Joey Bailey, Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services and Chief Financial Officer. The executive administrator, the general counsel—who also serves several other church agencies and provides advice to middle governing bodies—and the internal auditor report directly to Linda Valentine, the Executive Director. In the restructured GAC, there is a new position of Deputy Executive Director for Communication and Funds Development, which is filled by Karen Schmidt. The elevation of communications to a Deputy Executive Director position and the addition of funds development responsibilities to that position reflect the importance of communicating with all constituencies what GAC is doing and helping bolster financial resources. Survey results (see Appendix D) clearly reflect the importance of both communications and funds development.

In addition there are two offices—the Middle Governing Body Coordinator, Gary Torrens, and the Vocation Office Director, Marcia Myers—that report jointly to the GAC and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

#### *B. Key Observations*

1. Staff Morale. We found morale and optimism to be high. Shared services and other professional staff feel valued and an important part of helping achieve the GAC's new mission strategy. Staff members appear to be well qualified for their respective areas of responsibility and most have been in their current positions for several years. In contrast to past experience there are now strong bonds among the agencies of the church on issues involving administration and financial management.

2. GAC and OGA Cooperation. We observed a spirit of cooperation between GAC and OGA to make communication with middle governing bodies and enhancement of church vocations more effective parts of the church's mission.

3. Financial Resources. A major challenge in maintaining program effectiveness has been steady shrinkage in available financial resources, which has diverted energy almost without interruption for several years and which has led to downsizing staff and shrinking mission programs.

4. Budgeting. Financial budgeting is now aligned with the eight mission objectives.

5. Human Resources Compliance. We found that GAC staff composition complies with the church's gender and diversity guidelines.

6. Compensation Policies and Administration. The GAC's compensation structure was revised in 2005 but has not been fully implemented due to financial constraints. We also learned that GAC does not have an effective merit pay system, which creates the possibility of uneven administration of the compensation program. We were also advised that Deputy Executive Directors have the final authority on administration of compensation. While this provides for flexibility it also introduces risk of inconsistent application of compensation practices.

7. Technology Systems. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) web site, [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org) received 3.6 million page views in June 2007 from 1.3 million visits. Besides the home page and the search pages, the most visited areas were daily lectionary readings, followed by the Presbyterian Marketplace, "Find a Church," online giving, and ministry and vocations.

8. Order Fulfillment. Order fulfillment is done primarily by telephone. The existing web service is not user-friendly. Reportedly, this deficiency could be resolved but would be expensive to implement.

9. Cash Reserves. The cash reserves policy may be too conservative.

10. Presbytery Finances. Presbyteries' responsibilities are more complicated in today's world because presbytery staff increasingly is connecting with pastors and congregations in relational ways, but resources are scarcer—budgets are down substantially from ten years ago. Pastors are hungry for support and connection.

11. Vocation Office. The Vocation Office has been restructured to focus on leadership development and discernment of Christian vocation involving preparation for ministry, Christian education, and committees on ministry. It is no longer responsible for national volunteers. Vocation is about both ministers of the Word and Sacrament and certified Christian educators. There is a focus to nurture continuing education and pastoral accountability to use in ways that benefit local churches. However, as in so many other cases with the GAC, financial, human and technological resources limit these worthy programs.

12. Communications and Funds Development Management. The Deputy Executive Director for Communications and Funds Development, Karen Schmidt, has twenty-five years of sales, marketing, and business experience. She is a Presbyterian elder and believes deeply that through Jesus Christ the world can be transformed.

13. Communications and Funds Development Plan. Multiple modes of communication are needed for effective fund raising. The GAC is in the process of developing a comprehensive communications and funds development plan that is intended to help develop a culture within the GAC and throughout the church that establishes a clear "Identity" and follows with a "Call" for support in ways that give people choices. Confusion about identity leads to lack of trust. We must learn to ask each other for our time, talent and treasure. This will require investment in web site design, on-line technology, and databases.

### C. *Affirmations*

1. Human and Financial Resources. We heard from staff affirmation that the mission of GAC and the restructuring of the organization are on the right track. Also, staff was optimistic that available financial resources may have stabilized.

2. Unutilized Space. Because of significant staffing reductions, the Presbyterian Center has substantial unutilized space. A major challenge and opportunity is to lease the excess space and increase revenues.

3. Technology Systems. Significant progress has been made in upgrading technology systems. Systems conversions have been well-managed and completed on time with minimal interruption of critical services. The financial system conversion has been completed and a new donor management system has been installed. Importantly, the information technology architecture can support systems expansion that supports donor data base management and funds development.

4. Accounting and Treasury Functions. Accounting and treasury functions are well-managed. The GAC's external auditor had no concerns about the adequacy of internal controls. In fact, internal controls were effective in catching an internal embezzlement quickly and before much financial damage was incurred.

5. Internal Audit. Internal audit is effective and GAC oversight is appropriate. The 2006 external audit was delayed because of the implementation of a new software system. However, a conversation with external auditors indicated there were no issues of significance. The external auditors did issue a management letter with recommendations on investment reconciliations and certain information technology matters. None of the recommendations, however, was significant or material. The reconciliation of investments involves both the Foundation and GAC.

6. Human Resources. Human Resources has restructured its approach to be customer driven.

7. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund. Some of the tsunami funds contributed to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund have not been distributed to recipients.

8. Partnering with Middle Governing Bodies. The national church is in the process of moving into a world in which presbyteries are partners rather than clients. This has been facilitated by establishing a middle governing bodies team that is developing ways to strengthen partnership. A web site, MGB Connect!, has been established to share "best practices" and an annual meeting between GAC/OGA and middle governing bodies was inaugurated in September 2006.

9. Office of Vocation. With dwindling numbers of new ordained pastors, the Office of Vocation is exploring alternative pastoral models. The office has established an on-line service for "Church Leadership Connections." The office is nurturing "leadership eco-systems," which encompass programs for systematic development of leadership. It takes all of us to develop leaders.

10. Seminaries. The GAC staff warmly expressed a desire to work more closely with theological seminaries.

11. Communications Plan. The GAC recognizes that tension within the church interferes with funding. Thus, it is critical to establish a clear identity that embraces diversity and all constituencies. Message points have to be created that cut across all church constituencies. This must be accomplished collaboratively. For the GAC the key message is "mission."

12. Funds Development Plan. In recognition that individuals and congregations will respond to the call for mission funding with enthusiasm as mission opportunities are whole heartedly shared and embraced, it is critical to develop a positive, exciting approach that lifts up specific responsibilities in the service of Christ's mission. This will be supported by development of databases and other relevant information tools.

*D. Recommendations for Change or Further Consideration*

1. Conference Centers. During the review period changing utilization patterns and GAC subsidies put both of the church's conference centers—Stony Point and Ghost Ranch—under financial stress. The advisory board for Ghost Ranch has addressed the challenge and Ghost Ranch is currently operating at a small surplus and has no accumulated deficit. The advisory board for Stony Point has been slower to respond and, as a consequence, Stony Point is currently operating at a substantial annual deficit. The Stony Point advisory board is planning to address the situation with a plan to be presented to the GAC at the February 2008 GAC meeting. In addition, the advisory boards for both Ghost Ranch and Stony Point are considering other long-term alternatives, such as separate incorporation. The GAC should expedite the development of options to improve the financial viability of Stony Point and consider possible alternatives over a longer time horizon that make the most effective use of mission funds.

2. Unutilized Space. The GAC should consider how to utilize the excess space in the Presbyterian Center to support most effectively its new mission strategy.

3. Budget Preparation. We recommend that the GAC continue to be charged with the responsibilities of budget preparation that were formerly assigned to it by G-13.0201(f). While it was obvious that the GAC is continuing with this function, this responsibility needs to be included in the as yet to be released GAC manual of operations.

4. Transactions Involving the GAC and Presbyterian Foundation. The GAC and the Presbyterian Foundation should work together to resolve cash transactions reconciliation and other financial management issues involving both organizations.

5. The GAC and Presbyterian Foundation Coordination. The Review Committee heard that the GAC and the Presbyterian Foundation had worked together in solving some overlapping problems. In light of such positive results, both agencies should continue seeking every opportunity for communication and collaboration, such as providing representation at board meetings, and should continue to work together on matters of mutual interest.

6. Cash Reserves Policy. The GAC should review its cash reserves policy and determine what constitutes a reasonable amount.

7. Compensation Policies and Administration. The GAC should completely implement the revised compensation system or consider revising it so that it is commensurate with financial limitations. The fully implemented system should include either effective merit and promotion compensation administration or controls to ensure fair administration of compensation for all GAC employees.

8. Order Fulfillment. The GAC should explore alternatives, including web-enabled methods, to streamline order fulfillment in a manner that contains or reduces costs.

9. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund. The GAC should review the funds disbursement policy and address administrative issues.

10. Partnership with Middle Governing Bodies. Continue to develop the partnership role of the GAC with middle governing bodies and congregations.

11. Communications Plan. The GAC is on the right track in developing a comprehensive communications plan that establishes a clear "Identity" for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and all of its constituencies and follows with an affirmative "Call" for support in ways that provide people choices to give of their time, talent, and treasure. The GAC recognizes that accomplishing this task will be difficult and will require intense collaborative effort. Because of the importance of this to the church, this undertaking needs to be pursued as expeditiously as possible.

12. Stewardship Development Plan. Stewardship development currently is reactive. The GAC recognizes that the church needs to develop a giving culture that reaches out and cultivates relationships. This will require investment in funds development infrastructure. Moreover, funds development will need to be integrated with a comprehensive communications plan. It is important that funds development initiatives be coordinated and that the risk of potentially counter-productive multiple solicitations be recognized and addressed. The Review Committee encourages the GAC to make the necessary infrastructure investments and to move forward as expeditiously as possible in developing a comprehensive stewardship development plan

that addresses program needs as well as mission giving in collaboration with other church agencies and middle governing bodies.

13. Research Services. In recognition of the influential way in which Research Services serves the church, it should regularly consult with division (the term “ministry” has now replaced the term “division”) leaders concerning the ways in which surveys are prepared and reported to the church.

### Chapter 8—Referrals

The audit for 2005 for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, was not presented to the 217th General Assembly (2006) for approval as it normally would have been due to a delay in the completion of the financial statements as appropriate treatment of certain Presbyterian Foundation versus corporate funds was deliberated. The Presbyterian Foundation is the fiduciary for certain loan funds for which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, provides administration and disbursement services to congregations throughout the country. The delay in completion of the audit occurred while a determination was made about how these loan funds should be reported on each corporation’s financial statements. As a result, the General Assembly requested the Review Committee to review the 2005 audit.

Members of the Review Committee met with representatives of Crowe Chizek and Company (Crowe Chizek), external auditors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation’s, financial statements. Crowe Chizek reported that the issue had been resolved and approximately \$160 million in assets had been removed from the books. These assets reside on the books of the Presbyterian Foundation. Crowe Chizek issued an unqualified audit opinion for the 2005 financial statements. The Review Committee has completed its review of the 2005 financial statements and found all to be in order.

### APPENDIX A—GAC Purpose, Vision, Mission and Core Values

GAC Purpose Statement (Adapted from the *Book of Order*)

The General Assembly Council, led and empowered by the Triune God, provides visionary leadership in the development and implementation of the General Assembly’s mission directives, supports governing bodies in our common mission, and acts on behalf of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on policy matters when the General Assembly is not in session.

GAC Vision Statement (Adapted from the *Organization for Mission*)

The GAC envisions congregations, presbyteries, synods, General Assembly, and ecumenical partners, singly and together, being so inspired and nurtured by the gospel of Jesus Christ that ministries are vibrant and inviting. The GAC prays that all will be drawn irresistibly into ministries reflecting the love and justice of Jesus, with immediate neighborhoods and the whole of the world as arenas in which the gospel is to be proclaimed and lived.

GAC Mission Statement (Adapted from the *Book of Order*)

The mission of the General Assembly Council, with congregations and governing bodies, is to offer the world a visible witness of Jesus Christ through (1) the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; (2) the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; (3) the maintenance of divine worship; (4) the preservation of the truth; (5) the promotion of social righteousness; and (6) the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

GAC Core Values

The General Assembly Council is a community of believers centered in Jesus Christ and grounded in Scripture, prayer, and our confessional heritage. Relying on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, the General Assembly Council is guided by these core values:

Celebration: *Embracing our Reformed tradition through Word and Sacrament.*

Proclamation: *Listening for and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.*

Stewardship: *Giving, working, and living faithfully and responsibly.*

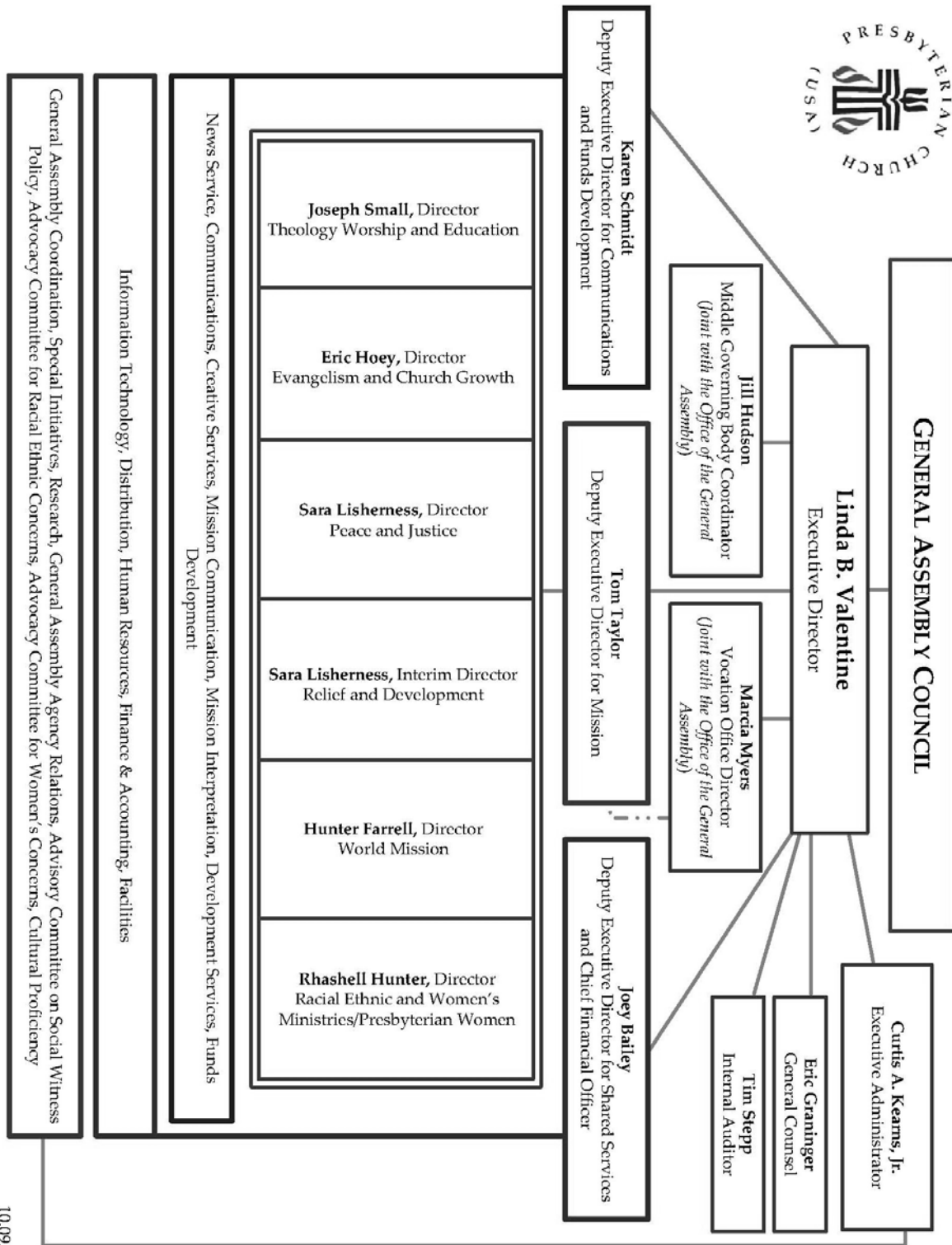
Nurture: *Supporting and caring for each other.*

Trust: *Communicating with integrity.*

Openness: *Living in community with The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and people of the world.*

Vision: *Serving with joy, living in hope, hearing and responding to diverse voices and obeying God’s will.*

APPENDIX B—GAC Organization Structure



10.09.07

## APPENDIX C—Survey Results

A. *Survey Results*

During the spring of 2007, Research Services contributed to a review of the work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) GAC between 2001 and 2006 by surveying eleven different GAC constituencies: congregational leaders, synod and presbytery executives, Christian educators, congregational change activists, committee on preparation for ministry and committee on ministry moderators, international and ecumenical partners, mission activists, Presbyterian Women leaders, racial ethnic caucus participants, youth and young adults, and donors. Response rates ranged from 56 percent for Presbyterian Women leaders to 15 percent for international and ecumenical partners.

Analysis of responses revealed that:

- Two-thirds of synod and presbytery executives (69 percent) said they were *very familiar or familiar* with the GAC. Less than half of respondents from all other constituencies, including a quarter of congregational leaders (24 percent), were familiar with the GAC.
- Regardless of size, leaders of only 10 percent to 20 percent of congregations believed that the GAC was *very effective* or *effective* in serving congregations of their size (100 or fewer members, 8 percent; memberships between 101 and 350, 11 percent; memberships between 351 and 800, 17 percent; more than 800 members, 21 percent).
- More than 40 percent of congregational leaders and synod and presbytery executives said that the GAC was *ineffective* in serving elders on congregational sessions and serving members of congregations.
- Three in five congregations (62 percent) had given money to the GAC or one of its ministries (including Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) between 2001 and 2006. The typical congregation had donated once in 2006 and given \$1,000 in its latest donation. Leaders of seven in eight (86 percent) congregations that had given were *satisfied* with the donation process.
- The typical individual or family that had given money to the GAC or one of its ministries (including Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) between 2001 and 2006 had given \$100 in his or her most recent donation and donated once in 2006. Almost all donors (89 percent) were *satisfied* with the process.
- Less than 5 percent of congregations had applied for any of five different GAC grants, and less than 4 percent had received grants. Leaders of half or more of the congregations that had applied were *satisfied* with the application process, and leaders of three-quarters or more of congregations that had received grants were *satisfied* with that process.
- A third or more of presbyteries had applied for GAC grants between 2001 and 2006, and a quarter or more of all presbyteries had received these grants. Leaders of half of presbyteries that had applied for grants were *satisfied* with the application process. Leaders of at least two-thirds of presbyteries that had received grants were *satisfied* with that process.
- Of eight GAC-produced communications resources, larger proportions of Presbyterian leaders had examined the following four between 2001 and 2006: Presbyterian Planning Calendar, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site, *Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study*, and *Presbyterians Today* magazine. Two-thirds or more of those who had examined these resources rates them as good.
- Asked how the GAC should respond to a shortfall of denominational funds available for its ministries, in most groups two strategies were strongly favored: focusing and improving the quality of its services and communicating to Presbyterians more effectively about its ministries. Four in five synod and presbytery executives (79 percent) also believed that the GAC should sharply reduce the size and scope of its work.
- Half or more of Presbyterian leaders in each constituency believed that the GAC exhibits leadership in support of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Three-quarters of synod and presbytery executives (77 percent) believed this, as did three in five congregational leaders (59 percent).
- Half or more of Presbyterian leaders in each constituency believed that the GAC was faithful to its purpose *to a great extent* or *to some extent*. Nine in ten synod and presbytery executives (93 percent) and two-thirds of congregational leaders (65 percent) believed this.
- At least three in five Presbyterian leaders in each constituency believed that the work of the GAC is *very important* or *important* to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Three in five congregational leaders (64 percent) and synod and presbytery executives (60 percent) believed this.

- In response to an open-ended question, some Presbyterian leaders argued that the GAC is out of touch with presbytery leaders, congregational leaders, and rank-and-file Presbyterians. Also, Presbyterian leaders exhibited confusion about the difference, if any, among the GAC, Office of the General Assembly, elected GAC, and GAC staff.

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### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-D

*Comment on Item 08-D—From the General Assembly Council.*

#### A NEW WAY FOR A NEW DAY General Assembly Council of the PC(USA)

#### COMMENDATION

There are several comments the General Assembly Council (GAC) would like to lift up for the 218th General Assembly (2008) in response to the report from the General Assembly Committee on Review of the GAC. First and foremost the General Assembly Council would like to commend the Committee on Review for its work and concur with the committee's ten overarching recommendations. In fact, the GAC is impressed with how closely the focus and direction of the recommendations correspond to issues the council has identified as on-going concerns.

In its original recommendations to the GA Committee on Review, included at the end of the General Assembly Council's Self-Study, the GAC identifies some of the primary concerns emerging from its organizational redesign. These concerns are reflected in the following plan of action:

1. That the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the General Assembly Council's role and responsibility as the primary coordinator of mission direction and priorities for the General Assembly.
2. That the General Assembly Council continue using the framework of the Mission Work Plan to set objectives, develop action steps, outcomes, and measurements, and to help ensure the success of the strategy, including
  - a. Engaging the larger church in new ways of networking and partnering in mission,
  - b. promoting an understanding of the distinctive role restricted and unrestricted funds play in the General Assembly Council's ability to respond to the church's needs,
  - c. continuing to explore new and more effective methods for funding mission,
  - d. striving to create a stable but flexible work environment for staff,
  - e. developing an evaluation process that will assist in setting measurable outcomes, and facilitate ongoing assessment.
3. That the General Assembly Council emphasize the importance of creating a successful ongoing communication strategy capable of sharing the activities, resources, and concerns of the General Assembly Council and the wider church with the congregations and middle governing bodies of the church.
4. That the General Assembly Council make it a priority to participate in efforts that help to develop effective linkages with the governing bodies of the church.

In many ways this plan of action mirrors the concerns picked up by the Review Committee in its recommendations, namely concerns about evaluation and prioritization, communication and stewardship, trust and credibility. It's also worth noting that the General Assembly Council does not view these as concerns for future emphasis but rather as issues that have been and still are being addressed. Evaluation and prioritization are integral components of the staff's review of 2007–2008 objectives, and the same will be true for the operational goals developed for the 2009–2012 Mission Work Plan. Communication and stewardship have been consistent priorities throughout the restructuring process, and concerns about increased trust and credibility infuse the overall fabric and design of the new mission strategy.

#### A UNIQUE PERIOD IN THE LIFE OF THE COUNCIL

As mentioned in the Review Committee's report, in many ways this review deviates from the norm given the fact that the period it covers has seen monumental changes in the General Assembly Council, its staff, and its ministries. For the last



seven years the General Assembly Council has been very busy improving itself. A quick review of that history provides a sense of just how extensive this process has been.

The seeds for these changes were laid as early as 1999 when the General Assembly instructed the GAC and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to proceed with holding consultations with synods and presbyteries that would examine and encourage relationships. In 2002, indications of seismic changes in the church and the broader society caused the General Assembly Council to launch a Strategic Visioning Process and to engage in a process of “spiritual discernment” actively seeking God’s guidance in shaping General Assembly mission. Isaiah 43:19 tells us that God informs Israel, “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” Surely God is saying the same to the church in this day and time, and the General Assembly Council has been and is making a faithful effort to both perceive and respond in effective ways.

In 2003, the General Assembly Council employed consultants to help gauge its effectiveness in governance. In 2004, the council approved its first Mission Work Plan, effective for 2005 and 2006, employing objectives to establish the focus and direction of its ministries, and setting in motion the most extensive reorganization of the mission agency experienced in many years. In this reorganization, the council moved from a three-division configuration (Congregational, National, and Worldwide) to its new ministries centered structure. The new Mission Work Plan system is now in its third iteration with recommendations for 2009–2012 being sent to the 218th General Assembly (2008) for approval.

The period from 2000 to 2006 was indeed a unique period, a time when the General Assembly Council set its sights on meeting the changing needs of the church and mission. Clearly, this was not change merely for the sake of change but rather the result of an extensive process of discernment, reflection, and just plain hard work, and the council believes its efforts to make its programs more responsive to the needs of a changing church will pay substantial dividends.

#### FIDELITY TO THE MISSION

The primary responsibility of the General Assembly Council is mission and while this process of discernment and study was going forward the council continued to be diligent in the fulfillment of its role. The ministries of the council are many and varied. A quick sampling would include activities as broad and diverse as education, advocacy, network support, resource development, program administration, communication, events planning, publishing, training, institutional support, missionary sending, ecumenical partnerships, ministries of relief and development, matching and placement, and consultative services—just to name a few—and all of these activities continued uninterrupted throughout this period of study, reflection, and reorganization. Indeed, the council is proud of the fact that the integrity and effectiveness of its programs has been maintained. Evidence of its faithfulness along these lines can be seen in the 2007 General Assembly Council Annual Report, a report that highlights the many accomplishments of the council’s ministries.

Ministry is what the council is all about. The General Assembly Committee on Review’s survey seeking input into the church’s perception of the council’s ministries produced mixed results, some uplifting and others identifying opportunities for improvement, but the results clearly attest to the importance of mission and ministry even amidst the changes that characterize these times. The survey observes, “Half or more of respondents in each constituency believed that the General Assembly Council was faithful to its purpose to a great extent or to some extent. Nine in ten synod and presbytery executives (93 percent) and presbytery committee on preparation for ministry and committee on ministry moderators and co-moderators (90 percent) believed the General Assembly Council was faithful to its purpose. Two-thirds of congregational leaders (65 percent) and half of international and ecumenical partners (50 percent) and donors (58 percent) believed the General Assembly Council was faithful to its purpose.”

The survey was also encouraging in its assessment of the council’s role, “At least three in five respondents from each constituency believed that the Council’s work is very important or important to the denomination.” It is reassuring to know that mission is still an important priority to the church and that the council is viewed as having an important role in this crucial area.

## Item 08-Info

### *A. Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel (PCCMP)—Forwarded from the General Assembly Council*

#### 2006–2008 REPORT

The PCCMP has been extraordinarily active in its support of chaplains since the 217th General Assembly (2006). Ever since 9-11, reserves and National Guard have been mobilized in large numbers. That continues today with forty-five reserve

and National Guard chaplains mobilized from 2006 to 2008. To date, all have come home in good shape. We have been in near constant contact with most of them—assisting in their entry in the active military, speaking with their families, churches, and presbyteries, helping explain pension and USERRA rights, providing support when they returned from the military. With many forces deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Djibouti, and the region, the tempo of reserve component utilization may remain high for years. We’ve enjoyed assisting individuals, churches, presbyteries, and General Assembly offices in supporting deployed military members and chaplains. The PC(USA) was especially helpful in posting the names of all of our deployed chaplains for prayer on the PC(USA) Website. We’ve been gratified to see prayers offered, care packages sent, and chaplains “adopted” by churches.

Approximately sixty of our active duty chaplains were deployed into Southwest Asia for actions regarding Iraq and Afghanistan from 2006 to 2008. Many are still deployed. Our military chaplains suffer the same hardships as other military; their ministry is often in harm’s way. We’re glad that only two have earned Purple Hearts and that both are expected to make full recoveries. Some of them are quite exhausted after a war tour; some have symptoms of post-traumatic stress. We seek to be with them and find appropriate support. We held a retreat for chaplains attended by 115 chaplains and family members. We represented the church at retirement ceremonies for eighteen chaplains. We were at funerals for several retired chaplains. We look forward to contacts after chaplains redeploy and are reunited with their families.

The PCCMP has two core functions:

1. The ecclesial duty of endorsement of clergy for service in the military and veteran’s administration (VA) chaplaincies.
2. The pastoral function of supporting those same clergy during their time of service.

Over the past two years, we approved fifteen for military chaplain candidate (seminarian) programs. We endorsed nineteen for the Army, Navy, and Air Force; some are in the reserves while others went immediately to active duty chaplaincy. We endorsed ten for the VA chaplaincy and nine for the Civil Air Patrol (Air Force Auxiliary). Each approval or endorsement requires a collection of application, transcripts, presbytery approval, and letters of reference. After the documents are gathered, we interview the candidates.

Our current data on chaplains by denomination is shown below. We provide endorsement and support to 47 seminarians and 341 clergy. Eighteen of the active duty are female as are two of our VA chaplains. Most of our presbyteries have participants in one or more of the chaplaincy programs.

	<b>Chaplain Candidate</b>	<b>Reserve/ Guard</b>	<b>Active Military</b>	<b>Full-Time VA</b>	<b>Part- Time VA</b>	<b>Civil Air Patrol</b>	<b>Totals</b>
PCUSA	40	121	98	16	41	24	338
Associated Reformed	2	2	11	1		2	18
Cumberland	1	2	8	1	2	4	18
Cumberland in America		1	1				2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>376</b>

\*Of these Reserve/Guard, 22 are currently mobilized

We attended General Assemblies or General Synod for all of our denominations. The chaplain ministry is well received and supported by each denomination. We also participate in the GAC of the PC(USA) without vote because of our covenant relationship. We will host our annual meeting in November 2008.

The ongoing pastoral care for chaplains is an extension of what presbyteries do through committees on ministry. We expect our chaplains to maintain a sound relationship with the PCCMP and their presbytery. We seek to keep a semiannual written contact with each active duty chaplain. We augment that contact with email and telephone. We also make personal contact with each chaplain at least every other year with a visit to their duty station or a meeting at a gathering of chaplains. We also respond very quickly when chaplains and families are in crisis. We work hard to serve chaplains who are changing commands, moving from the USA overseas or the reverse. Quite a few stop by the office in the District of Columbia while in a move or when in Washington for military duty. The PCCMP also hosts an annual retreat for chaplains and families; this facilitates networking and mutual support for our Presbyterian clergy who are often isolated from other Presbyterian contact.

The PCCMP works to interpret its mission and needs to the church. We had good support from *Presbyterians Today*, *Horizons*, and the Presbyterian News Service to explain what chaplains do. We’ve also been published in several seminary publications, the *Outlook*, and the *Layman*. We made visits to eleven seminaries these past two years and to many presbyteries to interpret the chaplain story and PCCMP mission.

The PCCMP also maintains sound working relations with the chiefs of chaplains offices for each branch of the military and the VA. It offers leadership in the Military Chaplain Association, the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) and the Endorsers Council for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC). The NCMAF is the advisory body to the secretary of defense on religion.

Keeping the ministry vital with adequate funding has been difficult. We have redoubled our development efforts, using a part-time development officer and several regional volunteer assistants. We have also found a new fund source in the Combined Federal Campaign. However, the bedrock of our financial health remains with the PC(USA). We are most appreciative of our restored covenant relationship (renewed in 2005) and the inherent financial support of this ministry and function of the church.

Anyone wishing more information can check at our website: [www.pccmp.org](http://www.pccmp.org) or call our office in Washington, D.C., 202-244-4177. We will also gladly mail a DVD showing our chaplains and agency at work with the military; it was featured at the Fall 2007 General Assembly Council meeting.

Yours in Christ's Service,

Edward T. Brogan, Director  
Chaplain, Colonel, USAF (Ret)

Phone (202)244-4177 Fax: (202)237-0983 Web: [www.pccmp.org](http://www.pccmp.org)

## **B. Report of the General Assembly Council on Current Task Forces, Work Groups, and Ad Hoc Committees**

As instructed by the 204th General Assembly (1992), the General Assembly Council presents to the General Assembly annually, the work of all task forces, work groups, ad hoc committees, and similar bodies established by the General Assembly Council, its divisions, or other assembly entities (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, pp. 144, 147, 277–78.)

All ministries and the Executive Director's Office were requested to disclose information on how many task forces, work groups, ad hoc committees, and similar bodies were currently at work in their entity. Of the entities responding, sixty-three such groups are currently operating. Fifty-one of the groups were reported as having ongoing responsibilities. The other twelve groups have set completion dates with a written report expected by the entity, the General Assembly Council, or the General Assembly itself. Whenever it is possible, the General Assembly Council assigns tasks to an existing part of its structure. All persons serving on a board, committee, task force, or work group with an expected life of more than two years are selected through the General Assembly Nominating Committee process.

### *1. Evangelism & Church Growth*

Ongoing responsibilities: Mission Development Resource Committee, Financial Aid for Studies Reading Teams, Presbyterian Student Strategy Team (PSST).

### *2. Peace & Justice*

Ongoing responsibilities: Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI).

### *3. Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women*

Ongoing responsibilities: National Asian Presbyterian Council, National Black Presbyterian Caucus, Native American Consulting Committee, National Hispanic Presbyterian Caucus, National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus, National Cross Caucus, African American Advisory Committee, Hispanic Advisory Committee, Native American Advisory Committee, Advisory Committee on Southeast Asian Ministries, Coordinating Committee on Korean American Presbyteries, National Korean Presbyterian Council, Association of Hispanic Presbyterian Administrators, Native American Task Force on Native American Ministries, Native American Presbyterian Women, Native American Indian Youth Council, Native American Young Adults, National Asian Youth Council, National Cambodian Presbyterian Council, Chinese Presbyterian Council, National Filipino Presbyterian Council, National Taiwanese Presbyterian Council, National Thai Presbyterian Council, National Vietnamese Presbyterian Council, Advisory Committee for Middle Eastern Ministries, Advisory Committee for New Immigrant Groups, Portuguese Language Coordinating Committee, South Asian/Pakistani Advisory Committee, African Immigrant Pastor/Spouse Association, Secondary School Roundtable, Presidents Roundtable, National Hispanic, Latino Presbyterian Men's organization, National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Women's Organization, National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Youth & Young Adult Organization, Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Committee, Coordinating Committee of the National Network of Presbyterian College Women, Coordinating Committee of Racial Ethnic Young Women Together.

4. *Relief & Development*

a. General Assembly Task Force on the Incorporation of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (ends with 219th General Assembly (2010)).

b. Ongoing responsibilities: Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee, U.S. Advisory Committee/Jinishian Memorial Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee, Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, Jarvie Commonweal Service Committee.

5. *Theology Worship & Education*

Ongoing responsibilities: Ghost Ranch Governing Board, Stony Point Center Governing Board, Mountain Retreat Association Board of Trustees of Stock (Montreat), Committee on Theological Education.

6. *World Mission*

No current task forces, work groups, or ad hoc committees.

7. *Vocation*

Ongoing responsibility: Educator Certification Council.

8. *Executive Director's Office*

a. General Assembly Council/Middle Governing Body Meeting Planning Team—September 2008. This is a short-term team that is established each year to plan for one meeting.

## b. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

- (1) Energy Resolution Team—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (2) Pay Equity Resolution Team—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (3) Voting Rights Resolution Team—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (4) Social Creed Resolution Team—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (5) Colombia/Human Rights Work Group—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (6) Nature and Value of Human Life Work Group—report to the 219th General Assembly (2010);
- (7) Comprehensive Serious Mental Illness Task Force—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (8) Homelessness Work Group—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (9) Katrina Work Group—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- (10) Smithfield Work Group—report to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

Ongoing responsibility: Theological Educators for Presbyterian Social Witness (TEPSW)—annual conference with on-going exchange of papers among seminary ethics professors and other ACSWP consultants.

**C. *Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Report of Progress***1. *Introduction*

Out of the various “calls” to mission, justice, equality, affirmation, love, hope, and charity, the partnership of congregations and governing bodies works to achieve the goals of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action.

2. *Our Goals*

As outlined in the Churchwide Plan for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment opportunity, approved by the General Assembly in 1985, the church has accepted the EEO goals of 40 percent women and 20 percent racial ethnic as established by the General Assembly Council.

3. *How the Information Is Reported*

Entities of the General Assembly are reported separately as well as jointly. The following categories are reported:

- General Assembly Council (PC(USA));
- Office of the General Assembly (OGA);
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions (BOP);
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (FDN);
- Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC);
- Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Inc. (PILP);

- synods;
- presbyteries;
- theological institutions;
- conference centers
- Jarvie Commonweal Service
- Hubbard Press

4. *Our Results*

For 2006 and 2007, all reporting entities met the 40 percent goal for women. General Assembly Council, Office of the General Assembly, conference centers, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (FDN), theological institutions, and Jarvie Commonweal Service met the 20 percent goal of racial ethnic persons. Churchwide totals met the 40 percent goal for women and the 20 percent goals for racial ethnic persons.

2007 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total	Grand %
		Male					Female					Male					Female						
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total %		
<b>GAC</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	2	0	2	0%	2	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	0%
	<b>Asian</b>	9	0	9	2%	5	2	7	2%	16	4%	0	0	0	0%	6	1	7	2%	7	2%	23	6%
	<b>African American</b>	6	3	9	2%	22	0	22	5%	31	8%	3	1	4	1%	30	2	32	8%	36	9%	67	17%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	3	0	3	1%	6	0	6	1%	9	2%	1	1	2	0%	10	0	10	2%	12	3%	21	5%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	2	0	2	0%	2	0	2	0%	4	1%	1	0	1	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	0%	5	1%
	<b>White</b>	83	4	87	21%	110	6	116	29%	203	50%	12	1	13	3%	59	13	72	18%	85	21%	288	71%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>29%</b>	
<b>Women</b>					<b>147</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>38%</b>							<b>105</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>30%</b>			<b>276</b>	<b>68%</b>	
<b>OGA</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Asian</b>	1	0	1	1%	2	0	2	3%	3	4%	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	1%	1	1%	4	5%
	<b>African American</b>	0	0	0	0%	5	0	5	7%	5	7%	1	0	1	1%	7	0	7	9%	8	11%	13	17%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	1	0	1	1%	2	0	2	3%	3	4%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	3	4%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	0	1	1%	1	0	1	2%	2	3%	2	3%
	<b>White</b>	8	1	9	12%	21	0	21	28%	30	40%	2	4	6	8%	16	1	17	23%	23	31%	53	71%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29%</b>
	<b>Women</b>					<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40%</b>							<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>35%</b>			<b>56</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>CONFERENCE CENTERS</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	1%	1	1%	1	0	1	1%	0	0	0	0%	1	1%	2	2%
	<b>Asian</b>	0	1	1	1%	1	0	1	1%	2	2%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%
<b>3 reporting</b>	<b>African American</b>	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	1%	1	1%	0	2	2	2%	1	2	3	3%	5	4%	6	5%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	2	0	2	2%	9	2	11	9%	13	11%	8	9	17	15%	18	7	25	21%	42	36%	55	47%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	2%	1	1%	1	1%
	<b>White</b>	5	1	6	5%	10	3	13	11%	19	16%	6	7	13	11%	5	14	19	16%	32	27%	51	44%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>56%</b>
	<b>Women</b>					<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23%</b>							<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>41%</b>			<b>75</b>	<b>64%</b>

08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

<b>SYNODS</b> 9 reporting	Native American	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Asian	1	0	1	1%	1	0	1	1%	2	3%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%
	African American	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	2	0	2	3%	2	3%	2	3%
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	White	15	8	23	31%	16	7	23	31%	46	61%	2	0	2	3%	17	6	23	31%	25	33%	71	95%
Totals	16	8	24	32%	17	7	24	32%	48	64%	2	0	2	3%	19	6	25	33%	27	36%	75	100%	
Total Racial Ethnic	1	0	1	1%	1	0	1	1%	2	3%	0	0	0	0%	2	0	2	3%	2	3%	4	5%	
Women					17	7	24	32%							19	6	25	33%			49	65%	
<b>PRESBYTERIES</b> 99 reporting	Native American	2	0	2	0%	5	1	6	1%	8	1%	1	0	1	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	0%	9	1%
	Asian	7	3	10	1%	1	0	1	0%	11	1%	0	2	2	0%	0	0	0	0%	2	0%	13	2%
	African American	8	2	10	1%	13	6	19	2%	29	4%	1	2	3	0%	16	3	19	2%	22	3%	51	6%
	Hispanic	13	6	19	2%	5	5	10	1%	29	4%	0	1	1	0%	9	6	15	2%	16	2%	45	6%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	1	2	0%	2	0%	2	0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	1	2	4%	2	0%	2	0%
	White	134	86	220	27%	142	115	257	31%	477	58%	22	19	41	5%	96	81	177	22%	218	27%	695	85%
Totals	164	97	261	32%	166	127	293	36%	554	68%	24	24	48	6%	123	92	215	26%	263	32%	817	100%	
Total Racial Ethnic	30	11	41	5%	24	12	36	4%	77	9%	2	5	7	1%	27	11	38	5%	45	6%	122	15%	
Women					166	127	293	36%							123	92	215	26%			508	62%	
<b>THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS</b> 7 reporting	Native American	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Asian	9	0	9	2%	4	0	4	1%	13	3%	0	0	0	0%	0	1	1	0%	1	0%	14	3%
	African American	13	0	13	3%	21	0	21	5%	34	7%	8	2	10	2%	15	2	17	4%	27	6%	61	13%
	Hispanic	9	0	9	2%	4	0	4	1%	13	3%	8	0	8	2%	11	1	12	3%	20	4%	33	7%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	1	0	1	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
	2 or More Races	1	0	1	0%	1	0	1	0%	2	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	0%
	White	112	4	116	26%	104	10	114	25%	230	51%	24	3	27	6%	75	11	86	19%	113	25%	343	76%
Totals	145	4	149	33%	134	10	144	32%	293	65%	40	5	45	10%	101	15	116	26%	161	35%	454	100%	
Total Racial Ethnic	33	0	33	7%	30	0	30	7%	63	14%	16	2	18	4%	26	4	30	7%	48	11%	111	24%	
Women					134	10	144	32%							101	15	116	26%			260	57%	
<b>HUBBARD PRESS</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Asian	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	African American	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	White	3	0	3	18%	0	0	0	0%	3	18%	2	0	2	12%	12	0	12	71%	14	82%	17	100%
Totals	3	0	3	18%	0	0	0	0%	3	18%	2	0	2	12%	12	0	12	71%	14	82%	17	100%	
Total Racial Ethnic	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
Women					0	0	0	0%							12	0	12	71%			12	71%	

08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

<b>PPC</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Asian</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	0	1	3%	0	0	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%
	<b>African American</b>	2	0	2	6%	0	0	0	0%	2	6%	1	0	1	3%	1	0	1	3%	2	6%	4	13%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>White</b>	12	0	12	39%	10	2	12	39%	24	77%	0	0	0	0%	2	0	2	6%	2	6%	26	84%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16%</b>	
<b>Women</b>					<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>39%</b>							<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>			<b>15</b>	<b>48%</b>	
<b>PILP</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Asian</b>	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	7%	1	7%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%
	<b>African American</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>White</b>	4	0	4	29%	3	0	3	21%	7	50%	0	0	0	0%	6	0	6	43%	6	43%	13	93%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>	
<b>Women</b>					<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29%</b>							<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43%</b>			<b>10</b>	<b>71%</b>	
<b>BOP</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	1%	1	1%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
	<b>Asian</b>	5	0	5	3%	3	0	3	2%	8	4%	1	0	1	1%	1	0	1	1%	2	1%	10	5%
	<b>African American</b>	3	0	3	2%	17	0	17	9%	20	11%	4	0	4	2%	23	0	23	12%	27	14%	47	25%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	2	0	2	1%	3	0	3	2%	5	3%	1	0	1	1%	2	0	2	1%	3	2%	8	4%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>White</b>	44	0	44	24%	49	0	49	26%	93	50%	8	0	8	4%	19	1	20	11%	28	15%	121	65%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>35%</b>	
<b>Women</b>					<b>73</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>39%</b>							<b>45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>25%</b>			<b>119</b>	<b>64%</b>	
<b>FOUNDATION</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Asian</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%
	<b>African American</b>	4	0	4	4%	4	0	4	4%	8	8%	0	0	0	0%	10	0	10	10%	10	10%	18	17%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	1	2	2%	2	2%	2	2%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>White</b>	30	1	31	30%	31	1	32	31%	63	61%	3	0	3	3%	11	5	16	16%	19	18%	82	80%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20%</b>	
<b>Women</b>					<b>35</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35%</b>							<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>28%</b>			<b>65</b>	<b>63%</b>	



08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

<b>JARVIE COMMONWEAL SERVICE</b>	<b>Native American</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Asian</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	7%	1	7%	1	7%
	<b>African American</b>	1	0	1	7%	1	0	1	7%	2	14%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	14%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	0	0	0	0%	2	0	2	14%	2	14%	1	0	1	7%	0	0	0	0%	1	7%	3	21%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>White</b>	2	0	2	14%	2	3	5	36%	7	50%	1	0	1	7%	0	0	0	0%	1	7%	8	57%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43%</b>	
<b>Women</b>					<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>57%</b>							<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7%</b>			<b>9</b>	<b>64%</b>	
<b>CHURCHWIDE TOTALS</b>	<b>Native American</b>	2	0	2	0%	9	1	207	9%	12	1%	2	0	2	0%	0	0	0	0%	2	0%	14	1%
	<b>Asian</b>	32	4	36	2%	18	2	20	1%	56	2%	2	2	4	0%	10	2	12	1%	16	1%	72	3%
	<b>African American</b>	37	5	42	2%	84	6	90	4%	132	6%	18	7	25	1%	105	9	114	5%	139	6%	271	12%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	30	6	36	2%	31	7	38	2%	74	3%	19	11	30	1%	51	15	66	3%	96	4%	170	7%
	<b>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</b>	1	0	1	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	1	2	0%	2	0%	3	0%
	<b>2 or More Races</b>	3	0	3	0%	3	0	3	0%	6	0%	2	0	2	0%	3	1	4	0%	6	0%	12	1%
	<b>White</b>	452	105	557	24%	498	147	645	28%	1202	52%	82	34	116	5%	318	132	450	19%	566	25%	1768	77%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>1483</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>2310</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>23%</b>	
<b>Women</b>					<b>643</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>1003</b>	<b>43%</b>							<b>488</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>28%</b>			<b>1651</b>	<b>71%</b>	

**D. Parameters for Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands Gifts—From the General Assembly Council**

The General Assembly Council reports for information, the following resolution establishing parameters for the Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands gifts. The resolution was approved by the General Assembly Council Executive Committee during its conference call meeting of October 29, 2007:

## Resolution

Where the following eight (8) requirements are met, as they may apply to a particular gift, the funds generated will be counted towards the \$40 million funds development goal of the Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands (MIJHH) in support of international mission personnel and church growth:

1. The donor may be an individual member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA)) or an individual not a PC(USA) member. The donor may be a PC(USA) governing body, a PC(USA)-related or supportive agency or corporation, or a non PC(USA) affiliated foundation, corporation, or other entity.
2. The donor will have been informed about MIJHH prior to making the gift and the donor will express in writing an intent that the gift is for MIJHH.
3. The gift may be made in the form of immediately available monies, an irrevocable endowment established and dedicated for the benefit of a MIJHH eligible purpose, or a signed pledge commitment.
4. The gift must be fully paid by December 31, 2012, except in cases of endowments created in accordance with requirement number 3, herein that may extend in perpetuity.
5. The gift may or may not flow to the General Assembly Council (GAC). The gift may remain with other PC(USA) governing bodies. The gift may flow to other PC(USA)-related agencies or church partners. An acceptable irrevocable endowment may be made through the PC(USA) Foundation or other institutions approved by the GAC as to purpose, security and suitability of the investment.
6. The gift must advance either PC(USA) international mission personnel or PC(USA) church growth as those terms are defined below:
  - A. International mission personnel means personnel whose primary work is outside the U.S. and advances the global witness and service of the PC(USA), whether or not the personnel are sent by the GAC. To further clarify the intent of this paragraph:
    - i. International mission personnel may be sent by all PC(USA) governing bodies or other PC(USA)-related agencies. If the personnel are being sent by other than the GAC's World Mission Program Area (World Mission), then the sending entity and World Mission must be in agreement that the proposed position is consistent with and supportive of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s work and witness in the place to which the personnel are being sent and such personnel must attend a World Mission orientation for mission personnel prior to deployment;
    - ii. At the GAC, international mission personnel must be new positions. That is a position that has not existed previously or has not been filled in the past 3–5 year term. A person with missionary experience is not excluded from candidacy;
    - iii. Donors may give for the purposes of PC(USA) international mission personnel generally or for a particular PC(USA) mission personnel position;
    - iv. International mission personnel is also understood to include projects related to a PC(USA) mission personnel position, as described above; and,
    - v. The Agreement between the Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands and the Worldwide Ministries Division (predecessor to the current PC(USA) World Mission area) on funding International Mission Personnel and dated April 27, 2005 is hereby incorporated by reference. In the event any of the provisions of that Agreement should conflict with those otherwise stated herein, the explicit provisions of this Resolution shall apply.

- B. Church growth means providing funding for:
- i. grants for new church development, especially in racial ethnic, Immigrant, and Gen-X new church developments;
  - ii. grants for church redevelopment for existing congregations;
  - iii. grants for racial ethnic and immigrant fellowships;
  - iv. grants for specialized ministries such as day-care centers, youth outreach programs, and parish nurses;
  - v. grants and loans for “bricks-and mortar” projects, including property acquisition, building construction, building repair, and expansion; and,
  - vi. grants and loans for technology upgrades to assist worship;
7. In reporting gifts, the following financial reporting standards shall apply:
- A. Campaign total will consist of:
- i. Face value of outright gifts and pledges from individuals, foundations, or other entities received and payable within the campaign period and post campaign accounting period and no later than December 31, 2012;
  - ii. Face value of outright gifts and pledges from congregations and middle governing bodies received and payable within the national campaign period and post campaign accounting period and no later than December 31, 2012. It is understood that said gifts and pledges may also be counted as commitments and contributions to local fund raising efforts.
- B. To be reported, all pledges shall be in written form with signature by the individual donor, the donor’s legal representative or trustee: All pledges from congregations require written verification by the clerk of session or the stated clerk of the presbytery. The date of recording for financial reporting purposes shall be the date of the vote by the session or the middle governing body, if verification is received within 5 working days past the end of the quarter.
- C. Outright gifts shall be recorded when assets are transferred irrevocably to the PC(USA) or the Presbyterian Foundation. Deferred gifts will be reported only when assets are transferred, or in the case where no assets are transferred, when the donor consummates a legally binding pledge agreement or other irrevocable document with the PC(USA) or the Presbyterian Foundation.
8. If questions arise regarding whether or not the requirements set forth above have been met, a request for clarification will be presented in written form to the full Steering Committee of MIJHH for its review and validation, and the full committee is hereby authorized to determine whether the funds generated are within the campaign or not. Further, upon its review and validation, the Steering Committee of MIJHH shall immediately report such determination to the GAC or if the GAC is not in session, to the GAC Executive Committee.

Further, and recognizing that certain commitments and agreements have been made relative to that certain gift from Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church which does not fall within all the parameters set forth above and while still honoring the commitments and assurances made to previous MIJHH donors, a one-time exception will be made to treat the MAPC as counting toward the goals of MIJHH to the extent that: i. funds generated from its quasi endowment shall be used consistent with Item 6.A.i., above; and, ii. gifts shall be recorded only in an amount equivalent either to a signed pledge to fund such position(s) or in the alternative, in the amount(s) actually received by MIJHH prior to December 31, 2012, as such gifts are received.

#### Background

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a large and diverse church. Its more than 2,000,000 members, governing bodies, and related institutions have a passion for the mission of the church. Since the inception of the MIJHH in 2002, Steering Committee and GAC leadership have witnessed, time and again, the enthusiasm for advancing global mission and domestic church growth. We have also seen donors (individuals and governing bodies) who want to contribute to the MIJHH but want to give gifts at some variance from the original intent of the campaign. These donors embrace the MIJHH; they simply do so in ways somewhat different from the original design. We have listened and learned in this process. The PC(USA) is growing into the 21st century church. The face of the church is changing and, with it, what Presbyterians want to give to and how they want to give. We believe the MIJHH should be agile enough to meet the church where it is right now.

Recognizing this, the Steering Committee of the Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands adopted a resolution on July 16, 2007, and referred it to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly Council (GAC) Executive Committee with the recommendation the Executive Committee adopt the resolution and forward it to the September 2007 meeting of the

GAC for ratification by that body. On July 27, 2007, the Executive Committee adopted the resolution. After further consultation, the Executive Committee adopted a revised resolution on September 18, 2007. The revised resolution was submitted to the GAC for ratification by the council. On September 21, 2007, the GAC voted to refer the resolution to the Executive Committee for further review and deliberation, with pertinent background documentation forwarded to each GAC elected member for their review; requesting that each council member send comments or advice to the GAC chair or Executive Director for consideration by the Executive Committee; and further, that the Executive Committee be authorized to take final action on adoption of the resolution. A telephonic conference meeting of the Executive Committee was held on October 2, 2007. Following discussion and inquiry as to MIJHH's guidelines and actual practices, the Executive Committee decided to appoint a committee to further revise the proposed resolution incorporating ideas and points raised during the telephonic conference meeting. The Executive Committee called a telephonic conference meeting for October 29, 2007, for ratification of the resolution, as further revised. The resolution should be reported as information to the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### ***E. Report of Changes to the Appendixes of the GAC Manual of Operations***

The General Assembly Council Executive Committee reports for information to the 218th General Assembly (2008) changes to the appendixes of the *GAC Manual of Operations* as attached. Following is an overview of such changes:

#### 1. Appendix 1:

a. The original Appendix 1 has been separated in two appendixes—the revised Appendix 1 includes election functions/responsibilities and the new Appendix 2 includes staff functions/responsibilities.

b. II.C. Development of Agenda—The General Assembly Council's Covenant is included under 2.

c. II.D. Closed Meetings—Eliminated Executive and Private Sessions and replaced it with "Closed Meetings." This section includes non-voting members of council in a closed meeting. At-large members of Audit and Stewardship Committees have been included as those who will be present in closed meetings of the General Assembly Council.

d. III.C.1. & 2. Terms of Office—Changed election of GAC chair and vice-chair to biennially and changed the term from one year to two years as provided in the Election Process approved by the council in September 2007.

e. IV. General Assembly Council Committees—This section includes: A. Mission Administration Committees, ie., Executive Committee and Its Subcommittees, Personnel Committee, GAC Nominating Committee, Audit Committee, and B. General Assembly Council Mission Committees, ie, Evangelism; Vocation; Justice; Stewardship; and Discipleship.

f. IV.A.1.d. Responsibilities—Added the following responsibility to the Executive Committee: (19) Provide for regular meetings with Middle Governing Body personnel.

g. IV.A.2. Personnel Committee—Deleted the words, "between mid-term and in-depth performance reviews" and added a reference to Appendix 10.

h. IV.A.3.b. GAC Nominating Committee—Changed terms in the note and in items (3)–(9) and (11) – (13) to be a four-year, non-renewable term. This change was made throughout the rest of the document where this term was stated.

i. V. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation—Added a statement regarding quorum for the meeting of PC(USA), A Corporation (majority).

j. VI.C. Election Procedures—Has been modified to reflect the new procedure approved by the General Assembly Council in September 2007.

k. VI.D. General Assembly Council Members by Election or Appointment—Removed the list of Corresponding Members under number 11. They are listed in the Composition of Council and this is redundant.

#### l. VII. Advisory and Advocacy Committee

(1) Definitions of Advisory Committee and Advocacy Committees have been included here.

(2) Narrative portion before A. In the paragraph that begins with "Whenever the work . . .", the phrase "of the PC(USA) nationally, or internationally" has been inserted following the word "audience."

(3) The paragraph immediately following that begins with “The committees shall ...”, The first sentence has been deleted and words added to the end of the second sentence, “based on the approved policies of the General Assembly.”

(4) Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, I.a., the word “carry-out” has been inserted in this statement so that it reads, “The committee shall be accountable to *carry-out* the process and procedures, . . .”

m. IX. Other General Assembly Related Committees—A list of committees related to the General Assembly Council are included, i.e., Mission Responsibility Through Investment; Mission Development Resources Committee; Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee; Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee, and Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People.

n. X. Temporary Special Committees, Task Forces or Work Groups—This section replaces “Creation of Other Committees.” It includes an expanded list of information needed to create new committees, task forces, or work groups.

o. XI. Covenant Relationships—This section recognizes that the General Assembly Council has connections with various organizations and has established formal linkages. Covenants are in the process of revision and will be available on the GAC website.

#### 2. Appendix 2—General Assembly Council Staff Organization

This appendix is new and it tells how GAC staff is organized in broad terms beginning with Mission Administration and giving brief description for each of the 7 ministries of the General Assembly and General Assembly Support Ministries.

#### 3. Appendix 3—GAC Governance Report

The GAC Governance Structure as approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) is included here.

#### 4. Appendix 7—Awards Policy

This policy has been revised to reflect the new organizational structure and to include “Awards as issues to ponder” form the report of the Awards Task Group to the Executive Committee, September 1999.

#### 5. Appendix 8—Ethics Policy

This replaces the old “Conflict of Interest Policy.”

6. Appendix 9—Procedures to Follow When a General Assembly Council Executive Director or Deputy Director Vacancy Occurs

Changes have been made to this appendix to reflect the new organization structure.

7. Appendix 10—Midterm and Comprehensive End-of-Term Performance Review Process for the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council

This appendix has now been developed to reflect the review processes for only the Executive Director. In the new structure, ministry directors were eliminated.

#### 8. Appendix 12—General Assembly Per Capita Apportionment

Under, Per Capita Budget Funding, General Assembly Council, added “Work of the Advocacy and Advisory Committees”

#### 9. Appendix 13—Policy and Procedures for Submitting Changes to the GAC *Manual of Operations*.

The policy has been revised to reflect the new organizational structure.

#### 10. Appendix 14—GAC Program Evaluation

The need for a program evaluation is recognized. This appendix is simply listed while it is under development.

Some appendixes were removed from the *Manual of Operations*, and they are as follows:

- Old Appendix 2—Process for Action by the General Assembly Council on Matters Related to Work of More Than One Ministries Division or Entity—This appendix is no longer relative due to the new organizational structure.

- Old Appendix 8—Process for the Concurrence in the Election of Officers of Corporations of the Church—This appendix is no longer needed due to the changes approved to the *Book of Order* by the 217th General Assembly (2006). This is no longer a responsibility of the GAC.
- Old Appendix 12—Seeking to Be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement—This policy is printed in several places and will be posted on the GAC Website.
- Old Appendix 15—Validated Mission Support Groups—This was removed from the GAC *Manual of Operations* and will be listed with other covenants on the GAC Website.
- Old Appendix 11—GAC Executive Director’s Process for Review of GAC Programs and Services—This is an outdated policy that was not effective. A new appendix regarding Review of GAC programs may come at a later time.

## General Assembly Council—Manual of Operations Appendix 1

### General Assembly Council Elected Organization

#### I. Responsibilities of Council

General Assembly Council members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for a six-year, non-renewable term (refer to Appendix 3).

The responsibilities of the General Assembly Council are listed primarily in the *Book of Order*, G-13.0201, and the Council is also guided by the *Book of Order*, G-9.000.

#### II. Council Meetings

##### A. Meetings

1. Stated/Regular Meetings — Recommendations regarding the scheduling of meetings of the General Assembly Council (GAC) shall be prepared by the General Assembly Council Executive Committee and brought to the Council for approval.
2. Special/Called Meetings—Upon the written request of at least ten (10) voting members of the Council, the chair shall call a meeting. Written notice of the meeting shall be provided, specifying the subject matter to be considered, to all members of the Council at least fifteen (15) calendar days in advance of the meeting date. All members of the General Assembly Council shall be notified of the resulting decisions as soon as possible after the meeting.

##### B. Quorum

The quorum for all General Assembly Council Meetings and its committees shall be 40% of voting members.

##### C. Development of the Agenda

1. The Executive Director, in conjunction with the GAC Chair, shall develop the agenda for meetings of the Council. Groups who wish to be placed on the agenda may communicate their requests to the General Assembly Council chair (or designee) or the Executive Director (or designee). Any member of the Council may propose an item for consideration prior to Council action to adopt the agenda.
2. Each agenda will include an opportunity for members of the GAC to renew their covenant with the General Assembly Council, stating:

We, the General Assembly Council, called to this ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ, covenant together to:

- Seek God’s will, remaining open to fresh movement of the Holy Spirit, acting boldly and creatively for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in ministry and mission.
- Relate to one another with honesty, trust, respect, openness, and kindness, proclaiming God’s graciousness by risking and daring transformation in our lives and work.
- Be faithful stewards, seeking to make wise decisions in partnership with the greater church, doing our homework, listening to all points of view, working for consensus, and faithfully supporting decisions we have made.
- Worship and pray with joy and appreciation for God’s guidance in doing this work.

##### D. Closed Meetings

Closed meetings shall be held in accordance with the General Assembly Open Meeting Policy (see Appendix 5). In closed meetings, only members of the Council (both voting and non-voting), at-large members of Stewardship Committee, and Audit Committee, and other persons explicitly invited by the Council to serve it, are to be present. The Council may determine, by majority vote, that it wishes to go into a closed meeting. Minutes kept of a closed meeting may be approved only in a closed meeting. All

present in a closed meeting are honor-bound to keep the confidentiality of the discussion of the closed meeting. Ordinarily, when the use of a closed meeting can be anticipated, the GAC chair or Executive Director will provide advance notice to the GAC that a closed meeting is recommended.

*E. Recording Secretary*

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, or designee, shall be the Recording Secretary of the General Assembly Council.

III. Officers of the Council

*A. Chair*

The duties of the chair are to:

1. Preside at meetings of the General Assembly Council.
2. Be a member of and chair the Executive Committee.
3. Guide the Council in fulfilling its responsibilities identified in the *Constitution* and the *Organization for Mission*.
4. Appoint the chair and members of the GAC Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee.
5. Appoint two GAC voting members to the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee, for a four-year, non-renewable term.
6. Request and appoint a parliamentarian from the Office of the General Assembly to advise the chair and upon request of the chair to speak to the body.
7. Make appointments as authorized by the General Assembly Council, with ratification by the Executive Committee.
8. Be an ex-officio member of all Council committees with voice but not vote (except the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee) only during GAC meeting dates.
9. Appoint committees of counsel as necessary. The committees shall have a maximum of three (3) members, but may have fewer as determined by the GAC chair. The Legal Office shall serve as the primary staff support to GAC committees of counsel. (*Book of Order* D-6.0302)

*B. Vice-Chair*

The duties of the vice-chair are to:

1. Assume the responsibilities of the chair when called upon or when the chair becomes vacant.
2. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee.
3. Serve as the chair of the GAC Personnel Committee.
4. Serve as a corresponding member of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

*C. Terms of Office*

1. Chair

The General Assembly Council shall elect its chair biennially from among its voting members. The chair shall be elected at the first General Assembly Council meeting of the calendar year and shall serve as a corresponding member of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee (voice but not vote) until assuming office upon the adjournment of the assembly. The term shall be for two years without renewal. The chair may continue to hold offices requiring election by the GAC, with the exception of chair or vice-chair of any committee or board, if he or she was already serving in such positions upon his or her election. The chair may not be elected to an additional office by the GAC during the term of office, but is eligible to serve in appointed positions and will serve in ex-officio positions as mandated by the *GAC Manual of Operations*.

2. Vice-Chair

The General Assembly Council shall elect its vice-chair biennially from among its voting members. The vice-chair shall be elected at the first General Assembly Council meeting of the calendar year and shall serve as a corresponding member of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee (voice but not vote) until assuming office upon the adjournment of the assembly. The term shall be for two years without renewal. The vice-chair may continue to hold offices requiring election by the GAC, with the exception of chair or vice-chair of any committee or board, if he or she was already serving in such positions upon his or her election. The vice-chair may not be elected to an additional office by the GAC during the term of office, but is eligible to serve in appointed positions and will serve in ex-officio positions as mandated by the *GAC Manual of Operations*.

IV. General Assembly Council Committees

*A. Mission Administration Committees*

1. Executive Committee

The basic operating principle guiding the work of the Executive Committee is that of resourcing and facilitating decision-making by the General Assembly Council.

a. Membership

The Executive Committee shall be composed of members of the General Assembly Council, including the General Assembly Council chair, General Assembly Council vice-chair, chair of each of the Mission Committees, and two voting

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

members elected by the General Assembly Council. (See section VI. Election Procedures, D.2.). The General Assembly Council Executive Director is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee (voice, but without vote). The General Assembly Council Executive Committee shall be chaired by the chair of the General Assembly Council.

### b. Scheduling of Meetings

- (1) *Stated/Regular Meetings* – Recommendations regarding the scheduling of regular meetings of the GAC Executive Committee shall be prepared by the Executive Director in conjunction with the Chair of the General Assembly Council and brought to the Executive Committee for approval.
- (2) *Special/Called Meetings* – Upon the written request of at least three (3) voting members of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee, the chair shall call a meeting. Ordinarily, written notice of the meeting shall be provided specifying the subject matter to be considered in the meeting at least fifteen (15) calendar days in advance of the meeting date. All members of the General Assembly Council shall be notified of the resulting decisions as soon as possible following the meeting.

### c. Quorum

A quorum (40%) must be present to conduct business for the called meeting (See Section II.B.).

### d. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Executive Committee are to:

- (1) Administer and coordinate the work of the Council by:
  - (a) Planning and making arrangements for meetings of the General Assembly Council,
  - (b) Monitoring the budget for the work of the Council,
  - (c) Assisting in the resolution of conflicts that may arise among Mission Committees, other General Assembly Council committees, and work groups.
- (2) Coordinate the work of the Mission Committees and provide for ongoing planning and review.
- (3) Lead the Council to cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church.
- (4) Facilitate effective communication within the Council and implement means of communicating the work of the Council to the church and the world-at-large.
- (5) Appoint General Assembly Council voting members, which may include an at-large member of the Stewardship Committee, to serve at a called meeting of a Joint Budget Table for resolution of unresolved per capita budget matters. (See Appendix 12.)
- (6) Review and act upon all requests to celebrate Communion.
- (7) Ratify appointments made by the chair as authorized by the General Assembly Council; background information shall be provided.
- (8) Act on behalf of the Council on those matters that require immediate action between meetings of the Council.
- (9) Report at each meeting of the Council on all its work, which is subject to review of the Council, giving reasons for action.
- (10) Recommend action by the General Assembly Council with data for informed decision-making.
- (11) Provide the Council with an annual report of its “Ethics Policy” and interpretation as necessary. (See Appendix 8.)
- (12) Nominate voting members for the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee for election by the General Assembly Council at its fall meeting. (See Section VI.B.2.)
- (13) Recommend biennially to Council the corresponding members to General Assembly.
- (14) Act as publisher of publications produced by the General Assembly Council’s Office of Communication.
- (15) Meet with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly at least biennially regarding mutual concerns, issues, and input to the deliberative process. (See Appendix 11 for Guidelines.)
- (16) Coordinate the plan for General Assembly Council resourcing at the General Assembly.
- (17) Serve as the GAC Personnel Committee.
- (18) Develop a process for orientation of new Council members.
- (19) Provide for regular meetings with Middle Governing Body personnel.

### e. Subcommittees of the Executive Committee

#### (1) Procedures Subcommittee

##### (a) Membership:

The Procedures Subcommittee shall consist of two voting members of the Executive Committee, one of whom shall be chair, and three voting members of the council not presently serving on the Executive Committee; to be appointed annually by the council chair.

##### (b) Function:

Review and report to the GAC Executive Committee on GAC materials and other agency reports being forwarded to the General Assembly. Review and report to the GAC Executive Committee on the GAC *Manual of Operations, Organization for Mission*, Mission Ministries, Communications and Funds Development Min-



istry, Shared Services Ministry, Audit, Advocacy and Advisory Committees' manuals of operations for consistency with the GAC *Manual of Operations* and relevance within the current context.

(c) Responsibilities

Work of the subcommittee shall include but not necessarily be limited to:

- i Review of reports to General Assembly prepared by General Assembly Council in the course of its regular work.
- ii Review of reports to General Assembly prepared by another General Assembly entity, task force or committee requiring joint action, concurrence, and/or comment by General Assembly Council. Such review shall ordinarily be in consultation with the appropriate Offices of the General Assembly Council.
- iii Recommend as needed, revisions and amendments to the *Organization for Mission*, and *General Assembly Council Manual of Operations*.
- iv Review the minutes of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns annually for consistency with established guidelines and report findings to the Advocacy Committees and the GAC Executive Committee.

(2) Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee

(a) Membership:

The General Assembly Council Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee shall be composed of four (4) voting members of the General Assembly Council and one co-opted member with special expertise, representing a presbytery or congregation. The council chair shall annually appoint a GAC voting member of the committee as chair of the committee. Membership will be determined in the following ways:

- i The four voting members of the General Assembly Council shall be appointed by the council chair and ratified by the General Assembly Council Executive Committee. The four members shall be arranged in classes representing two-year terms and eligible for a second term, so long as such person continues to serve as a member of the General Assembly Council.
- ii The co-opted member representing a presbytery or congregation shall be appointed by the council chair and ratified by the General Assembly Council Executive Committee. This member will serve a two-year term, be eligible for a second term, and may be a General Assembly Council voting member.
- iii All members shall have voice and vote.

(b) Function:

The Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee provides oversight and guidance of the process by which governing bodies and General Assembly entities apply for the use of General Assembly Restricted Funds (See generally *General Assembly Minutes*, 1997, Part I, pp. 218–222.). The Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee reviews the applications, and makes funding recommendations to the General Assembly Council through the General Assembly Council Executive Committee.

(c) Meetings:

The Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee meets immediately before the Fall GAC meeting. Additional conference call meetings may be needed.

(d) Responsibilities:

- i Recommend policies and procedures for the process by which governing bodies and General Assembly entities apply for the use of General Assembly Restricted Funds.
- ii Provide oversight and guidance for the General Assembly Council staff with respect to the application process.
- iii Review the applications received and make funding recommendations to the General Assembly Council, through the General Assembly Council Executive Committee, taking into consideration the recommendations from any consultation among the applicants.

2. *Personnel Committee*

a. Membership:

- (1) The members of the GAC Executive Committee shall serve as the Personnel Committee.
- (2) The Executive Director of the Council shall be a corresponding member of the committee, with voice but without vote.

b. Functions:

- (1) Advise and counsel the Executive Director in his or her responsibilities in “supporting the organizational health of the Council, the Ministries, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (*Organization for Mission*, V.G.1.b.), as well as in his or her responsibility of supervising the staff of the General Assembly Council.
- (2) Conduct an annual performance review of the Executive Director. (See Appendix 10)
- (3) Conduct an exit interview of the Executive Director when needed (See Appendices 9 and 10)
- (4) Implement procedures to follow when a General Assembly Council Executive Director vacancy occurs. (See Appendix 9)

- (5) Develop, implement, and oversee the compensation policy. Implement and monitor the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA).
- (6) Recommend for General Assembly Council action:
  - (a) Personnel policies and procedures for the General Assembly Council staff.
  - (b) Revisions to the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative action.
  - (c) Compensation guidelines within which salaries are administered.
  - (d) Salary adjustments for the Executive Director.
  - (e) Other appropriate actions.

3. *General Assembly Council Nominating Committee*

a. Membership:

Membership of the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee shall consist of five voting members of the General Assembly Council arranged in classes for one two-year term, including one man, one woman, and one racial ethnic person. Each member shall have at least one year of experience on General Assembly Council before he or she serves on the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee.

b. Responsibilities:

*(Note: When no current member of the General Assembly Council has the gifts or abilities required to serve on particular boards or entities that require GAC representation, the GAC Nominating Committee may select nominees from past GAC members. Ordinarily the term is for four years, non-renewable.)*

- (1) Nominate GAC voting members, for election by the General Assembly Council, to a two-year term on the Mission Committees, with eligibility for two additional terms. Those so elected shall assume their responsibilities at the fall meeting. (See Section VI. D., 1.)
- (2) Nominate two GAC voting members, for election by the General Assembly Council, to one-year at-large terms on the Executive Committee. Those so elected shall begin their service at the end of the General Assembly, or in non-Assembly years, with the Executive Committee Retreat. (See Section VI. D.2.)
- (3) Nominate three GAC voting members, for election by the General Assembly, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. Those so elected shall assume their responsibilities at the end of the General Assembly. (See Section VI. D.3.)
- (4) Nominate one GAC voting member for election by the General Assembly Council to a four-year non-renewable term on the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns. (See Section VI. D. 4.)
- (5) Nominate one GAC voting member for election by the General Assembly Council to a four-year, non-renewable term on the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns. (See Section VI. D. 4.)
- (6) Nominate one GAC voting member from the Stewardship Committee for election by the General Assembly Council, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.
- (7) Nominate one GAC voting member from the Discipleship Mission Committee for election by the General Assembly Council to a four-year non-renewable term as a corresponding member of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.
- (8) Nominate one GAC voting member from the Stewardship Committee, and one GAC voting member from the Evangelism Mission Committee, for election by the General Assembly Council, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.'s Board of Directors, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.
- (9) Nominate one GAC voting member from the Stewardship Committee, for election by the General Assembly Council, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions.
- (10) Nominate one GAC voting member, for election by the General Assembly Council, to any selection committee for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions' President. (*Organization for Mission*, Appendix D, Section 7).
- (11) Nominate one GAC voting member, for election by the General Assembly Council, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel.
- (12) Nominate two GAC voting members, with election by the General Assembly Council, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Committee on Theological Education.
- (13) Nominate one GAC voting member for appointment by the General Assembly Council to a four-year non-renewable term on the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.
- (14) Nominate four members, at least one of whom shall be a current GAC voting member, to a three-year term with eligibility for one additional term to Board of Directors of the Mountain Retreat Association, Inc., for approval by the General Assembly.
- (15) Nominate one GAC voting member to the Stony Point Conference Center Board of Directors, and one GAC voting member to Ghost Ranch Conference Center Board of Directors to a four-year non-renewable term, for election by the General Assembly Council.
- (16) Prepare and distribute nominees' biographical information.
- (17) Nominate for other positions as requested by the General Assembly Council.
- (18) Work in consultation with the Committee on Representation to provide for inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church. (*Book of Order*, G-9.0105b.)
- (19) Coordinate the nomination and election process for chair and vice-chair.

4. *Audit Committee*

a. Purpose:

The primary function of the Audit Committee is to assist the General Assembly Council (GAC) in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities and duties as follows:

- (1) Monitor the integrity of the financial reporting process and system of Internal Control regarding finance, accounting, legal compliance and ethics that have been established.
- (2) Monitor the independence and performance of the Corporation's external auditors, internal auditing unit and management.
- (3) Provide an avenue of communication among the external auditor, internal auditing unit, management and the GAC.

The Committee has the authority to conduct any investigation appropriate to fulfilling its responsibilities, and in this regard, it has direct access to the external auditors as well as anyone in the organization.

b. Composition and Membership

The Committee is composed of six (6) voting members:

- Three (3) are GAC voting members.
- One (1) member is appointed by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).
- Two (2) are at-large members nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) for special expertise and elected by the General Assembly.

Each member of the Committee shall be independent and may not accept directly or indirectly any consulting, advisory, or other compensatory fee from either the GAC or Office of the General Assembly (OGA). All members of the Committee shall have a working familiarity with basic finance and accounting practices and the two at-large members of the Committee shall have accounting or related financial management expertise determined by the Stewardship Committee and the Audit Committee Chairs.

The Committee will meet in conjunction with the scheduled GAC meetings or more frequently as circumstances may require. The Committee meets annually, usually in April, to review the audited financial statements. Also, if the Committee Chair is not designated or present, the members of the Committee may designate a Chair by majority vote of the Committee membership (50% of the members present shall constitute a quorum).

The Committee may ask members of management or others to attend the meetings and provide pertinent information as necessary. The Committee shall meet periodically with management, the external auditors and Internal Audit in separate executive sessions.

c. Duties and Responsibilities

The Committee is to assist the GAC in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities by reviewing and reporting on:

The system of internal controls over financial reporting,  
The integrity of the financial statements,  
Processes to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and  
Ethics Policy violation reports

The Committee will provide input regarding the Internal Audit function. This input may include the qualifications, independence, performance and compensation of the Internal Audit staff.

The Committee will pre-approve all auditing services and be directly responsible for the appointment, compensation, retention, dismissal and oversight of the work of any external auditing firm engaged. The Committee will resolve any disagreements between management and the auditor regarding financial reporting.

The Committee shall be provided appropriate funding for payment of compensation to the external auditors and ordinary administrative expenses of the Committee. The Committee will carry out the following specific duties and responsibilities:

(1) Internal Control

- (a.) Review with management, internal auditors and external auditors the adequacy and effectiveness of policies for assessing and managing risk.
- (b.) Examine any findings of weaknesses and recommendations for the improvement of the internal controls. Monitor management's response to and implementation of internal control recommendations.

- (c.) Review with management, internal auditors and external auditors the adequacy of computerized systems controls, the security of such, and the contingency plan for processing financial information in the event of a system breakdown.

## (2) Financial Reporting

Review with management, the internal auditors and the external auditors:

- (a.) The interim and year-end financial statements and related footnotes considering their completeness, consistency, and reflection of appropriate accounting principles.
- (b.) The external auditors' audit of the financial statements and their report thereon.
- (c.) Any significant changes in accounting principles, significant judgment areas and significant or complex transactions (including any off-balance sheet structures) that occurred and the external auditors' judgments about the quality, not just the acceptability, of the accounting principles as applied in financial reporting.
- (d.) Management's handling of proposed audit adjustments identified by the external auditors.
- (e.) Any significant changes required in the external auditors audit plan.
- (f.) All written communications between the external auditors and management, such as any management letters or schedule of unadjusted differences.
- (g.) Any serious difficulties or disputes between management and the external auditors.
- (h.) All matters required to be communicated to the Committee under generally accepted auditing standards (SAS-61).

## (3) External Auditors

- (a.) Serve as the authority to which the external auditors report.
- (b.) Appoint the external auditors to be engaged, establish the audit fees of the external auditors, pre-approve any non-audit services provided by the external auditors.
- (c.) Review the latest internal quality-control or peer review of the external auditors' firm, any material issues raised, and the steps taken to resolve such.
- (d.) Review, at least annually, all relationships between external auditors and GAC/COGA and otherwise assess the independence of the external auditors and the turnover rates of the lead and concurring partners.
- (e.) Review and evaluate the performance of the external auditors and review with the GAC any proposed replacement of the external auditors.

## (4) Internal Auditors

- (a.) Review the objectivity, effectiveness, budget and staffing of the Internal Audit Department.
- (b.) Receive information from the GAC Executive Director regarding the appointment, replacement, reassignment or dismissal of the Associate Director of Internal Audit.
- (c.) Review the Internal Audit Plan for the current year, the risk assessment procedures used to identify projects included in the plan and any changes required in its scope.
- (d.) Review the Internal Audit Policy and compliance with the Institute of Internal Auditors' (IIA) Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.
- (e.) Review with management and the internal auditors:
  - i Significant findings on internal audits during the year and management's responses thereto.
  - ii Any difficulties the internal auditors have encountered in the course of their audits, including any restrictions on the scope of their work or access to required information.
  - iii Any changes required in the scope of their internal audits.

## (5) Ethics Policy Violation Reports

- (a.) The Audit Committee has duties under the "Ethics Policy for COGA and GAC Elected and Appointed Members." It also has duties under the "Ethics Policy for General Assembly Council and Office of the General Assembly Employees". These policies are attached as Appendix 8 and can be viewed at (<http://www.pcusa.org/gac/ethics.htm>)
- (b.) The Audit Committee will fulfill its duties as set out in those Ethics Policies.

## (6) General

- (a.) Review the Committee's charter annually, reassess the adequacy of this charter and, considering any new laws or regulations, recommend any proposed changes to the GAC.
- (b.) Ensure that the Ethics Policies are formalized in writing, adequate and up-to-date. Review with legal counsel and the Associate Director of Internal Audit the processes for communicating the importance of the Ethics Policies, monitoring compliance therewith and any changes to or waivers of the Ethics Policies.
- (c.) Request the external auditors provide information on any legal and regulatory matters that may have an internal impact on the financial statements and the related compliance policies and procedures.
- (d.) Institute and oversee special investigations as needed.
- (e.) Perform other activities related to this charter as requested by the GAC.
- (f.) Confirm annually that all responsibilities outlined in this charter have been carried out.

(g.) Evaluate the performance of the Committee and its individual members on a regular basis.

B. *General Assembly Council Mission Committees*

*This section reflects the current Mission Work Plan*

1. *Evangelism*

- a. **Membership**  
Seven General Assembly Council voting members and one Ecumenical Advisory member.
- b. **Purpose**  
We are called to invite all people to faith, repentance, and the abundant life of God in Jesus Christ, to encourage congregations in joyfully sharing the Gospel, and through the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in membership and discipleship.

2. *Vocation*

- a. **Membership**  
Seven General Assembly Council voting members.
- b. We are called to lead by Jesus Christ's example, to identify spiritual gifts, and to equip and support people for faithful and effective servant leadership in all parts of the body of Christ.

3. *Justice*

- a. **Membership**  
Seven General Assembly Council voting members and one Ecumenical Advisory Member.
- b. **Purpose**  
We are called to address wrongs in every aspect of life and the whole of creation, intentionally working with and on behalf of poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people as did Jesus Christ, even at risk to our corporate and personal lives.

4. *Stewardship*

- a. **Membership**  
Eight General Assembly Council voting members and two at-large members.
- b. **Purpose**  
We are called to support the mission and ministry of the mission committees through the application of broad-based services necessary to enable, equip, account and serve. We are the committee designated for Corporate, property, and legal matters for the PC(USA).

5. *Discipleship*

- a. **Membership**  
Seven General Assembly Council voting members.
- b. **Purpose**  
We are called to deeper discipleship through scripture, worship, prayer, study, stewardship and service, and to rely on the Holy Spirit to mold our lives more and more into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

V. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation*

By corporate action of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Council is also the Executive Committee of the Corporation (GAC, September 1997). A quorum of a majority of voting members is required to conduct business.

By corporate action of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, the Stewardship Committee, or its successor, is also the Property, Legal, and Finance Committee of the Corporation (Corporate Minutes, September 26, 1998). International property matters requiring approval by the PCUSA Board of Directors are referred to the board via action of the Evangelism Committee, or its successor. (Corporate Minutes, March 16, 2007).

VI. *Election Procedures (Approved by GAC September 2007)*

*A. Election Procedures for General Assembly Council Chair and Vice-Chair (See Section III. Officers of the Council, C. Terms of Office, C., 1., 2.)*

- 1. Only General Assembly Council voting members who have served at least two years on Council before taking office are eligible for election as chair or vice-chair.

2. The General Assembly Council Nominating Committee will use a nominating process approved by the General Assembly Council, as follows:
  - a. The General Assembly Council Nominating Committee (GACNC) will compile a list of gifts, abilities, and skills that they believe will be needed by the Council leadership during the ensuing biennial period. It will also draft two or three questions to be answered by potential candidates for Council leadership. The questions will address the anticipated key challenges facing the Council during the ensuing biennial period.
  - b. Staff to the GACNC will identify all Council members eligible for election to Council leadership and prepare for each of them a resume form that includes the person's personal information from the GAC biography form, a summary of their Council experience, and the questions drafted by the GACNC. The letter will:
    - Inform the Council member of his or her eligibility for Council leadership.
    - Ask if the Council member feels called to be considered for nomination to a Council leadership position.
    - If the response is affirmative, request that he or she verify the resume form information and answer the leadership questions, and
    - Ask that the completed form be returned to GACNC staff.
  - c. The GACNC will review all the submitted forms and will also go through a discernment process as to whether or not eligible Council members who have not submitted forms have leadership gifts that justify an invitation to consider a call to candidacy for Council leadership. If so, the GACNC will extend the invitation to submit a completed resume form and answers to the leadership questions.
  - d. The GACNC will evaluate the final list of Council leadership candidates who have submitted resume forms and completed the questions to identify a candidate who it wishes to nominate for GAC chair and a candidate it wishes to nominate for GAC vice-chair for the ensuing biennial period. The GACNC chair will notify the selected candidates that they are the GACNC's nominees for the appropriate GAC leadership positions.
  - e. The names of the nominees, along with their resumes and their responses to the questions, will be communicated to all Council members a minimum of three weeks prior to the winter/spring Council meeting.
  - f. The Council leadership election will be conducted during the winter/spring Council meeting. The Council vice-chair election will be held following the election of the Council chair. Nominations from the floor will be accepted for both elections. The elections will be by written ballot.
  - g. The two-year term of office will begin with the close of the upcoming General Assembly meeting and end with the close of the next General Assembly meeting.
3. In the event of vacancy during the term of the chair, the vice-chair assumes the chair. The General Assembly Council Executive Committee is empowered to appoint an interim vice-chair upon nominations by the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee. Election to the position shall occur at the next full meeting of the Council.

*B. Election Procedures for General Assembly Council Nominating Committee Members*

1. Each member shall be elected for a term of two years. (Also see Section IV.A.3.a)
2. The General Assembly Council Executive Committee shall nominate members of the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee for election by the General Assembly Council. (See Section IV.A.d.12.)
3. No person shall be eligible for reelection to the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee.
4. General Assembly Council Nominating Committee members shall elect their own chair.
5. Members of the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee are eligible to serve on other committees.

*C. Election Procedures for Chairs of the Mission Committees, and Audit Committee*

1. The committees shall nominate and elect their chairs, and may elect a vice-chair, during the first General Assembly Council meeting in the calendar year and notify the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee.
2. The chairs shall begin their service at the end of the General Assembly, or in non-Assembly years, with the Executive Committee Retreat.
3. Committee chairs shall be elected for a one-year term, renewable for one additional term.
4. Council voting members completing at least two consecutive years on a committee are eligible for election as committee chair.
5. Ordinarily, committee chairs shall make appointments and assignments of committee members to work groups, task forces, and other subcommittees as necessary, giving consideration to experience, interest, and representation.

*D. General Assembly Council Members Assignment by Election or Appointment*

1. General Assembly Council members shall be elected to the Mission Committees and Audit Committee for a two-year term, eligible for two additional terms. [Refer to IV.A.3.b. (1)]
2. At-large members of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee shall be elected for a one-year term during the first General Assembly Council meeting in the calendar year. In even-numbered years, at-large members will begin their service at the end of the General Assembly, or in non-Assembly years, with the Executive Committee Retreat. Ordinarily,

these at-large members shall serve no more than three years as at-large members. An annual election provides for continuity, balance, and fair representation. [See Section IV. A.3. b.(2)]

3. The three General Assembly Council members of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy shall be elected for a four-year non-renewable term. The names shall be submitted by the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee for concurrence by the General Assembly Council, placed in nomination by the General Assembly Nominating Committee, and elected by the General Assembly. [See Section IV.A.3.b.(3)]
4. General Assembly Council members shall be elected to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns for a four-year non-renewable term [See Section V.A.3.b.(4), (5)]
5. The two at-large members of the Stewardship Committee, selected for their special expertise, shall be nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for a two-year term, eligible for two additional terms. (See Section VI.H.a.)
6. The two at-large members of the Audit Committee, selected for their special expertise, shall be nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for a two-year term, eligible for two additional terms. (See Section VI.H.b.)
7. General Assembly Council representatives to related corporations shall be elected for designated terms.
8. Election by the General Assembly Council shall take place at the first General Assembly Council meeting following General Assembly unless otherwise specified by the General Assembly Council *Manual of Operations*.
9. The General Assembly Council Nominating Committee shall consult with members, prior to nomination, in the following ways:
  - a. All new members of the General Assembly Council shall be requested to list in writing all appropriate committees in order of preference for service. The General Assembly Council Nominating Committee shall consider the preference ranking and committee needs in preparing nominations, with the understanding that a person must serve one year on the General Assembly Council before being elected to serve on the General Assembly Council Executive Committee or the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee. Nominations shall be made without further consultation.
  - b. All members, after completing a three-year term as a committee member, shall list in writing all appropriate committee choices in order of preference for service. In preparing nominations, the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee shall consider the preference ranking and the committee needs when the continuing member is assigned to a new committee.
10. Ecumenical advisory members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee for election by the General Assembly for a two-year term with eligibility for two additional terms on the General Assembly Council. One ecumenical advisory member shall serve on the Justice Mission Committee and one shall serve on the Evangelism Mission Committee, with voice and vote in committee. Ecumenical advisory members to the General Assembly Council shall not be elected to the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Council.
11. Corresponding members are not assigned to a committee and may attend any committee meeting that is conducting business of interest to them. Corresponding members of the General Assembly Council have voice but not vote in General Assembly Council and committee.

#### E. Absences

Ordinarily, two absences from regular meetings of the General Assembly Council and/or its related board or committees without prior notification shall be a basis for the Council chair to recommend to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly that the position be declared vacant.

#### F. Resignation

A member of a General Assembly entity who finds it necessary to resign shall send his or her resignation to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, who shall notify the entity and the nominating committee or other body that originated the person's nomination or election. When any member of an entity of the General Assembly (Council, commission, unit, division, committee, task force, or any other body) shall resign or becomes unable to serve because of chronic or permanent physical or mental illness or disability, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall declare the position vacant. (*Organization for Mission*, IV., B.2.0.)

Additionally, any GAC member resigning shall send a copy of the resignation to the Council chair, Executive Director, and chair of his or her assigned Mission Committee.

#### G. General Assembly Nominations

1. *In keeping with the action of the 208th General Assembly (1996), (Recommendation G, Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 201), the General Assembly Council shall:*
  - a. make use of the General Assembly Nominating Committee whenever possible;
  - b. report annually to the General Assembly Nominating Committee records of attendance and participation of General Assembly Council members;
  - c. work through the General Assembly process in selecting persons to serve on boards, committees, task forces, work groups, and initiative teams to . . . "ensure fair and open access from all areas of our denomination and to ensure a valid and enriching diversity within all working groups" . . . (Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 201, para. 15.113). This procedure applies to all working groups with a life span of more than two years.

- H. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will nominate persons for election by the General Assembly to serve in the following at-large positions on GAC committees:

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- a. Two at-large members of the Stewardship Committee are nominated for a two-year term, eligible for two additional terms, with voice and vote in committee. The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall consult with the Stewardship Committee for expertise needed on the committee.
- b. Two at-large members of the Audit Committee are nominated for a two-year term, eligible for two additional terms, with voice and vote in committee. The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall consult with the Audit Committee for expertise needed on the committee.

### VII. General Assembly Advisory and Advocacy Committees

The 205th General Assembly (1993) approved the creation of one advisory committee and two advocacy committees. They are:

- Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy
- Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns
- Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns

An advisory committee is related to an entity or agency of the General Assembly that is formed for the purpose of providing advice, recommendations, resources, information, or counsel to its parent body.

An advocacy committee is related to an entity or agency of the General Assembly that is formed for the purpose of providing resources and support for a stated cause, constituency, policy, or defined interest through recommendations, advice, counsel, and efforts that endorse, define, or encourage. The committee reports regularly to its parent body and constituency.

The above named committees shall have members as detailed below; elected for a four-year term with a maximum of eight years. For those who continue from the similar committees, continuous service is counted.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall nominate the members, for election by the General Assembly, and shall monitor the rotation of committee members among the synods.

The chairs of the advisory committee and advocacy committees shall be elected in the same manner as the chairs of the GAC Mission Committees, i.e., elected by the members of the respective committees.

The funding for the meetings of these committees comes from the per capita budget and is the responsibility of the General Assembly Council.

Whenever the work of the committee takes the members beyond the audience of the PC(USA), nationally or internationally, there shall be intensive pre-trip briefing which shall include current church policy, political situations and possible conflicting ideologies and shall include training on dealing with people of differing cultures, faith and backgrounds. When statements to the media are necessary they shall ordinarily be made by the chair of the committee, based on the approved policies of the General Assembly.

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be accountable to the Office of the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, through the Executive Administrator, in consultation with the appropriate Advisory or Advocacy Committee.

#### A. *Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

This advisory committee shall consist of three General Assembly Council members and nine at-large members selected for special expertise and geographical diversity.

##### 1. Accountability

- a. The committee shall be accountable to carry out the processes and procedures, and for the identification of financial implications, generally required by all entities for presentation of material to the General Assembly. However, it is understood that the nature of the committee's work occasionally may create difficulties for all concerned in these areas.
- b. The committee shall be accountable for the content of its work to the General Assembly in accordance with the *Manual of the General Assembly*, pg. 77, *Forming Social Policy*, 2.a.: "The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy will be responsible for the process of developing and recommending social witness policy to the General Assembly. If any other entity is involved in processes of developing and recommending social witness policy, then appropriate consultation and linkage with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy shall be undertaken."
- c. Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be accountable to the Office of the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council through the Executive Administrator, in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.
- d. During the employee review process of the Coordinator, input will be requested from the Committee.

##### 2. Search Procedures

- a. When the coordinator position becomes vacant, a search committee of seven members shall be appointed by the Executive Director, with membership as follows:
  - (1) In consultation with the chair of ACSWP, three shall be appointed from the Committee, one of whom shall be the chair of the Search Committee.
  - (2) In consultation with the chair of the GAC, three shall be appointed from the elected members of the Council.
  - (3) The Executive Administrator shall provide staff services to the Search Committee and shall have voice but not vote.



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- (4) The chair of the Search Committee shall communicate the Search Committee's recommendation to the Executive Director.
- b. The GAC Executive Director shall appoint and have supervision of the coordinator for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.
- c. The search and appointment shall be guided by, and in accordance with, the *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly Council Employee Handbook*.

### 3. Budget

The budget shall be displayed in the Office of the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with the Executive Director signing off on matters requiring the signature of a Deputy Executive Director.

### 4. Staff Relationships

The Social Witness Policy Office and the Committee relate most closely to the Peace and Justice Ministry Area in order to be a regular part of information channels, staff meetings, teams and discussions, and for linkages to the two advocacy committees. Relationships with other ministries shall be developed through staff participation in 'staff week' meetings, staff teams and consultative processes.

### 5. Access

Access to the General Assembly Council Executive Leadership Team for planning and consultation shall be on invitation of the Executive Director or at the request of the coordinator for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. At least annually, there will be a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and representatives of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee for strategic reflection and anticipation regarding social witness policy concerns.

The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the General Assembly Council.

### 6. Liaisons

A staff person shall be named from the Peace and Justice Ministry as liaison to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

### 7. Relation to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council

Access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, social involvement reports, Advice and Counsel Memoranda, a yearly narrative report, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and Counsel Memoranda are to be developed cooperatively with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns as appropriate.

### 8. Assigned Functions

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions study papers, social involvement reports, or Advice and Counsel Memoranda on the church's social witness for study and recommendation to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative; seek concurrence of the council relative to financial implications on plans for studies.
- b. Advise General Assembly Council on matters of social witness policy or strategy, including interim statements concerning pressing social issues, that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly. Facilitate two-way communication with all parties throughout policy development and advisory processes.
- c. Prepare special studies at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or its Ministries on matters of social witness.
- d. Work cooperatively with the Ministries and all governing bodies in coordinating the interdependent process of social policy formation, implementation, and monitoring.
- e. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its representative committees on overtures, commissioner resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that recommend policy direction or action on social witness.
- f. Maintain an up-to-date and accurate Social Policy Compilation of General Assembly social witness policy and provide information to the church as requested.
- g. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret the social witness policies of the General Assembly.
- h. Identify facets of the church's social witness that enable or obstruct effective action. Analyze, in cooperation with the General Assembly Ministries, the effectiveness of social witness in governing bodies, institutions, and the General Assembly Council. After consulting entities that have primary ministry responsibility and the General Assembly Council, report to the General Assembly on the advisory committee's findings, together with recommendations for improving social witness.
- i. Report directly to the General Assembly because of the need to maintain and advance a prophetic witness of the church.

*B. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

This advocacy committee shall consist of the following persons:

- 2 African American (\*)
- 2 Asian American (\*)
- 2 Hispanic (\*)
- 2 Middle Eastern (\*)
- 2 Native American (\*)
- 1 at-large member elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic segments, geographic diversity and ethnic balance.
- 1 General Assembly Council Member nominated by the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly Council to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the General Assembly Council and the advocacy committee.

(\*) Members of the five racial ethnic caucuses (African American, Asian American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Native American ) shall select one member from each caucus to be elected through the General Assembly Nominating process to serve a four year-term with eligibility for one additional term.

## 1. Accountability and Lodgment:

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be appointed by the General Assembly Council Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the office of the General Assembly Council Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the committee to the Office of the General Assembly Council Executive Director through the Executive Administrator.

## 2. Budget

Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns comes from the per capita budget except for the staffing costs which are accounted for in the budget of the office where the staff is lodged. The Advocacy Committee shall propose a yearly budget to the office of the Executive Administrator.

## 3. Access

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council. Access shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, racial involvement reports, a yearly narrative report, Advice and counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and counsel Memoranda shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate.

The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the General Assembly Council.

## 4. Assigned Functions

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and Advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advise the General Assembly Council on matters of racial ethnic concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of racial ethnic concern.
- d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on racial ethnic concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.
- f. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies and programs relative to racial ethnic concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concern.

*C. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)*

This advocacy committee shall consist of:

- 2 clergy women
- 1 woman church lay employee
- 1 Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team Vice Moderator for Justice and Peace
- 7 members at-large, chosen to balance the committee geographically, racially and ethnically, and with consideration to age and expertise.

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- 1 General Assembly Council Member nominated by the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly Council to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the General Assembly Council and the advocacy committee.

At least four members of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns shall be racial ethnic women. At least two members of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns will be men, but no more than three members may be men.

1. Accountability and Lodgment

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be appointed by the General Assembly Council Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the office of the General Assembly Council Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the committee to the office of the General Assembly Council Executive Director through the Executive Administrator.

2. Budget

Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns comes from the per capita budget except for the staffing costs which are accounted for in the budget of the office where the staff member is lodged. The Advocacy Committee shall propose a yearly budget to the office of the Executive Administrator.

3. Access

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council. Access shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, a yearly narrative report, Advice and counsel Memoranda. Advice and counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate.

The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the General Assembly Council.

4. Assigned Functions

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, G-4.0403. The committee shall monitor and evaluate policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church and the world; and shall advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society.

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and Advice and counsel memoranda on women's concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advise the General Assembly Council on matters of women's concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women's concerns.
- d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women's concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women's concerns.
- f. Monitor the implementation of women's policies and programs relative to women's concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women's concerns.

### VIII. Committee on Theological Education

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) has direct access to the General Assembly and their work is coordinated through the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry.

As constituted by the 198th General Assembly (1986) and reaffirmed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) the Committee on Theological Education has the following purposes: to further the cause of theological education in the church; to provide a vehicle through which the individual theological seminaries can coordinate their activities and report to the church; to provide for official

communication from the church to the seminaries; to preserve the freedom of the seminaries for the benefit of the church; and to assure visible representation of theological education in the national level of the church's organization.

#### 1. Committee Membership

This committee of the General Assembly will consist of:

- One representative appointed by each of the ten PC(USA) seminaries;
- Eleven at-large members for special expertise and geographical diversity, who are elected through the General Assembly Nominating Committee process to serve a four-year term, with eligibility for one additional term;
- Two GAC members nominated by the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly Council to a four-year non-renewable term;
- Corresponding members representing seminaries that have renewable covenant relationships with the PC(USA);
- A corresponding member representing the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation; and up to three corresponding members representing non-Presbyterian seminaries as determined by annual vote of the Committee on Theological Education.

#### 2. Staff Accountability and Lodgment

Staff responsible for planning and coordinating work of the committee shall be appointed by the Director of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry in consultation with the Committee on Theological Education. The staff shall be lodged within the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry and be directly accountable to the Director of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry.

#### 3. Budget

Funding for the work of the Committee on Theological Education, including related staffing costs and allocations to the seminaries on behalf of the denomination, shall be accounted for in the budget of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry.

#### 4. Access

The Committee on Theological Education shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council. Access shall be in the form of resolutions, a yearly narrative report, comments on issues before the Assembly, and other appropriate correspondence. The yearly narrative report shall be forwarded to the GAC Executive Committee for possible comment. Institutional representatives serving on the Committee on Theological Education will represent COTE on a rotating basis with corresponding member status at meetings of the General Assembly Council.

#### 5. Assigned Functions

- a. To develop and maintain a comprehensive overview of theological education from the perspective of the whole church.
- b. To identify, develop, and propose strategies for a systemic approach to theological education within the denomination.
- c. To serve as an advocate before the whole church for theological education and to interpret the mission of the denomination's seminaries to the whole church.
- d. To provide a way for the church's needs to be addressed to the denomination's seminaries.
- e. To review the effectiveness and stewardship of the seminaries on behalf of the church.
- f. To encourage and enhance cooperation among the theological seminaries of the denomination.
- g. To relate the governing bodies and agencies of the PC(USA), particularly those which have responsibilities for theology and worship, for education, for candidacy, and for leadership development for pastors and church members.
- h. To maintain appropriate relationships with those responsible for theological education in other branches of the church catholic.
- i. To receive and act upon requests and recommendations from the church.
- j. To receive and review reports from the theological seminaries appropriate to the work of the committee;
- k. To identify the issues, needs, and opportunities of the seminaries, individually and corporately, and, where appropriate, address these as requests and recommendations to the church;
- l. To authorize use of Theological Education Fund monies, prepare an appropriate formula for disbursements to the theological seminaries of the PC(USA), and to advocate for financial support of the seminaries.
- m. To maintain relations with educational and ecumenical associations which share common concerns with the committee.
- n. To serve as an agency of the denomination for relating to theological seminaries other than those of the PC(USA).
- o. To recommend to the General Assembly those theological seminaries which shall qualify as members of the Committee on Theological Education.

### IX. Other General Assembly Council Related Committees

#### A. *Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI)*

The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) is responsible for implementing General Assembly policy related to mission responsibility through investment. MRTI assists the church at all levels to utilize its investments as key instruments to promote its mission goals in society. MRTI provides leadership for effective engagement of the private sector in partnership with ecumenical colleagues in the United States, and in collaboration with indigenous churches, ecumenical

bodies and local groups in other nations. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the General Assembly Council's Justice Mission Committee.

*B. Mission Development Resources Committee (MDRC)*

The Mission Development Resources Committee makes decisions on Church Loans, Walton Awards for New Church Development and Mission Program Grants (New Church Development, Congregational Transformation and Specialized Ministries). Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the General Assembly Council's Evangelism Mission Committee.

*C. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee (PDA)*

The purpose of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee is to give policy advice, review the work, assist in setting strategic program direction and planning, and recommend an annual budget. This "is a ministry of relief and response to national and international disasters, aid to refugees and displaced persons, refugee resettlement and efforts toward development." This ministry is "carried out through ecumenical partnerships, related church agencies, middle governing bodies, and congregations." Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the General Assembly Council's Justice Mission Committee.

*D. Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee (PHP)*

The purpose of the Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee is to guide the church's response to hunger and its underlying causes. The committee carries out the following tasks: 1) recommending Presbyterian Hunger Program operating guidelines, 2) making and reporting funding (grant) decisions within the approved guidelines; and 3) suggesting the development of programs and strategies for implementing the "Common Affirmation on Global Hunger," and other General Assembly policies related to hunger and poverty. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the General Assembly Council's Justice Mission Committee.

*E. Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP)*

The National Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People provides the opportunity for the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and non-members to help establish partnerships with economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people in the United States and around the world, which helps them to develop toward their own potential, self-determination, and human dignity. (People who are not Presbyterian may be nominated, elected, and serve). The National Committee shares this ministry with middle governing body committees, as the focal point of the Church's efforts to promote the self-development concept and cause.

X. Temporary Special Committees, Task Forces or Work Groups

If Mission Committees, Stewardship Committee, the GAC Executive Committee or two or more of these committees determine a need for a temporary special committee, task force or work group that will involve General Assembly Council membership and/or non-General Assembly Council membership, a proposal shall be submitted to the General Assembly Council through the GAC Executive Committee for approval. All proposals for temporary special committees, task forces and work groups shall include the following information:

1. Temporary special committee, task force or work group name.
2. Statement of purpose and tasks to be accomplished.
3. Explanation as to why these tasks cannot be accomplished by current GAC committees.
4. Expertise, skills and experience needed by the members.
5. Duration of the committee, task force or work group shall not exceed two years.
6. Size of the committee, task force or work group. Ordinarily not to exceed seven members.
7. Annual budget with the source of funding.
8. Proposed names of the committee, task force or work force members with sensitivity to diversity.

XI. Covenant Relationships

The General Assembly Council is connected to a variety of organizations and networks that further its ministry with congregations. Among those are groups that have established formal linkages with the General Assembly Council through Covenants of Agreement and are designated as Covenant Groups. The General Assembly Council has a responsibility to review the work of each Covenant Group regularly and renew its covenant, when appropriate, as stated in the specific Covenant Agreement. Detailed information is available on the GAC Website at [www.pcusa.org/gac/covenants](http://www.pcusa.org/gac/covenants).

**Appendix 2**  
**General Assembly Council Staff Organization**

I. Mission Administration

A. *Office of the Executive Director*

The primary purpose of the office is to provide overall leadership and support for the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) working with and through the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly Ministries. The office is divided into mission administration areas, two of which are shared with the Office of the General Assembly:

1. Executive Administrator's Office which includes: Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns, Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, Cultural Proficiency, and Research Services.
2. Internal Audit
3. Legal & Risk Management

Shared with the Office of the General Assembly

1. Middle Governing Body Relations
2. Vocation

B. *Deputy Executive Directors*

The General Assembly Ministries are led by three Deputy Executive Directors reporting to the Executive Director.

1. Deputy Executive Director for Mission
  - a. Evangelism and Church Growth
  - b. Peace and Justice
  - c. Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women
  - d. Relief and Development
  - e. Theology, Worship and Education
  - f. World Mission
2. Deputy Executive Director for Communications & Funds Development
  - a. Creative Services
  - b. Development Services
  - c. Executive Office Communications
  - d. Funds Development
  - e. Mission Communications
  - f. Mission Interpretation
  - g. Presbyterian News Service
3. Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services
  - a. Finance and Accounting
  - b. Human Resources
  - c. Information Technology
  - d. Presbyterian Center Services
  - e. Presbyterian Distribution Services

II. General Assembly Ministries

A. *Mission Ministries:*

1. Compassion, Peace and Justice
 

The Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry seeks to support, assist and involve congregations and governing bodies in ministries of compassion, justice, and peacemaking. It responds to disasters, provides support for sustainable community development, and works to alleviate hunger and poverty nationally and around the world. It also addresses injustice in all arenas of life and advocates for just and peaceful solutions to situations of violence, conflict and oppression.

This work is done in collaboration with middle governing bodies, partner churches, ecumenical partners and community-based organizations. Work areas and offices carry out this ministry in a variety of ways, providing resources, supporting networks, sponsoring events that equip congregations to witness to God's healing and reconciling activity in the world.
2. Evangelism and Church Growth
 

The Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry equips, empowers, and inspires individuals, congregations and governing bodies to share their personal faith in Christ and to become connected to a community of faith. This work is done in partnership with synods and presbyteries. Work area offices carry out this ministry by coaching and training leaders to plant new churches, to transform existing congregations, and to effectively share and live out the Gospel in our increasingly multicultural world.
3. Racial Ethnic and Women Ministries/Presbyterian Women
 

The Racial Ethnic and Women Ministries/Presbyterian Women Ministry seeks to develop leaders, to work for racial and gender justice and equality, and to cultivate Presbyterian communities of faith that truly reflect the increasing multicultural world.

tural makeup of our society. Work areas and offices carry out this ministry through networks, events, publications, communication, advocacy, and financial support.

4. **Theology, Worship, and Education**  
The Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry assists the whole church in its common calling to explore the riches of the gospel, worship the one Triune God, and strengthen the ministries of the church. In partnership with congregations, presbyteries, and seminaries, Theology Worship and Education develops educational materials, worship resources, leader development programs, spiritual enrichment processes, and theological studies that support the church’s faith and life.
5. **Vocation**  
The Office of Vocation is a shared ministry of the General Assembly Council and the Office of the General Assembly. Its mission is to provide ecclesiastical and programming support related to vocation and leadership for Presbyterian individuals, congregations, governing bodies, and other partners. Its ministry includes support for presbyteries and congregations in the nurture of Christian Vocation, the preparation, credentialing, and support of church professionals, and the PCUSA call system.
6. **World Mission**  
The World Mission Ministry carries on our 170-year Presbyterian tradition and calling of sending missionaries, sharing and living out the gospel, and supporting partner Christian ministries around the globe. Work areas and offices in this ministry include supporting dozens of partner churches in many countries, working with international ecumenical bodies, and sending hundreds of full time, part time, and volunteer mission personnel to over 60 countries around the world. World Mission supports mission involvement throughout the PC(USA) by providing mission education, networking opportunities, interfaith resources, opportunities to volunteer nationally, and leadership development for young adults serving nationally and internationally.

*B. General Assembly Support Ministries*

1. **Communications and Funds Development**

Communication and Funds Development Ministry communicates the mission and ministry of the General Assembly Council and the role and activities regarding mission in the PC(USA). Communication and Funds Development encourages, implements, and guides stewardship and giving to fund the GAC and the mission and ministry of connectional entities and agencies of the PC(USA).

2. **Shared Services**

Shared Services Ministry faithfully receives, records, and reconciles contributions offered to the church from congregations and presbyteries. Shared Services assists the ministry areas in budgeting, disbursing, documenting, and financial reporting. Shared Services prints, packages, mails, and distributes denominational materials to congregations, middle governing bodies, and to mission fields across the nation and the world. Shared Services also provides support for human resources, information technology, property management, and Presbyterian Center operations.

**Appendix 3**

**A VISION FOR GOVERNANCE FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY COUNCIL**

Note: The structure of the General Assembly Council has been modified since its approval by the 217th General Assembly (2006), through the work of the Implementations Work Group

Size of General Assembly Council	48 total members 39 voting members: 36 elected voting members 3 ex-officio voting members: o current Moderator of the General Assembly o immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly o current Moderator of the Churchwide Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women 7 corresponding non-voting members 2 ecumenical advisory non-voting members
Composition of the 36 elected voting members	6 General Assembly commissioners (2 from current assembly, 2 each from the two immediate past assemblies) 4 young adults (ages 18–35) 3 ordained presbytery staff 2 synod ordained staff 21 from recommendations of presbyteries

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Corresponding members (non-voting)	<p>7 total: Representative from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA)</p> <p>Mandated by the <i>Book of Order</i>: Stated Clerk of the General Assembly General Assembly Council Executive Director</p> <p>Mandated by the <i>Manual of Operations</i>: Chairperson of Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy Chairperson of Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns Chairperson of Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Representative from Committee on Theological Education</p>
Ecumenical advisory members (non-voting)	2 total, in accordance with the <i>Book of Order</i> , G-13-0202b(1)
Term of Office	6 years, non-renewable
Nomination process	The General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) will place in nomination 21 members from among those recommended by presbyteries, and will place in nomination 4 young adults, 3 executive presbyters, and 2 synod executives from at-large. From among these 30 members, each synod will have at least one GAC member who holds membership within their bounds. The GANC will also place in nomination 6 General Assembly commissioners from the roster of the General Assembly (2 from the current assembly and 2 each from the two immediate past assemblies), giving preference to those who have demonstrated leadership at an assembly and are willing to serve six years on the General Assembly Council.
Diversity provision	<i>Book of Order</i> G-4.0403, G-9.0104, G-9.0105a (6), G-13.0111, G-13.0202d: 1/3 ministers of the Word and Sacrament 1/3 laymen 1/3 laywomen 20 percent racial ethnic persons
Committee structure	5 committees total: 4 goal area committees: Justice and Compassion, Evangelism and Witness, Spirituality and Discipleship, Leadership and Vocation 1 support committee: includes such functions as stewardship, budgeting, mission funding, information services, audit, and so forth
Committee assignment	7 elected members on each goal area committee and 8 on the support committee. Corresponding and ecumenical members free to participate in any committee with voice but not vote. Current GA Moderator, GAC chairperson and GAC vice-chairperson will not serve on a committee.
Plenary and committee responsibilities	Emphasis on the vision of the whole church’s mission and ministry. Quality time spent in worship, education, and small group discernment to explore urgent concerns facing the larger church. Consent agendas to facilitate efficient decision-making and affirm the programmatic recommendations and priority goal work of the committees.
Frequency of meetings	3 meetings annually during General Assembly years  2 meetings annually during non-assembly years, one of which will be an annual joint meeting with presbytery and synod executives
Size of Executive Committee	10 total: GAC Chairperson GAC Vice Chairperson Chairpersons of goal area committees (4) Chairperson of the support committee 2 at-large members GAC Executive Director (non-voting)
Role of Executive Committee	Responsible for the functions of the personnel committee, oversight of GAC communication strategy, and current duties outlined in the <i>Book of Order</i> and the <i>GAC Manual of Operations</i> (including cultivating and promoting spiritual welfare, planning for meetings, acting on behalf of the council on matters requiring immediate actions between meetings, and nominating voting members of the GAC nominating committee).
Roles and responsibilities of GAC members	To be faithful and accountable in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Active involvement in a congregation and commitment to a personal discipline of spiritual growth</li> <li>● Knowledge of and commitment to the mission, goals, and policies of the GAC</li> <li>● Openness to new vision and direction emerging within the life of the church</li> <li>● Informed and honest participation in all GAC meetings</li> <li>● Faithful discipleship regarding stewardship, confidentiality, and leadership roles</li> <li>● Positive interpretation of the work of the GAC</li> </ul>



Roles and responsibilities of GAC staff	To support GAC members by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing sufficient information to facilitate the decision-making of the council</li> <li>• implementing the decisions and actions of the council</li> </ul> <p>It is the responsibility of the staff to make recommendations to the council on topics for consideration and on resolution of topics. Once the council has been provided the necessary information and recommendations, the deliberations of the matter-at-hand are the responsibility of the members of the council. Members of the Staff Leadership Team have the right of voice in all committee and plenary meetings of the council.</p>
GAC staff structure	Staff structure will be developed upon the approval of the elected structure with the following proposed schedule: <p>April 2006 council meeting: preliminary structure  June 2006 General Assembly: confirmation of new GAC Executive Director  Fall 2006: executive director evaluation of structure  February 2007 council meeting: final recommendation of structure</p>
Transition plans	The transition to the 36-elected member council can be accomplished by the 218th General Assembly (2008), with provisions allowing current council members to complete all the service for which they are currently eligible.
Financial implications	The proposed structure will result in a net cost increase of less than \$25,000 during a biennial period. The meeting costs of a smaller council will result in a savings, which will be slightly more than offset by the cost of an annual meeting with presbytery and synod executives.
Book of Order, Manual of Operations, and Organization for Mission changes	The executive committee will/may recommend <i>Book of Order</i> changes on Saturday of the GAC meeting (Feb. 11, 2006) to implement this proposed new structure. <i>Manual of Operations</i> and <i>Organization for Mission</i> changes will be submitted at a future GAC meeting and for approval by the 218th General Assembly (2008).

### Background

Nehemiah was one of the Bible's great leaders. He exhibited three abilities that every leader needs to develop and demonstrate.

First, a leader needs discernment to assess accurately the current condition of the organization, i.e. "This is where we are now." When Nehemiah looked at his country, he saw people on the verge of losing their identity. Because Jerusalem was unprotected and vulnerable to attack, its inhabitants sought security in small villages outside the city. Gradually they melted into these foreign cultures, losing their unique language, culture, and religion.

Nehemiah exercised discernment to assess the situation correctly. He saw beyond the obvious—that the Jews were drifting geographically—to the more subtle fact that they were drifting spiritually.

Second, a leader needs the vision and understanding to add, "And this is where we need to go." Nehemiah realized what Jerusalem needed if it hoped to be the city God intended. Without direction, the situation would inevitably worsen, and the nation would lose its grip on what spiritual identity it could salvage.

Visionary leaders know the status quo won't last forever; most static organizations are actually in the first stages of decline. So leaders look ahead. They envision change. Nehemiah pictured his nation as it ought to be—strong and sure of its identity.

Third, a good leader knows how to bring together the people and resources needed to move the organization from where it is to where it needs to be. Nehemiah was a master at this mobilization. He gathered together hundreds of workers and inspired them to work "with all their heart" (Neh. 4:6). They would not give up their goal, even in the face of opposition.

*Lead* is an active verb. A leader is able to say, "Here's how we get to where we want to go," and people follow.

The abilities of a leader in Nehemiah's time are the same for us today. As those of us called to leadership in the church know, how we manage the process of getting things done through other people is an important component of leadership. To accomplish our goals we need to have the ability to bring together the necessary people and resources with an effective structure based on a solid theological foundation.

The vision for governance detailed in the following pages will provide the effective, theologically grounded structure to help us accomplish our goals.

### Theological Foundation

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new (2 Cor. 5:17).

In our reflections together, the Governance Task Force has been inspired by fresh winds of the Spirit that God is sending within our life as a denomination. We believe that a church that is reformed and continually being reformed by the providence of God (*Book of Order*, G-2.0200) needs to reshape structure and process to respond to the contemporary needs of a changing world. In this third millennium, governance systems have become leaner and more flexible, collegial, and focused on empowering all constituencies. We believe that the part of the body of Christ called the General Assembly Council needs to become a new creation in the ways we implement and interpret the vision of the General Assembly. The proposals in this report reflect our sense of the Spirit's call to reshape our life together.

The task force has been guided in its reflection, discussion, and work by the following affirmations. They are founded on the witness of the Bible and the expositions of our Reformed tradition, including the *Book of Order* and *The Book of Confessions*.

We believe Jesus Christ is the head of the church and the Lord of the conscience, and that whenever we gather we are wholly dependent on the mercy of God to guide us as individuals and as a community.

We believe baptism is an act of grace initiated by the community of Christ, and a foundation for a life of Christian discipleship. Baptism is our entrance to the Christian community and our call to service in the church and in the world. By its very nature it obligates the individual to the community.

We believe the connectional polity of our denomination provides witness to the manifestation of the Spirit of Christ that the strong in faith may need to submit individual freedoms to the conscience of the community. In our governance system, the responsibility of the individual and the responsibility of the community are held in tension; neither is elevated. The individual responsibility to discern the will of God is tested in the life of the community.

In a church that is faithful and diverse, we propose a General Assembly Council (GAC) structure that can build up the body of Christ with a unifying vision, helping us to better discern the mind of Christ. We have endeavored to strengthen our relationships within the body of Christ by offering a connecting network between the GAC and the middle governing bodies of the church—all to the glory of God!

#### *Rationale*

The BoardSource self-assessment the General Assembly Council (GAC) completed in January 2003 clearly showed the need for the council to be closer to congregations, presbyteries, and synods, and to look for ways to better communicate to them. It also indicated the large size of the council was a concern, and that we needed to look at our size and the relationship between elected and staff roles as together we guide and best support the mission of the church. Taking all of this into consideration, in February 2004 the Mission Work Plan called for us to evaluate, develop, and propose a structure of the GAC (elected and national staff) that will strengthen connectedness with presbyteries and synods.

The current structure of the GAC has served us faithfully and well in an era where General Assemblies met annually, terms of office began and ended each year during an assembly, and the work of the staff was structured within divisions. But the winds of the Spirit are leading us in a new direction:

1. Biennial assemblies have changed terms of office and altered the functions of the GAC over a two-year period.
2. Because the Mission Work Plan has built a new structure around four goal areas that do not fit naturally into the existing GAC structure, it is important to re-envision a GAC governance structure that supports this new reality.
3. Strengthening connectedness with presbyteries and synods requires enhancements to our ability to communicate and our capacity to act quickly as a leaner, more efficient entity.
4. Because presbyteries and synods are in close touch with the mission needs of the church and are creating new governance patterns and structures that are more fluid, flexible, and effective, we believe the GAC can learn from these middle governing bodies. A smaller council and a commitment to meet annually with presbytery and synod executives will encourage communication and mutual learning to happen.

#### **Appendix 7**

##### **General Assembly Council Awards Policy**

(Approved by the General Assembly Council, September 1999, Revised September, 2007)

The General Assembly Council, at various times and places, may present awards to honor persons or entities/organizations for outstanding achievements in relationship to the goals of the General Assembly Council. Listed below are guidelines to be followed for determining award recipients:

- A. Appropriate staff will (re)formulate written policies and procedures in the selection process for each award to be submitted for approval by the appropriate Mission Committee. [Each award is to have a one-sheet explanation including criteria and process for determining the selection with periodic review and/or approval of changes (possibly included in covenants)].
- B. Each selection committee will submit proposed recipients for each award to the appropriate Mission Committee with the names of those serving on the selection committee and written rationale for the proposed selection(s). This should be done prior to informing the proposed recipient(s) of their selection. The appropriate Mission Committee reviews the proposed recipient(s) in light of the ongoing commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be reformed and always reforming according to the Word of God and the Call of the Spirit, as well as to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Constitutional standards and policies. This should be done before the selection goes forward.
- C. All nominees should be submitted to the appropriate Mission Committee at or before the winter meeting of the GAC (or its successors) for its review. In the event the nominees cannot be named by the winter meeting of the GAC, the nominees will be sent to the GAC Executive Committee for its action.

- D. The selection committees will report to the appropriate Mission Committee the results of their consideration of “Awards as issues to ponder” (see below) and this response will be included in the minutes of the appropriate Mission Committee.
- E. In the event the selection committee’s nominee is not accepted by the appropriate Mission Committee, the selection committee may appeal that decision to the General Assembly Council. Appeals are limited to questions pertaining to compliance with award criteria.

From the Report of the Awards Task Group to the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Council, September 22, 1999:

Awards as issues to ponder:

... The work Group proposes that the following five items need to be pondered thoughtfully by the groups awarding and administering awards “within the scope of the work of the General Assembly Council.” [See recommendation D.]

1. Why give awards? The answer seems to be simply, “to honor the person.” While this is part of an answer, the questions also asks for honesty regarding the motivation of the group giving the award. Is there a strong element of advocacy for a cause? The work group is convinced that we must remember that it is the Church of Jesus Christ which is involved in such activities.
2. Develop an appropriate basis for each award.
  - a. Scripture, particularly the Gospels, warn us about the dangers of seeking honor (Matthew 13:57 and parallels). “Honor” is most frequently used relating to reverence toward the Triune God.
  - b. In *The Book of Confessions*, the emphasis on honor to God is continued. Appropriate to our present concern are passages such as C-5.026, 5.258 (regarding government in the light of Romans 13), and C-7.237, 239, and .241, where honor for others is discussed.
  - c. The Directory for Worship offers what we found to be perhaps the most helpful comments regarding this situation in W-4.7001:
 

“Service given to the community beyond the particular mission of the church may be appropriately recognized as an expression of Christian discipleship with prayer and thanksgiving at a suitable time in an occasion of worship. Significant accomplishments in the lives of Christians or honors and other forms of recognition received by them may also be occasions for such celebration with the community of faith.” [Note how this compares with W-4.1001, .2004, .3003, and .5002.]
3. How much staff time, money, and energy go into awards? Our investigation suggested that the “costs” of awards tend to be hidden. Some awards are supported by dedicated funds for cash awards. Our concern is not with these, but primarily with the “costs” in staff time and energy. Most of the actual costs are considered “Office Expense”, and appear to be relatively minor.
4. When and where should awards be given? The giving of awards at a special ceremony was not part of the 211<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. There continue to be numerous breakfasts where awards are conferred. However, reflection on W-4.7001 suggests that the question of the appropriate venue for giving awards can be a fruitful enterprise. For example, when the Restorative Justice Award was given at a presbytery meeting, the person was honored as the value and importance of this aspect of mission were highlighted. The effect of this change of venue suggests the wisdom of careful reflection on the appropriate venue in the light of the purpose of the award as a recognition of commitment to mission.
5. Can awards serve as models and/or inspiration? We believe that the answer to this question is, “Yes,” when there has been careful review and preparation for the way in which each award is conferred, as well as where that is most appropriately done.

### Appendix 8

#### ETHICS POLICIES

(Replaces Conflict of Interest Policy)

The Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the General Assembly Council is set out immediately below. The Ethics Policy for General Assembly Council Employees is set out at <http://www.pcusa.org/gac/ethics.htm>

ETHICS POLICY  
for Elected<sup>4</sup> and Appointed Members of the  
General Assembly Council and  
the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly  
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

#### Introduction

This Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the General Assembly Council (“GAC”) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (“COGA”) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“Ethics Policy”) addresses business ethics and does not include the

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<sup>4</sup> The term “elected members” collectively means elected and appointed members and members of their committees, task forces and work-groups.

other ethical values and policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“PCUSA”)<sup>5</sup>. The Ethics Policy applies to all elected and appointed members of the GAC and COGA and members of their committees, task forces and workgroups in matters relating to the performance of their duties and responsibilities for the GAC/COGA. Hereinafter the term “elected member” will be used to collectively refer to those individuals listed in Footnote 1 below. The term “GAC/COGA” collectively refers to those two ecclesial bodies, their elected members, their respective staff members, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, and all subparts thereof.

*All funds and property received and administered by the GAC/COGA are entrusted to the organization by God through the faithful financial support of PCUSA members and friends. The highest degree of stewardship and fiduciary responsibility is expected of all elected members, including the receiving, reporting, and use of funds, property, and time. Elected members are responsible for complying with laws, regulations<sup>6</sup>, and GAC/COGA and PCUSA policies and procedures.*

As an elected member, what does this Ethics Policy require of me?

The required standards of this Ethics Policy are set out in 1-6 immediately below. The forms and processes are set out in the five attachments.

#### Standards of Ethical Conduct

1. *Duty of Loyalty and Care.* The duty of loyalty and care as well as the obligation of good stewardship requires all elected members to act first in the best interests of the GAC/COGA rather than in the elected member’s own interests or the interests of another entity or person. All elected members shall exercise reasonable efforts to inform themselves of the mission and ministry of the GAC/COGA. All elected members shall act as a reasonable elected member would act under the same or similar circumstances. These responsibilities are set forth below.
2. *Conflicts of Interest.* All elected members shall avoid conflicts of interest, potential conflicts of interest, and situations that give even the appearance of a conflict of interest.<sup>7</sup>
  - a. *Definition.* “Conflict of interest” means any situation in which the elected member may be influenced or appear to be influenced in decision-making or business dealings by any motive or desire for personal advantage other than the success and well-being of the GAC/COGA. Personal advantage means a financial interest or some other personal interest, whether present or potential, whether direct or indirect. This standard applies to both actual and contemplated transactions. When in doubt, the elected member is to assume there might be a conflict and should raise the question pursuant to this Ethics Policy.
  - b. *Employment Ineligibility.* No GAC elected member shall be eligible to become an employee of GAC or otherwise render compensable services to the GAC for the duration of their term. For purposes of this paragraph, resignation does not result in the premature end of term. For example, an elected person who resigns with one year left in his/her term continues to be prohibited from becoming an employee until the expiration of that remaining year. No COGA elected member shall be eligible to become an employee of OGA or otherwise render compensable services to OGA for the duration of their term. This prohibition does not apply to a member serving as an ex officio member of the GAC or COGA. For purposes of this paragraph, resignation does not result in the premature end of term. Exceptions, however, may be made under the following two circumstances if the GAC Executive Committee or COGA Coordinating Committee (as appropriate) votes by 2/3 to allow the exception:
    - To facilitate development of specified projects through limited contracts of less than 18 months in duration. The elected member may be compensated under the contract.
    - To fill an officer or employee position on an interim or acting basis for two years or less. The elected member may be compensated for such service. The elected member must resign his/her elected position.
  - c. *Disclosure Deadlines.* All present and potential conflicts of interest issues must be disclosed in writing annually (See Attachment 1) and thereafter as they arise. If the conflict is known in advance of any meeting, business transaction, contract, or other activity at which issues may be discussed or on which the issues may have a bearing on the elected member’s approach, whether directly or indirectly, it shall be disclosed ahead of time and the elected member shall abstain from any participation in the discussion or decision. If the conflict is not known in advance, it shall be disclosed when the actual or potential conflict becomes apparent. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the chair/ moderator of the body and to the General Counsel. (See Attachment 2). See Attachment 5 for procedures to follow at meetings of the elected body or its committees, task forces and workgroups to document disclosure and action by disinterested members.
  - d. *Potential Conflicts of Interest.* All elected members are likewise to disclose promptly, in writing, matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of a conflict in business dealings with the GAC/OGA. Examples include, but are not limited to, financial interests, leadership roles, or board membership with vendors and other organizations doing business

<sup>5</sup> For other policies, see the Standards of Ethical Conduct approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

<sup>6</sup> Federal and state constitutional religious free exercise provisions, as well as laws and ordinances, exempt religious organizations from some laws. An elected member should consult with the General Counsel if such questions arise.

<sup>7</sup> Personal investments with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., or employee benefits provided by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are not considered a conflict of interest.

with the GAC/OGA. GAC/OGA business dealings with an elected member's friends and family<sup>8</sup> are particularly sensitive and are to be disclosed and carefully evaluated because of the potential for inferences of tangible or intangible personal advantage and the appearance of impropriety. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the chair/moderator of the body and to the General Counsel. (See Attachment 2).

- e. **Gifts and Relationship Building.** To avoid appearances of impropriety, any gifts, gratuities, special favors, and hospitality to an elected member shall not be accepted by any elected member from any person or organization that sells, delivers, or receives any goods, materials, or services to or from the GAC/OGA. This prohibition includes those persons or organizations that desire to enter into such relationships with GAC/OGA. There are four exceptions to this rule:
    - (1) Gifts, meals, outings, and relationship-building activities provided by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches, middle governing bodies, partner churches or related organizations in connection with GAC/OGA business. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount.
    - (2) Gifts that primarily benefit the GAC/OGA and not an individual elected member, such as gifts of complimentary rooms given to the GAC/OGA by hotels, conventions, and conferences in relation to official GAC/OGA business. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount.
    - (3) Occasional small gifts (less than \$50.00 in value, such as flowers or foodstuffs) to an individual elected member. Where gifts are shared with other elected members or GAC/OGA staff (e.g., foodstuffs set out for all to partake), then the gift is not deemed to be to an individual elected member. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount.
    - (4) Luncheons, dinners, outings, and relationship-building activities in connection with GAC/OGA business may be received. If an activity permitted under this section #4 results in a value of over \$100 to the elected member, the elected member shall promptly report this in writing to the chair of the body and to the General Counsel. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount. The written report will include a description of the activity, the dollar value, the name of the person/organization providing it, and the business that person/organization does with GAC/OGA. The General Counsel shall maintain a log that includes all of the written reports submitted under this section #4. This log will be available at all times to the GAC Chair, the GAC Executive Director, the COGA Moderator, the Stated Clerk and the Chair of the Audit Committee.
  - f. **Process and Resolution.** All conflict of interest disclosures, reports, or questions are to be made promptly and in writing to the chair of the body and to the General Counsel. The General Counsel will consult with the chair of the body and the GAC Executive Director or the Stated Clerk, as appropriate. After consultation, the General Counsel will make a recommendation to the GAC Executive Committee or the COGA Coordinating Committee, as appropriate. Those bodies provide the final decision on any elected member conflict of interest matters.
3. **Confidentiality of GAC/COGA Information.** Elected members shall not disclose information about the GAC/COGA that is not known outside of the GAC/COGA or is not known by public means. Of course, it is expected that elected members will share certain GAC/COGA information with other parts of the PCUSA, related entities and the public when asked to do so by the GAC/COGA. If questions arise, the elected member should inquire of the chair of the body. If the chair/moderator of the body needs assistance, the General Counsel should be consulted by the chair/moderator.
  4. **Transactions, Reporting, and Document Retention.** Each elected member has a duty to prepare, process, maintain, and report complete, accurate, and timely records pertaining to their role, including, but not limited to, expense reports. This also includes safeguarding all physical, financial, informational, and other GAC/COGA assets and records. Elected members shall comply with the Records Retention Schedule of the Office of the General Assembly's Department of History and related schedules as part of the normal course of business and use the schedules in a consistent and accountable manner for both records retention and destruction purposes. See [www.history.pcusa.org/national/schedules.html](http://www.history.pcusa.org/national/schedules.html). See also the Electronic Records Policy for GAC and OGA (anticipated release in 2007). Any document relevant to actual or anticipated internal investigations, legal proceedings or governmental investigations (civil or criminal) must not be destroyed and must be preserved in a manner that would ease accessibility and retrievability of the document. In addition, elected members shall not direct or participate in establishment or maintenance of undisclosed or unrecorded funds or assets, nor shall the elected member direct the making of any artificial or false entries in the financial or other records of the GAC/COGA.
  5. **Duty to Disclose/Whistleblower Policy.** Elected members have a duty to report violations of this Ethics Policy, whether the violation is by themselves or by another. This includes, but is not limited to, financial, accounting, or auditing irregularities. See Attachment 2 for Self-reports. See Attachment 3 for Whistleblower Reports concerning others. See Attachment 4 for Procedures for processing a Whistleblower Report. Likewise, concerns about the appearance or the possibility of violations should be reported. Care must always be taken to be factual and objective. Violations shall be reported promptly in writing to the General Counsel, and may be reported anonymously. Anonymous whistleblower reports can also be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877 (operable May 2, 2007). An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation. (If the alleged violation involves the General Counsel or one of his staff members, it should be reported to the Internal Auditor.)

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<sup>8</sup> "Family" includes the elected member's spouse, parents, siblings, spouses of siblings, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, the spouses of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, any other blood relative, and individuals who live in the elected member's home.

- (a.) No Retaliation. There shall be no retaliation within GAC/COGA for good faith complaints, reports, participation in an investigation or for providing truthful information relating to an alleged violation of this Ethics Policy. In addition, there will be no retaliation where an elected member makes a good faith report of the commission or possible commission of any criminal offense to a law enforcement officer. Elected members are protected even if the allegations are mistaken or unsubstantiated, as long as the elected member reasonably believes the reported conduct constitutes a violation of the Ethics Policy. One who makes a claim or report under this Whistleblower Policy in bad faith, or knows or has reason to know that such claim or report is false or materially inaccurate may be subject to disciplinary sanctions by the governing body with jurisdiction over the elected member.
- (b.) Confidentiality of Investigation. Reports under this Whistleblower Policy will be treated confidentially with disclosures made on a need-to-know basis only to those directly involved in the investigation of the reported concern. To the extent possible within limitations of the law, policy and the need to conduct a competent investigation, confidentiality will be maintained.
- 6. *Violations.* Violation or noncompliance with this policy may result in discipline by the governing body with jurisdiction over the elected member.
- 7. *Amendments.* The Ethics Policy may be amended from time to time. In consultation with the General Counsel, the GAC Executive Director and the Stated Clerk (as appropriate) are authorized to make reasonable and necessary changes to this Ethics Policy. Substantive changes must be reported back to the elected body approving this Ethics Policy. Editorial changes need not be reported back.
- 8. *Designees.* Where this Ethics Policy assigns a duty to a particular officer or staff position, that officer or staff position may use a designee to complete the duties.
- 9. *No Waiver by GAC/COGA.* Nothing in this Ethics Policy shall be construed to waive any claim, assertion or defense of the GAC/COGA to exemption or exclusion from applicability of a statute and/or regulation or lack of jurisdiction of a civil court or governmental agency.
- 10. *Trainings.* Trainings to familiarize the elected members with this Ethics Policy and its related forms and procedures will be conducted for GAC/COGA elected members by the Legal Services Office as frequently as deemed necessary by the GAC Chair and COGA Moderator, as appropriate:
- 11.

ATTACHMENT 1  
Annual Ethics Policy Representation by Elected and Appointed Members  
(Annual Report)

*This form is to be completed annually and signed by all "elected members" of the GAC/COGA as defined in the Ethics Policy. Upon completion, send it to the General Counsel.*

- I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the GAC and COGA (*Ethics Policy*) dated , 2007.
- I understand it is my responsibility to read and comply with the Ethics Policy and any revisions made to it.
- I understand:
  - I am subject to the Ethics Policy and am required to comply with it.
  - I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me, is reported to me, or that I observe.
  - I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any whistleblower reports I receive under the Ethics Policy, as well as any other violations of the Ethics Policy I observe.

Initial all of the following statements that apply:

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not aware of any violations of the Ethics Policy that involve me or that I have observed in regards to others.

\_\_\_\_\_ *No employee or elected member has submitted a whistleblower report or a self-report to me that I have not reported already to the General Counsel.*

\_\_\_\_\_ I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me or that I have observed in regards to others. By submitting the information immediately below, I am reporting the alleged violation.

Name of employee, elected member, or organization with the possible violation:

\_\_\_\_\_

Facts of the possible violation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

Name (Please print)

ATTACHMENT 2  
Report of Ethics Policy question, violation, or possible violation  
in regards to the reporting elected or appointed member  
(Question/Self-report)

This form is to be completed, signed, and sent to the General Counsel and the chair of GAC or COGA moderator, as appropriate by "elected members" as that term is defined in the Ethics Policy. It is important to report questions promptly. Generally, the chair/moderator of the body, Executive Director of the GAC and the Stated Clerk, as appropriate, and the General Counsel will consult with the elected member to resolve the conflict of interest, if any.

*I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me or I have a question about the Ethics Policy as it involves me.*

1. Elected Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Facts about the elected member's possible violation or the question presented:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Date the elected member became aware of the possible violation or question: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTACHMENT 3

Whistleblower Report of possible Ethics Policy violation in regards to another elected member, an employee, or organization

This form is to be completed, signed (unless submitted anonymously), and sent to the General Counsel. The term "elected member" is defined in the Ethics Policy. Anonymous whistleblower reports can also be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877. An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation.

*I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves another elected member, an employee, or an organization.*

1. Name of person(s) involved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Name of organization(s) involved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Facts about the possible violation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Date the elected member became aware of the possible violation: \_\_\_\_\_

*(DO NOT SIGN IF BEING SUBMITTED ANONYMOUSLY)*

*Signature:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Print name:* \_\_\_\_\_

ATTACHMENT 4

Procedures for processing a Whistleblower Report of possible Ethics Policy violation in regards to another elected member, an employee, or an organization

A. All reports under the Whistleblower Policy (See the Ethics Policy) shall be submitted in writing promptly to the General Counsel. Anonymous whistleblower reports may be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877. An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation. If the alleged violation involves the General Counsel or one of his staff members, it should be reported to the Internal Auditor. The General Counsel will decide if the reported activity, if confirmed, would be an Ethics Policy violation, a possible violation of a policy or procedure not covered by this Ethics Policy, or a matter to be processed through another avenue, typically supervisor review with a report to the General Counsel. If the General Counsel decides the report will not be processed under this Ethics Policy, the General Counsel will respond to the accuser unless the report was filed anonymously. The General Counsel shall keep a log of all reports received under



the Whistleblower Policy. Whether or not an investigation was done, the log will include the resolution of all reports. The log will be available at all times to the Chair of GAC, the Moderator of COGA, and the Chair of the Audit Committee. If the person reporting is simply confused about an issue and how it applies, then the General Counsel will ensure clarification is provided by the chair of the body or the General Counsel. If the chair of the body provides a written response to the elected member, a copy of the response will be provided to the General Counsel.

- B. All other reports shall be initially reviewed by a three-person committee (Investigative Committee) comprised of the General Counsel, the Internal Auditor and a third person appointed by the GAC Chair or COGA Moderator (as appropriate). The Investigative Committee will first determine whether or not an investigation is warranted. If it is not, the Investigative Committee shall so report. If an investigation is warranted, the Investigative Committee shall proceed as set forth below.
- C. The following processes shall apply to an investigation conducted by the Investigative Committee:
  - 1. If the report alleges a violation by a GAC elected member, then the GAC Chair and the GAC Executive Director shall be notified an investigation has commenced. If the report alleges a violation by a COGA elected member, then the COGA Moderator and the Stated Clerk shall be notified an investigation has commenced.
  - 2. If the report alleges a violation by the GAC Chair, then the vice-chair and the GAC Executive Director shall be notified an investigation has commenced. If the report alleges a violation by the COGA Moderator, then the vice-chair and the Stated Clerk shall be notified an investigation has commenced.
  - 3. The Investigative Committee shall be allowed to retain the services of experts it may need to conduct a reasonably thorough investigation.
  - 4. The Investigate Committee may recommend administrative leave for any involved employees while the investigation is in process.
  - 5. The Investigative Committee will promptly conduct its work. The typical investigation will include the following steps:
    - a. Interview all parties involved with relevant knowledge, including but not limited to the accuser and the accused (if possible). Secure and review any relevant documents or other communications (if available and appropriate).
    - b. Determine if there is a potential for risk to persons or property. If there is a potential risk, take reasonable measures as appropriate to protect those persons and property.

Complete a written report of the findings and recommendations, (including discipline of the elected member). The Investigative Committee will provide a copy of its report (including all relevant documents) to the Audit Committee. At the same time the report is submitted to the Audit Committee, copies will be provided to the accused and the accuser. The chair/moderator of the body and the GAC Executive Director or Stated Clerk (as appropriate) will also receive a copy. Generally, the accused and the accuser will have seven business days to submit written comments to the Audit Committee in response to the Investigative Committee's written report. The Chair of the Audit Committee may extend this period if such an extension is reasonably necessary.

- 6. All elected members and employees are required to fully cooperate with these investigations, and shall not be retaliated against by supervisors or anyone for cooperating and participating in the investigation.
- 7. The Audit Committee shall consider all the submissions promptly and reach a conclusion. While the Audit Committee does not have the authority to discipline elected members of GAC/COGA, its decision shall include any recommendations in that regard. GAC or COGA, as appropriate, shall give great weight to the decision of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall make a full report of the matter to the GAC Executive Committee and the Executive Director or the COGA Coordinating Committee and the Stated Clerk (as appropriate). Thereafter, the GAC Executive Committee or the COGA Coordinating Committee (as appropriate) will affirm, modify, or reverse the decision of the Audit Committee. In reaching its decision, the GAC Executive Committee or the COGA Coordinating Committee (as appropriate) may also hear from any of the following as it deems fit: the accused, the accuser, the Investigative Committee, and others it deems relevant.
- 8. GAC/COGA will ensure that whistleblower reports submitted under this Ethics Policy are dealt with impartially and confidentially. To that end, information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis so as to fulfill the process. Any elected member who violates the confidentiality of this process shall be subject to disciplinary action by the body with jurisdiction over the elected member.
- 9. GAC/COGA prohibit retaliation, including but not limited to making any threatening communication by verbal, written, or electronic means, against anyone who reports in good faith or provides any information concerning violations of the Ethics Policy or applicable state or federal laws or who provides truthful information relating to the commission or possible commission of any criminal offense to a law enforcement officer. GAC/COGA will not discipline any elected member where the elected member in good faith (or any person acting pursuant to the request of the elected member) reports, discloses, testifies, or otherwise informs GAC/COGA, pursuant to this Ethics Policy, of a violation by an elected member, employee, or organization.

Any elected member found engaging in retaliation will be subject to discipline by the body with jurisdiction over the elected member.

*ATTACHMENT 5*  
Meeting Procedure

Actions taken by the GAC and COGA are recorded in minutes. For purposes of this document, “minutes” includes administrative notes. If an employee, officer or elected member has a conflict of interest with regard to a proposed transaction under consideration at the meeting, that person shall leave the meeting and henceforth refrain from discussing or voting on the matter. The person with the conflict of interest may, however, respond to questions posed by an elected member. The minutes must reflect:

1. the date of the meeting;
2. the names of employees, officers and/or elected members with conflicts of interest regarding the proposed transaction;
3. the names of those who left the meeting;
4. the names of those members who voted on the matter;
5. description of data obtained and relied upon by the GAC or COGA and how the data was obtained;
6. if the transaction is approved between GAC/COGA and the person with a conflict of interest, the basis for the approval (include any difference in comparability data and value of transaction to GAC/COGA and how that affected the approval); and
7. terms of the transaction as approved.

**Appendix 9**  
**Procedures to Follow When a General Assembly Council**  
**Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director Vacancy Occurs**

I. Executive Director, General Assembly Council

When an Executive Director announces the intention to retire, resign, not be available for another term, or there is an unexpected vacancy, the following process shall be followed:

*A. Resignation Procedures*

1. The chair of the council confers with the General Assembly Council Executive Committee regarding next steps.
2. The decision is announced on a schedule agreed to by the Executive Director and the General Assembly Council Executive Committee.
3. The Personnel Committee, and other such persons as may be deemed necessary, shall conduct an exit interview with the Executive Director.

*B. Unexpected Vacancy*

The chair of the council contacts the Personnel Committee and together they take all steps deemed necessary in regard to temporary leadership of the council. These actions shall be binding until the next meeting of General Assembly Council. (Refer to *Book of Order*, G-9.0706)

*C. Interim Procedures*

1. The chair of the council and the chair of the Personnel Committee meet with the staff of the Office of the Executive Director and the Executive Leadership Team to explain procedures, hear concerns, answer questions, and seek their suggestions.
2. The Personnel Committee in consultation with appropriate persons, determines the need for an Interim Executive Director, begins the selection process if it is determined that an Interim Executive Director is needed, and recommends an Interim Executive Director to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee for appointment. An Interim Executive Director cannot be called to be the next Executive Director unless the requirements of *Book of Order*, G-9.0706, are met.

*D. Search Procedures*

1. A search committee composed of seven members of the council shall be elected by the council. The General Assembly Council Nominating Committee shall nominate the membership of the committee, including a chair, representative of the diversity of the council.
2. In order for the General Assembly Committee on Representation to carry out its assigned functions, G-9.0105b, c, and e, a representative of the committee may participate in meetings of special committees elected by the General Assembly or the

General Assembly Council to select nominees for Executive Director during discussions of the position description, advertising, and interview procedures. Discussions of the qualifications of individual candidates and interviews of candidates shall be closed to members of the Committee on Representation unless invited as provided in section 3.(a & c) of the Open Meeting Policy (refer to Appendix 4).

3. When the candidate for Executive Director is being nominated to the General Assembly Council for election, the council shall be provided with the following:
  - a. a brief biographical sketch;
  - b. a personal statement of faith;
  - c. reason(s) candidate is deemed to be suitable for the position;
  - d. the candidate's goals for the term of office.
4. The search, nomination, election, and confirmation proceeds as per the *Organization for Mission*: "the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council shall be elected by the council, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly." The search, nomination, election, and confirmation shall be guided by the *Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action*. Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly. (*Organization for Mission*, Section V.G.)

## II. Deputy Executive Directors

- A. Deputy Executive Directors are selected and hired by the Executive Director, using a search committee that includes elected members of the General Assembly Council and subject to a confirmation vote by the General Assembly Council. Deputy Executive Directors do not have a term.
- B. When the Deputy Executive Director is being submitted to the General Assembly Council for confirmation, the council shall be provided with the following:
  - a brief biographical sketch;
  - a personal statement of faith;
  - reason(s) the individual is deemed to be suitable for the position;
- C. If a vacancy in a Deputy Executive Director position occurs and the Executive Director desires to fill the position on an interim basis, the position will be filled subject to a confirmation vote by the General Assembly Council Executive Committee. An interim Deputy Executive Director cannot be hired to be the next Deputy Executive Director unless the requirements of *Book of Order*, G-9.0706, are met.

### **Appendix 10 Comprehensive Performance Review Processes for the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council**

#### I. Purpose of Performance Review and Regular Consultations

The purpose of all performance reviews and consultations is to discuss and share successes and challenges, goals and performance related to the work of the Executive Director. At each regularly scheduled General Assembly Council meeting, time will be set aside for a private consultation between the Personnel Committee and the Executive Director. The Personnel Committee shall annually conduct a review that complies with the Personnel policies of the General Assembly Council Employee Handbook.

#### II. First-Year, First-Term Performance Review

- A. The purpose of this performance review is to provide support for the newly elected Executive Director, to correct any perceived missteps, to identify potential problems, to celebrate accomplishments, to listen to and identify potential issues and to set goals for the remaining years of the term.
- B. The performance review shall be conducted as follows:
  1. The review team shall consist of the Personnel Committee of the General Assembly Council, chaired by the chair of that committee, and of two (2) at-large members, one of whom may have served on the Executive Director's Nominating Committee.
  2. A review instrument developed by this team shall be utilized and available to the Executive Director and the participants in the review two (2) months prior to the review date.
  3. Participants in the review process shall include all General Assembly Council members, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and a random selection of persons in the following categories:
    - a. GAC staff (both exempt and nonexempt)
    - b. Middle governing body executives and clerks
    - c. The chief administrative officers of the other General Assembly agencies and corporation

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

- d. Others as deemed necessary (e.g., past GAC chairs, Deputy Executive Directors, and ecumenical partners).
4. Comments in response to the review instrument shall be shared in summary with the Executive Director; however, the names of the persons making comments shall be held in confidence by the review team.
5. The Executive Director shall submit to the review committee a written self-evaluation at least two (2) weeks prior to the face-to-face conference. The self-evaluation shall include goals and objectives for the remaining years of the term.
6. The results of this review shall be shared by the review team in a face-to-face interview with the Executive Director.
7. A confidential written summary of the review with goals and objectives shall be prepared by the chair of the review team. Both the chair of the review team and the Executive Director will sign the summary and it will be placed in the appropriate personnel file.
8. A summary of the review shall be presented to the General Assembly Council in closed session at the first meeting of the second year of the term.

### III. Second-Year (Midterm) Performance Reviews, All Terms

- A. The purpose of the second-year performance review is to build on the previous year's experience, to provide constructive support, to strengthen partnerships and to plan for the next two (2) years. This mid-term review provides an opportunity for selected individuals to comment on performance strengths and weaknesses, progress made in meeting goals, and any desirable mid-course corrections.
- B. The performance review shall be conducted as follows:
  1. The performance review team shall consist of the Personnel Committee of the General Assembly Council, chaired by the chair of that committee.
  2. A review instrument developed by this team shall be utilized and available to the Executive Director and the participants in the review two (2) months prior to the review date.
  3. Participants in the review process shall include all General Assembly Council members, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and a random selection of persons in the following categories:
    - a. GAC staff (both exempt and nonexempt)
    - b. Middle governing body executives and clerks
    - c. The chief administrative officers of the other General Assembly agencies and corporation
    - d. Others as deemed necessary (e.g., past GAC chairs, Deputy Executive Directors, and ecumenical partners).
  4. Comments in response to the review instrument shall be shared in summary with the Executive Director; however, the names of the persons making comments shall be held in confidence by the review team.
  5. The results of this review shall be shared by the review team in an informal face-to-face interview with the Executive Director.
  6. A confidential written summary of the review with goals and objectives shall be prepared by the chair of the review team. Both the chair of the review team and the Executive Director will sign the summary and it will be placed in the appropriate personnel file.
  7. A summary of the review shall be presented to the General Assembly Council in closed session during the council's next regular meeting.

### IV. Third Year Performance Review, All Terms

- A. The purpose of this review is to discuss and share successes and challenges, goals and performance related to the work of the Executive Director. A particular goal of this review is the evaluation by the review team and the Executive Director with regards to nomination for an additional term if he or she is eligible and willing to stand for renomination.
- B. The performance review shall be conducted as follows:
  1. The review team shall consist of the Personnel Committee of the General Assembly Council, chaired by the chair of that committee.
  2. A review instrument developed by this team shall be utilized and available to the Executive Director and the participants in the review two (2) months prior to the review date.
  3. Participants in the review process shall include all General Assembly Council members, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and a random selection of persons in the following categories:
    - a. GAC staff (both exempt and nonexempt)

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION AND BUDGETS

- b. Middle governing body executives and clerks
  - c. The chief administrative officers of the other General Assembly agencies and corporation
  - d. Others as deemed necessary (e.g., past GAC chairs, Deputy Executive Directors, and ecumenical partners).
4. Comments in response to the review instrument shall be shared in summary with the Executive Director; however, the names of the persons making comments shall be held in confidence by the review team.
  5. The Executive Director shall submit to the review committee a written self-evaluation at least two (2) weeks prior to the face-to-face conference. The self-evaluation shall include goals and objectives for the remaining years of the term.
  6. The results of this review shall be shared by the review team in a face-to-face interview with the Executive Director.
  7. A confidential written summary of the review with goals and objectives shall be prepared by the chair of the review team. Both the chair of the review team and the Executive Director will sign the summary and it will be placed in the appropriate personnel file.
  8. A summary of the review shall be presented to the General Assembly Council in closed session at the first meeting of the second year of the term.

### V. Fourth-Year Performance Reviews, All Terms

- A. The purpose of this review is to evaluate the performance of the entire term and to prepare for the next term.
- B. The performance review shall be conducted as follows:
  1. The performance review team shall consist of the Personnel Committee of the General Assembly Council, chaired by the chair of that committee.
  2. A review instrument developed by this team shall be utilized and available to the Executive Director and the participants in the review two (2) months prior to the review date.
  3. Participants in the review process shall include all General Assembly Council members, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and a random selection of persons in the following categories:
    - a. GAC staff (both exempt and nonexempt)
    - b. Middle governing body executives and clerks
    - c. The chief administrative officers of the other General Assembly agencies and corporation
    - d. Others as deemed necessary (e.g., past GAC chairs, Deputy Executive Directors, and ecumenical partners).
  4. Comments in response to the review instrument shall be shared in summary with the Executive Director; however, the names of the persons making comments shall be held in confidence by the review team.
  5. The results of this review shall be shared by the review team in an informal face-to-face interview with the Executive Director.
  6. A confidential written summary of the review with goals and objectives shall be prepared and signed by the chair of the review team and the Executive Director and placed in the appropriate personnel file.
  7. A summary of the review shall be presented to the General Assembly Council in closed session during the council's next regular meeting.

### VI. Subsequent Years Terms Performance Reviews

#### A. First-Year Performance Review

This review shall be conducted using the year one format with the following exception:

The review committee shall be the Personnel Committee and not include any members of the Executive Director's Nominating Committee.

#### B. Subsequent (Midterm, Third and Fourth-Year Performance Reviews

Utilize the review processes described in sections III, IV, and V.

### VII. Exit Interview

When an Executive Director leaves the position, the General Assembly Council Personnel Committee will conduct an exit interview. (Appendix 9)

## Appendix 12

### General Assembly Per Capita Apportionment

#### Description of Per Capita

“In order to give meaning to the interdependent nature of Presbyterian polity” (*Book of Order*, G-9.0404), per capita is the responsible way of sharing the costs that equitably belong to the whole Presbyterian Church community expressing the essential unity of the church. The payment of per capita apportionment can be seen as a sign of healthy relationships within the church, giving tangible witness to the unity and wholeness promised to us in Jesus Christ.

The General Assembly per capita apportionment can be historically documented in the Presbyterian Church since the mid-1800s when a plan of mileage was adopted by the General Assembly in order to defray the expenses of commissioners attending meetings of the General Assembly. Over the ensuing years, per capita has been defined in various documents and reports as being used to fund ecclesiastical and administrative functions. The costs of these functions are appropriately shared by the whole church.

The chronology of per capita development in the twentieth century shows that General Assemblies took action to expand the spectrum of functions that the General Assembly per capita finances. Beginning in the early 1920s, the General Assembly voted to enlarge the office of the General Assembly to include various program departments that served the whole church. In the process, the General Assembly agreed to finance related administrative expenses through the General Assembly per capita apportionment. The planning, coordination, and review of mission were included in the former United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1973, and this has been assembly policy for the reunited church since 1983.

#### Definition

Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian Church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians.

#### Per Capita Budget Funding

##### Office of the General Assembly

- General Assembly meetings
- Office of the General Assembly
- Ecumenical participation
- Department of History
- Fair share of mission support expenses

##### General Assembly Council

- General Assembly Council meeting
- Administration, planning, coordination of GAC
- Work of the Advocacy and Advisory Committees
- Communications
- Fair share of mission support expenses

#### Procedures for Per Capita Budget

##### 1. General Assembly Per Capita Budget

- a. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) have joint responsibility for submitting a budget to be supported by per capita funds to the General Assembly. They will also submit an analysis of income which will support the budget and will recommend a per capita apportionment rate. The analysis will include anticipated receipts from per capita apportionment, an itemized estimate of all revenues anticipated from other sources, and the type and amount of funds on hand.
- b. A Joint Budget Table will be convened on the call of either COGA or GAC to make recommendations on unresolved matters.

##### 2. Provision for a Joint Budget Table

- a. The Joint Budget Table, consisting of equal representation from the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), will consider unresolved matters related to the Per Capita budgets and will recommend resolution to their respective bodies.
- b. When COGA and GAC approve the budget and the per capita rate as recommended by the Joint Budget Table, COGA and GAC will jointly submit the budget and apportionment rate to the General Assembly. If agreement is not reached on particular issues, the report to the General Assembly will articulate the respective position of the two bodies.
- c. When necessary, the Joint Budget Table may recommend revisions to the total approved per capita budget. Revisions must be approved by both bodies.
- d. Any revisions that would increase the total budget funded by the per capita apportionment will be recommended by the Joint Budget Table to COGA and GAC for approval. This increase cannot exceed three (3) percent.

**Appendix 13**  
**Policy and Procedures for Submitting Changes to the**  
**GAC Manual of Operations**

I. Purpose of this Policy

To provide for consistency among the manuals of the committees accountable to the GAC and consistency of all manual of operations with the current *General Assembly Council Manual of Operations*, the *Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, plus any other pertinent documents.

II. Policy and Procedures

- A. Individual GAC members may submit proposed changes to the GAC Manual of Operations in writing to the GAC Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee chair a minimum of one (1) month prior to a GAC meeting.
- B. The Procedures Subcommittee shall respond, and may recommend, to submitting entities alterations to be made to their proposed changes to ensure consistency with existing GAC documents a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to a GAC meeting.
- C. Committee of the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and/or General Assembly (GA) shall submit their substantial\* proposed changes to the *GAC Manual of Operations* through their own customary processes.
- D. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), who are accountable to the GAC, shall submit substantial\* proposed changes to their manual of operations to the GAC, through the Procedures Subcommittee of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee, following customary procedures, for adoption or rejection.

III. Approval Process

The General Assembly Council may change those appendixes to the *Manual of Operations* that are within its purview following a first reading, which may be electronic, and adoption at a subsequent plenary session. First reading and action may take place during the same session of the General Assembly Council. The General Assembly Council Executive Committee shall submit a written report of changes to the appendixes to the next General Assembly

\* "Substantial" changes are defined as non-editorial changes that alter the organization or functioning of the named entity.

**Appendix 14**  
**General Assembly Council Program Review**

*This appendix is under development*

Item 08-C

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION**

**CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
AND SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES  
(WITH INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT THEREON)  
December 31, 2007**



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
(WITH INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT THEREON)  
December 31, 2007

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Crowe Chizek and Company LLC  
Member Horwath International

## REPORT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

The Board of Directors  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

We have audited the accompanying consolidated statements of financial position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (the "Organization") as of December 31, 2007 and the related consolidated statements of activities and changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These consolidated financial statements are the responsibility of the Organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation as of December 31, 2007, the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the 2007 basic consolidated financial statements taken as a whole. The consolidating information presented on pages 21 through 24 is presented for purposes of additional analysis of the consolidated financial statements rather than to present the financial position, results of operations, and cash flows of the individual organizations. The consolidated information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic consolidated financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the 2007 basic consolidated financial statements taken as a whole.

*Crowe Chizek and Company LLC*  
Crowe Chizek and Company LLC

Louisville, Kentucky  
April 22, 2008

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
December 31, 2007

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<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,601,473
Investments	
Investments and accrued income held by the Foundation	100,868,934
Other investments and accrued income	<u>41,901,623</u>
Total investments	142,770,557
Receivables	
Contributions from congregations	9,547,572
Mortgages and loans on churches and manses, including accrued interest, less allowance of \$5,500	5,333,466
Receivables from related entities, mortgages and loans, less allowance of \$1,330,990	7,758,361
Other accounts receivable	<u>163,344</u>
Total receivables	22,802,743
Inventories, prepaid expenses and other assets	4,401,945
Property and equipment, net	31,989,579
Residual interest in annuity and life income funds held by the Foundation	10,267,689
Long-term investments held by the Foundation	383,173,789
Funds held in trust by others	<u>65,081,492</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 664,089,267</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	
Liabilities	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 8,074,449
Amounts received from congregations and designated for others	1,108,518
Amounts held for missionaries and committed for projects	5,780,997
Amounts due to other agencies	11,956,519
Deferred revenue	836,244
Due to the Foundation	2,237,728
Other	<u>680,534</u>
Total liabilities	30,674,989
Net assets	
Unrestricted	
Undesignated	92,851,028
Designated	<u>60,491,980</u>
Total unrestricted	153,343,008
Temporarily restricted	216,239,743
Permanently restricted	<u>263,831,527</u>
Total net assets	633,414,278
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 664,089,267</u></b>

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See accompanying notes.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
Year ended December 31, 2007

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Revenue, gains, and other support</b>				
<b>Contributions</b>				
Congregations	\$ 26,326,980	\$ 4,791,612	\$ -	\$ 31,118,592
Presbyterian Women	1,042,450	42,000	-	1,084,450
Gifts, bequests, and grants	3,903,043	3,010,351	1,859,253	8,772,647
Special giving and special offering	<u>43,737</u>	<u>28,440,519</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>28,484,256</u>
Total contributions	31,316,210	36,284,482	1,859,253	69,459,945
Income from endowment funds held by the Foundation	4,032,366	3,991,701	217,815	8,241,882
Income on investments	1,706,333	1,599,170	139,365	3,444,868
Income from funds held by others	872,309	155,901	-	1,028,210
Realized and unrealized gains on investments, net	6,947,269	9,417,576	5,052,296	21,417,141
Interest income from loans	71,742	98,029	202,701	372,472
Change in value of beneficial interest in life income funds	-	(395,025)	(110,857)	(505,882)
Hubbard Press	1,671,890	-	-	1,671,890
Sales of resources and services	19,438,904	666,352	-	20,105,256
Other	<u>1,257,784</u>	<u>245,534</u>	<u>1,800</u>	<u>1,505,118</u>
	67,314,807	52,063,720	7,362,373	126,740,900
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>52,959,904</u>	<u>(52,959,904)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total revenue, gains, and other support	120,274,711	(896,184)	7,362,373	126,740,900
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b>Programs</b>				
Executive Administrator	1,620,567	-	-	1,620,567
Communication and Fund Development	7,415,622	-	-	7,415,622
Mission	69,067,188	-	-	69,067,188
Shared Services	10,151,192	-	-	10,151,192
Office of the General Assembly	10,496,542	-	-	10,496,542
General Assembly Council	2,617,743	-	-	2,617,743
Presbyterian Historical Council	556,905	-	-	556,905
Conference Center - Ghost Ranch	5,570,946	-	-	5,570,946
Conference Center - Stony Point	1,826,872	-	-	1,826,872
Hubbard Press	1,409,281	-	-	1,409,281
Related Bodies and Other Programs	<u>6,716,600</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,716,600</u>
	117,449,458	-	-	117,449,458
<b>General and administrative</b>				
Shared	3,301,870	-	-	3,301,870
Other	<u>1,314,312</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,314,312</u>
	4,616,182	-	-	4,616,182
Total expenses	<u>122,065,640</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>122,065,640</u>
Change in net assets	(1,790,929)	(896,184)	7,362,373	4,675,260
Net assets beginning of year, as previously reported	151,625,132	217,135,927	259,977,959	628,739,018
Prior period adjustment	<u>3,508,805</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(3,508,805)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net assets beginning of year, as restated	<u>155,133,937</u>	<u>217,135,927</u>	<u>256,469,154</u>	<u>628,739,018</u>
<b>Net assets end of year</b>	<u>\$ 153,343,008</u>	<u>\$ 216,239,743</u>	<u>\$ 263,831,527</u>	<u>\$633,414,278</u>

See accompanying notes.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
Years ended December 31, 2007

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<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>	
Change in net assets	\$ 4,675,260
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash from operating activities	
Depreciation	3,473,839
Net recoveries for losses on church loans	(2,500)
Contributions and revolving loan fund investment earnings restricted for long-term investment	(2,392,966)
Realized and unrealized gains on investments, net	(21,417,141)
Change in market value of annuity and life income funds	(499,981)
Loss on disposal of property	671,111
Additions to annuity and life income funds	(125,939)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities	
Contributions from congregations	(309,513)
Due from the Foundation	13,570,671
Other accounts receivable	824,932
Inventories, prepaid expenses and other assets	(818,904)
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	(451,602)
Amounts received from congregations and other liabilities	(279,650)
Amounts due to other agencies	1,463,280
Deferred revenue	(96,563)
Net cash from operating activities	<u>(1,715,666)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>	
Purchases of investments	(177,147,336)
Sales of investments	171,898,470
New church loans issued	(844,150)
Payments received on church loans	486,913
Change in accrued interest receivable on church loans	(2,795)
Net change in receivables from related entities, mortgages and loans	592,817
Acquisition of property and equipment	(1,743,813)
Net cash from investing activities	<u>(6,759,894)</u>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>	
Contributions and revolving loan fund investment earnings restricted for long-term investment	2,392,966
Maturities of annuity and life income funds	<u>1,131,802</u>
Net cash from financing activities	<u>3,524,768</u>
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(4,950,792)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>8,552,265</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<u>\$ 3,601,473</u>

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See accompanying notes.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 1 - ORGANIZATION AND NATURE OF OPERATIONS**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), ("PCUSA") is an unincorporated body of Reformed Christians, who have agreed to conduct worship and other religious activities in conformity with the then current version of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Constitution, which contains among other things, in its Book of Order, a Form of Government setting forth a detailed formal structure of the Church. As an ecclesiastical organization, PCUSA does not exist under any federal law. Central to the structure of PCUSA is the concept of governing bodies. At the national level, the governing body is the General Assembly. The ecclesiastical work of the PCUSA at the General Assembly level is carried out by a number of ministry units and related agencies.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation ("PCUSA, A Corporation") is a corporate entity of the General Assembly of PCUSA, and is the principal corporation of the General Assembly. All voting members of the General Assembly Council are members of the Board of Directors of PCUSA, A Corporation. PCUSA, A Corporation receives and holds title to property and income at the General Assembly level related to mission activities, generally maintains and manages all real and tangible property, including the insuring of such property, effects short-term investment of funds prior to either their disbursement or transfer to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (the Foundation) for longer-term investment; acts as the disbursing agent for all funds held for the General Assembly and for other governing bodies and entities upon their request; and provides accounting, reporting and other financial and related services as the General Assembly or General Assembly Council may direct or approve.

PCUSA, A Corporation is a tax-exempt religious corporation under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 2 - BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Basis of Presentation: The accompanying consolidated financial statements reflect the consolidated operations of PCUSA, A Corporation and its constituent corporations, which are presented on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The constituent corporations of PCUSA, A Corporation are the following: General Assembly Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); The Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Inc.; The Hubbard Press; Pedco, Inc.; The Presbyterian Historical Society, Inc.; Presbyterian Life, Inc.; Presbyterian Publishing House of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc.; The Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (formerly known as Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America) a New York corporation; Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and The Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a New York nonprofit corporation.

In order to ensure the observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of available resources, PCUSA, A Corporation maintains its financial accounts in accordance with the principles and practices of fund accounting. This is the procedure by which resources for various purposes are classified for accounting purposes into funds established in accordance with their nature or purpose.

For external reporting purposes, however, PCUSA, A Corporation's financial statements have been prepared to focus on the organization as a whole and to present balances and transactions classified in accordance with the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Net assets and related activity are classified as unrestricted, temporarily restricted and permanently restricted as follows:

- Unrestricted Undesignated - net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions. Unrestricted undesignated net assets consist of the accumulation of certain contributions, gifts, bequests, and related income thereon, which are available for general church purposes.
- Unrestricted Designated - net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions. Unrestricted designated net assets consist of the accumulation of certain contributions, gifts, bequests, and related income thereon that have been designated for specific purposes by the General Assembly Council of the General Assembly.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 2 - BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

- Temporarily Restricted - net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions that may or will be met either by actions of PCUSA, A Corporation or the passage of time. Temporarily restricted net assets primarily consist of contributions and related investment income.
- Permanently Restricted - net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions to be maintained permanently by PCUSA, A Corporation. Generally, the donors of these assets permit PCUSA, A Corporation to use all or part of the income earned on related investments for general or specific purposes. Permanently restricted net assets consist primarily of endowment funds and revolving loan funds.

Cash Equivalents: For purposes of reporting cash flows, PCUSA, A Corporation considers investments with an original maturity of three months or less when purchased to be cash equivalents.

Investments: Investments are recorded at fair value based on quoted market prices. Investment transactions are recorded on a trade-date basis. Realized gains and losses are recorded using the specific identification of securities sold on funds held by the Foundation and using the historical cost of securities sold on funds held by other investment managers.

The trustee believes that the carrying amount of its alternative investments is a reasonable estimate of fair value as of December 31, 2007. Because alternative investments are not readily marketable, the estimated value is subject to uncertainty and, therefore, may differ from the value that would have been used had a ready market for the investments existed and such differences could be material.

Long-term investments held by the Foundation represent General Assembly endowment funds, which are generally not available for immediate use.

Contributions from Congregations: Contributions from congregations include amounts in-transit at year-end.

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(Continued)



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 2 - BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

Allowance for Loan Losses: The allowance for loan losses is maintained at a level considered by management to be adequate to provide for loan losses inherent in the loan portfolio. Management determines the adequacy of the allowance based upon reviews of payment history, recent loss experience, current economic conditions, the risk characteristics of the various categories of loans and such other factors, which in management's judgment deserve current recognition in estimating loan losses. The allowance for loan losses is increased by the provision for loan losses and reduced by net loan charge-offs.

Annuity and Life Income Funds: PCUSA, A Corporation is an income beneficiary of trust funds held by the Foundation. In accordance with SFAS No. 116, *Accounting for Contributions Received and Contributions Made*, and SFAS No. 136, *Transfers of Assets to a Not-For-Profit Organization or Charitable Trust That Raises or Holds Contributions for Others*, PCUSA, A Corporation has recorded as an asset the net present value of the future income to be received from the funds.

Inventories: Inventories represent books, periodicals, and curriculum produced by PCUSA, A Corporation for distribution. These items are stated at average cost.

Property and Equipment: Property and equipment consists principally of the PCUSA, A Corporation headquarters building and related land and equipment, and domestic properties used for mission work, cemeteries, undeveloped land and property held for disposition.

The PCUSA, A Corporation headquarters building and related land and equipment are stated at cost, or fair value at the date of donation, if donated. The domestic properties used for mission work, cemeteries, racial ethnic schools, undeveloped land, and other properties are recorded based on fair value at date of donation, appraisal value or replacement cost. Expenditures, of greater than \$5,000, which increase values or extend the useful lives of the respective assets are capitalized. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

PCUSA, A Corporation holds title to various other foreign properties. Such properties include properties used for mission work, cemeteries, undeveloped land, and property held for disposition. Shared Services has administrative responsibility for property taxes, insurance, maintenance and improvements for these properties. Generally, it is PCUSA, A Corporation's policy to exclude the cost or donated value of foreign properties from its financial records.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 2 - BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

Deferred Revenue: PCUSA, A Corporation holds special events each year. Monies received to support future special events are recorded as deferred revenue.

Collections: PCUSA, A Corporation's collections consist of works of art, ecclesiastical objects and papers, historical treasures, scientific specimens and other assets. The collections, which were acquired through purchases and contributions since PCUSA, A Corporation's inception, are not recognized as assets on the consolidated statements of financial position. Purchases of collection items are recorded as decreases in unrestricted net assets in the year in which the items are acquired, or as temporarily or permanently restricted net assets if the assets used to purchase the items are restricted by donors. Contributed collection items are not reflected on the consolidated financial statements. Proceeds from deaccessions or insurance recoveries are reflected as increases in the appropriate net asset classes.

Use of Estimates: The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements. Estimates also affect the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. The more significant estimates made relate to the valuation of mortgages, loans, and contributions receivable and valuation of investments. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 3 - TEMPORARILY AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Temporarily and permanently restricted net assets at December 31, 2007 are available for the following purposes:

	Temporarily Restricted <u>Net Assets</u>	Permanently Restricted <u>Net Assets</u>
Church Loans	\$ 2,154,338	\$ 18,371,975
Jinishian Memorial Program	33,823,576	9,594,927
Education	27,369,661	15,931,574
Mission work	20,445,172	3,537,856
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	22,306,794	-
Evangelism and church growth	20,974,052	5,002,723
Health	18,335,374	9,711,546
Missionary support	43,717,845	11,515,228
Christian education	15,261,725	11,027,590
Peace making/Justice	2,204,178	64,524
Hunger	1,384,023	310,310
Outside Trusts/Life Income Funds	2,942,398	72,314,008
Racial ethnic	142,567	168,532
Women	713,041	77,559
Historical Foundation/Per Capita	1,711,687	782,632
General endowments	-	104,771,589
Other	<u>2,753,312</u>	<u>648,954</u>
	<u>\$216,239,743</u>	<u>\$263,831,527</u>

Net assets released from restrictions during the year ended December 31, 2007, consisted of the following:

Jinishian Memorial Program	\$ 2,309,955
Education	4,019,848
Mission work	9,303,353
Evangelism and church growth	4,240,617
Health	2,828,892
Missionary support	6,740,295
Christian education	2,923,702
Peace making/Justice	1,242,354
Hunger	3,820,472
Presbyterian disaster assistance	12,662,113
Self development of people	<u>2,868,303</u>
	<u>\$ 52,959,904</u>

(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 4 - INVESTMENTS**

Investments, including long-term investments, are primarily held in common funds managed by the Foundation on behalf of PCUSA, A Corporation. A summary of PCUSA, A Corporation's ownership of the investments held at December 31, 2007 is as follows:

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Fair Value</u>
Short-term investments	\$ 66,665,040	\$ 66,665,040
Deposits	4,368,471	4,368,471
Stocks	108,782	24,935,318
Bonds	25,560,837	25,746,412
Stock mutual funds	244,990,368	259,594,242
Bond mutual funds	106,186,750	111,496,873
Alternative investments	<u>30,619,712</u>	<u>33,137,990</u>
 Total investments	 <u>\$ 478,499,960</u>	 <u>\$ 525,944,346</u>

Income received by PCUSA, A Corporation from the Foundation is net of outside investment managers, custodian and Foundation administrative fees.

**NOTE 5 - FUNDS HELD IN TRUST BY OTHERS**

Funds held in trust by others represent resources neither in the possession nor under the control of PCUSA, A Corporation, but held and administered by outside trustees, with PCUSA, A Corporation deriving only income from such funds. Such investments are recorded in the consolidated statement of financial position at the fair value of the principal amounts, which represents the estimated present value of the expected future cash flows, and the income, including fair value adjustments, is recorded in the consolidated statement of activities and changes in net assets.

**NOTE 6 - INCOME FROM ENDOWMENT NET ASSETS**

Unrestricted Net Assets and Restricted Net Assets: PCUSA, A Corporation has a spending formula agreement with the Foundation whereby PCUSA, A Corporation receives investment income from unrestricted and restricted endowments held by the Foundation on behalf of the General Assembly for mission use.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 6 - INCOME FROM ENDOWMENT NET ASSETS (Continued)**

For the calendar year 2007, the distribution of income was 5% of the average annual fair value based on the 20-quarter rolling average as of June 30, 2004 (an eighteen-month lag).

Payments for calendar year 2007 and subsequent years will use the same eighteen-month lag. It is anticipated that payments will approximate the estimated sustainable rates of total return (income and a portion of capital appreciation) after inflation. This formula will be monitored to determine the effects of changing return and inflation expectations on the preservation of purchasing power and the generation of appropriate levels of spendable income.

**NOTE 7 - MORTGAGES AND LOANS ON CHURCHES AND MANSES**

A summary of the activity relating to mortgages and loans on churches and manses during the years ended December 31, 2007 follows:

Receivables at January 1	\$ 4,967,349
New loans	844,150
Repayments	<u>(486,913)</u>
Receivables at December 31	5,324,586
Add accrued interest receivable	<u>14,380</u>
	5,338,966
Less allowance for loss	<u>(5,500)</u>
Net receivables at December 31	<u>\$ 5,333,466</u>

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 7 - MORTGAGES AND LOANS ON CHURCHES AND MANSES (Continued)**

The ability of each borrower congregation to pay PCUSA, A Corporation for the loan(s) made to the congregation may depend on the contributions the congregation receives from its members. Therefore, payments to PCUSA, A Corporation may depend on the continued growth in membership of the borrower congregations, and on the maintenance of adequate contributions by individual members to their congregations, as well as on prudent management by those congregations of their finances. The following is a summary of the gross loan balances for each Synod at December 31, 2007:

<u>Synod</u>	<u>Gross Loan Balance</u>
Alaska-Northwest	\$ -
Covenant	466,209
Lakes and Prairies	14,919
Lincoln Trails	444,150
Living Waters	27,852
Mid-America	-
Mid-Atlantic	374,433
Northeast	421,863
Pacific	18,251
South Atlantic	2,089,063
Southern California/Hawaii	403,748
Southwest	606,322
The Rocky Mountains	-
The Sun	290,200
Trinity	<u>167,576</u>
	<u>\$ 5,324,586</u>

**NOTE 8 - ALLOWANCES FOR LOAN LOSSES AND IMPAIRMENT OF LOANS**

The outstanding principal balances of loans to churches, students, and Presbyterian schools and colleges for which an impairment has been recognized at December 31, 2007 were approximately \$1,336,490, and the related allocated allowance for loan losses at December 31, 2007 were \$30,000. No interest was received by PCUSA, A Corporation, on the impaired loans during 2007. The total average impaired loan balance was approximately \$1,343,401 at December 31, 2007.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 9 - RECEIVABLES FROM RELATED ENTITIES**

A summary of the activity relating to receivables from related entities, which includes unsecured student loans, during the year ended December 31, 2007 follows:

Receivables at January 1	\$ 9,693,490
New loans	16,309,089
Repayments	(16,379,890)
Loan recoveries (charge-offs)	<u>(533,338)</u>
Receivables at December 31	9,089,351
Less allowance for loss	<u>1,330,990</u>
Net receivables at December 31	<u>\$ 7,758,361</u>

**NOTE 10 - PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

The components of property and equipment at December 31, 2007 follow:

Land	\$ 3,887,958
Buildings and building improvements	47,459,344
Furniture and equipment	<u>24,755,311</u>
	76,102,613
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>44,113,034</u>
	<u>\$ 31,989,579</u>

**NOTE 11 - BENEFITS DATA**

As explained below, PCUSA, A Corporation offers a multi-employer defined benefit plan, a major medical plan and a retirement savings plan to eligible employees.

Substantially all employees of PCUSA, A Corporation participates in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ("the Benefits Plan") which is administered by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ("the Board of Pensions"). The Benefits Plan is a comprehensive benefits program, which provides a defined benefit pension plan, a long-term disability plan, a death benefits plan and a major medical plan. The assets of the Benefits Plan are commingled for investment purposes; however, accounting for each plan is separately maintained.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 11 - BENEFITS DATA** (Continued)

As of December 31, 2007, net assets available for plan benefits exceeded the actuarial value of accumulated plan benefits for each of these plans. Because the Benefits Plan is a Church Plan under the Internal Revenue Code, PCUSA, A Corporation has no financial interest in the Benefits Plan assets nor does it have any liability for benefits payable, contingent or otherwise, under the Benefits Plan or its components.

The defined benefit pension plan's total net assets available for benefits, as reported by the Board of Pensions, were \$7,095,094,000 at December 31, 2007. The defined benefit pension plan's total Accumulated Plan Benefit Obligations, as reported by the Board of Pensions, were \$4,503,023,000 at December 31, 2007.

PCUSA, A Corporation pays the entire cost associated with the major medical plan. Employees have the option to purchase additional coverage such as dental, long-term care, and life insurance.

In addition, PCUSA, A Corporation sponsors a retirement savings plan, which is a tax-deferred annuity plan. The employer contribution is designed to provide equalization of the impact of tax differences between clergy and lay personnel. All exempt lay employees are eligible to participate in the employer portion of the plan. PCUSA, A Corporation pays an amount based upon a calculation of tax differences. Substantially all employees may make voluntary contributions to the plan.

PCUSA, A Corporation's expenses for the plans for the year ended December 31, 2007 were as follows:

Administered by Board of Pensions	
Pension plan	\$ 3,667,261
Major medical plan	<u>6,344,038</u>
	10,011,299
Administered by others - retirement	
savings plan	<u>293,417</u>
	<u>\$ 10,304,716</u>

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(Continued)



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 12 - CONCENTRATION OF RISKS**

Revenue Risk: PCUSA, A Corporation's primary source of revenue is contributions from Congregations, Presbyteries, Synods and individuals. The majority of these contributions are transmitted via the Presbyteries that are grouped into 16 Synods comprising of a total of 173 Presbyteries. The following is a summary of the contributions by each of the Synods during the year ended 2007:

<u>Synod</u>	<u>Contributions</u>
Alaska-Northwest	\$ 1,097,595
Covenant	3,648,546
Individuals and Other Church Related	8,791,504
Lakes and Prairies	3,035,619
Lincoln Trails	2,876,366
Living Waters	2,054,152
Mid-America	1,674,361
Mid-Atlantic	5,367,093
Northeast	4,282,959
Pacific	2,869,295
Puerto Rico	45,048
South Atlantic	4,244,155
Southern California/Hawaii	2,122,478
Southwest	955,920
The Rocky Mountains	1,057,251
The Sun	2,880,010
Trinity	<u>5,154,805</u>
	<u>\$ 52,157,157</u>

Credit Risk: PCUSA, A Corporation maintains cash and cash equivalents with various financial institutions. At times, such cash and cash equivalents may be in excess of the FDIC insurance level.

At December 31, 2007, approximately 5.1% total short-term investments and long-term investments held by the Foundation were held in one common stock, The Proctor & Gamble Company.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 13 - FAIR VALUES OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The following methods and assumptions were used by PCUSA, A Corporation in estimating its fair value disclosures for financial instruments:

Cash and Short-Term Investments: The carrying amounts reported in the consolidated statements of financial position for cash and short-term instruments, included in investments and accrued income, approximate their fair value.

Investment Securities: Fair values for investment securities, which equal the carrying amount reported in the consolidated statements of financial position, are based on quoted market prices, where available. If quoted market prices are not available, fair values are based on quoted market prices of comparable instruments.

Mortgages and Loans: PCUSA, A Corporation's loan portfolio consisted of approximately 36 church loans (\$5.3 million), some of which are collateralized by church properties, and 1,189 unsecured student loans (\$3.2 million) at December 31, 2007. Generally, the church loans have repayment terms of 10 to 20 years and the student loans have repayments terms of 2 to 10 years. These loans are considered a part of the mission of PCUSA, A Corporation and their carrying values approximate fair values based on current interest rates and the present value of the estimated future cash flows.

**NOTE 14 - COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES**

PCUSA, A Corporation holds and participates in an insurance fund (the Fund) that exists to provide a source of funds for that portion of certain losses not covered by commercial insurance to cover deductibles on commercial insurance and for certain classes of uninsured losses. Various General Assembly-level agencies and corporations are included in the Fund. The largest possible loss to be assumed in any one event or occurrence is \$250,000, with \$1,000,000 as the largest potential aggregate of all claims in a single calendar year.

The minimum balance of the self-insurance fund shall not fall below \$5,000,000 as a result of claims paid. In the event this happens, an assessment will be made to the insured entities to return the fund to the \$5,000,000 minimum balance. The assessment will be based on each insured entity's 5-year loss ratio. A 1% minimum assessment will be made by the entities that have not experienced any losses in the 5-year period.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 14 - COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES (Continued)**

The balance of the Fund held by PCUSA, A Corporation was \$6,251,062 at December 31, 2007.

Additionally, PCUSA, A Corporation has excess insurance coverage for certain losses covered by commercial insurance up to \$25 million per occurrence on a policy that sits over the general liability and auto liability policies.

During the ordinary course of business, PCUSA, A Corporation is subject to pending and threatened legal actions. Management of PCUSA, A Corporation does not believe that any of these actions will have a material adverse effect on PCUSA, A Corporation's consolidated financial position or change in net assets.

**NOTE 15 - RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The Foundation provides certain investment, custodial and deferred giving services to PCUSA, A Corporation. The Foundation recoups the cost of those services not covered from the income of its own endowment funds and the annual grant from the General Assembly by quarterly charges against the investment pools in which the funds administered by the Foundation are invested. These charges were recovered equally from the principal and income of these pools. Such costs consist of salary and benefits, 51% of the Foundation's operating expenses; outside investment services, 23% of the Foundation's operating expenses; and other operating expenses, 26% of the Foundation's operating expenses.

The income received by PCUSA, A Corporation from the Foundation is net of outside investment managers, custody and Foundation administrative fees as described previously. PCUSA, A Corporation's investments and unrestricted and restricted endowment funds held by the Foundation on behalf of the General Assembly at December 31, 2007 totaled approximately \$484 million.

The Foundation's custodial cost recovery and investment management fees are assessed daily based on the prior day's market value against the total fund.

There are certain church loan funds whereby the fiduciary ownership belongs to the Board of National Missions, a constituent corporation of the Foundation. Accordingly, these funds are not reflected in the consolidated financial statements but are administered by PCUSA, A Corporation. These loan funds were \$197 million at December 31, 2007.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 15 - RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS (Continued)**

PCUSA, A Corporation served as a receiving agent for funds designated for the Board of Pensions. PCUSA, A Corporation received approximately \$2,388,891 for the year ended December 31, 2007, of which \$817,146 was yet to be remitted to the Board of Pensions at December 31, 2007.

PCUSA, A Corporation leases office space and provides administrative support to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. ("PILP") by contract. For the year ended December 31, 2007, administrative support charged to PILP was approximately \$130,123. Office space charged to PILP was approximately \$46,464 for 2007.

On June 29, 2000, PCUSA, A Corporation entered into an operating agreement with PILP under which PILP will provide administrative services (e.g., origination and loan servicing) for PCUSA, A Corporation's church loan program at cost in an effort to streamline the coordination process between PCUSA, A Corporation's church loan program and PILP's loan program. PCUSA, A Corporation reimbursed PILP approximately \$250,966 for the actual costs of such services during 2007.

PCUSA, A Corporation and PILP have issued joint loans through a participation arrangement. For the year ended December 31, 2007, PCUSA, A Corporation's amount was \$24,960,426 under this participation arrangement.

The current commitment, effective May 1, 2004, to PILP is a five-year commitment to invest up to \$5,000,000 in short and intermediate term deposit accounts. As of December 31, 2007, investments with PILP were \$8,385,915. At December 31, 2007 fixed interest rates ranged from 3.44% to 4.28%, and the adjustable rate ranged from 3.83% to 4.16%. For the year ended December 31, 2007, the Foundation did not invest with PILP from PCUSA, A Corporation's unrestricted endowment funds.

PCUSA, A Corporation leases office space to Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) under an operating lease. For the year ended December 31, 2007, rental income was approximately \$152,611. Future minimum rental income under the operating lease, which expires in December 2011 with an option to renew, is approximately \$163,924 annually.

Other related expenses charged to PPC for telephone and copy services were approximately \$131,421 in 2007. There were no expenses related to computer system services in 2007.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2007

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**NOTE 15 - RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS (Continued)**

PPC publishes various pamphlets, magazines, and books for PCUSA, A Corporation during the year on a project-by-project basis. Expenses related to this type of work were approximately \$0 in 2007. PPC also pays PCUSA, A Corporation for advertising space in various church publications. Advertising expense under such arrangements was approximately \$13,560 in 2007.

PCUSA, A Corporation participates in commercial insurance programs, whereby premiums are negotiated and paid by PCUSA, A Corporation. The Board of Pensions, Foundation, PILP and PPC reimburse PCUSA, A Corporation for expenses paid on their behalf. Expenses incurred for commercial insurance paid by PCUSA, A Corporation for December 31, 2007 are as follows:

Foundation	\$ 119,766
Board of Pensions	449,426
PILP	47,295
PPC	91,215

**NOTE 16 - INCOME TAXES**

PCUSA, A Corporation qualifies as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, no income taxes have been provided in the accompanying financial statements.

**NOTE 17 - RESTATEMENT**

The financial statements for prior periods have been restated to reflect certain corrections to prior year balances. The adjustments were to reclassify approximately \$3.5 million from permanently restricted net assets to unrestricted net assets for certain church loans.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES**

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
December 31, 2007

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	<u>General Mission</u>	<u>Plant</u>	<u>Hubbard Press</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,719,516	\$ -	\$ 2,284
Investments			
Investments and accrued income held by the Foundation	81,786,155	2,481,713	-
Other investments and accrued income	<u>35,379,087</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,232,534</u>
Total investments	<u>117,165,242</u>	<u>2,481,713</u>	<u>1,232,534</u>
Receivables			
Contributions from congregations	9,546,788	-	-
Mortgages and loans on churches and manses, including accrued interest, less allowance of \$5,500	-	-	-
Receivables from related entities, mortgages and loans, less allowance of \$1,330,990	3,118,708	-	189,520
Due (to) from other funds	(22,443)	(119,363)	269,009
Other accounts receivable	<u>177,718</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total receivables	<u>12,820,771</u>	<u>(119,363)</u>	<u>458,529</u>
Inventories, prepaid expenses and other assets	2,365,883	-	375,710
Property and equipment, net	1,731,108	27,987,847	295,726
Residual interest in annuity and life income funds held by the Foundation	10,267,689	-	-
Long-term investments held by the Foundation	379,699,946	-	-
Funds held in trust by others	<u>65,081,492</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<u>\$ 590,851,647</u>	<u>\$ 30,350,197</u>	<u>\$ 2,364,783</u>

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(Continued)

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<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Loans</u>	<u>Per Capita</u>	<u>Eliminations</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,879,673	\$ -	\$ 3,601,473
-	9,067,279	7,533,787	-	100,868,934
-	<u>3,415,872</u>	<u>1,874,130</u>	-	<u>41,901,623</u>
-	<u>12,483,151</u>	<u>9,407,917</u>	-	<u>142,770,557</u>
-	-	784	-	9,547,572
-	5,333,466	-	-	5,333,466
676,706	3,352,155	2,395,060	(1,973,788)	7,758,361
-	(555,217)	428,014	-	-
-	-	<u>(14,374)</u>	-	<u>163,344</u>
<u>676,706</u>	<u>8,130,404</u>	<u>2,809,484</u>	<u>(1,973,788)</u>	<u>22,802,743</u>
1,636,272	-	24,080	-	4,401,945
-	-	1,974,898	-	31,989,579
-	-	-	-	10,267,689
-	2,040,906	1,432,937	-	383,173,789
-	-	-	-	<u>65,081,492</u>
<u>\$ 2,312,978</u>	<u>\$ 22,654,461</u>	<u>\$ 17,528,989</u>	<u>\$ (1,973,788)</u>	<u>\$ 664,089,267</u>

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
December 31, 2007

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	<u>General Mission</u>	<u>Plant</u>	<u>Hubbard Press</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>			
Liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 7,981,019	\$ -	\$ 12,537
Amounts received from congregations and designated for others	1,108,441	-	-
Amounts held for missionaries and committed for projects	5,780,997	-	-
Amounts due to other agencies	11,956,519	-	-
Deferred revenue	830,375	-	-
Due to Foundation	2,236,311	-	-
Other	<u>554,809</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(9,592)</u>
Total liabilities	<u>30,448,471</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,945</u>
Net assets			
Unrestricted			
Undesignated	85,703,744	-	-
Designated	<u>17,550,664</u>	<u>30,350,197</u>	<u>2,361,838</u>
Total unrestricted	<u>103,254,408</u>	<u>30,350,197</u>	<u>2,361,838</u>
Temporarily restricted	212,373,715	-	-
Permanently restricted	<u>244,775,053</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total net assets	<u>560,403,176</u>	<u>30,350,197</u>	<u>2,361,838</u>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<u>\$ 590,851,647</u>	<u>\$ 30,350,197</u>	<u>\$ 2,364,783</u>

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<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Loans</u>	<u>Per Capita</u>	<u>Eliminations</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$ 2,038,138	\$ -	\$ 16,543	\$ (1,973,788)	\$ 8,074,449
-	-	77	-	1,108,518
-	-	-	-	5,780,997
-	-	-	-	11,956,519
-	-	5,869	-	836,244
-	-	1,417	-	2,237,728
<u>135,493</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(176)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>680,534</u>
<u>2,173,631</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>23,730</u>	<u>(1,973,788)</u>	<u>30,674,989</u>
-	-	7,147,284	-	92,851,028
<u>139,347</u>	<u>2,226,282</u>	<u>7,863,652</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>60,491,980</u>
<u>139,347</u>	<u>2,226,282</u>	<u>15,010,936</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>153,343,008</u>
-	2,154,338	1,711,690	-	216,239,743
-	<u>18,273,841</u>	<u>782,633</u>	-	<u>263,831,527</u>
<u>139,347</u>	<u>22,654,461</u>	<u>17,505,259</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>633,414,278</u>
<u>\$ 2,312,978</u>	<u>\$ 22,654,461</u>	<u>\$ 17,528,989</u>	<u>\$ (1,973,788)</u>	<u>\$ 664,089,267</u>

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
December 31, 2007

	Unrestricted							Total
	General Mission	Plant	Hubbard Press	Curriculum	Church Loans	Per Capita	Eliminations	
Revenue, gains, and other support								
Congregation	\$ 12,932,359	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,394,621	\$ -	\$ 26,326,980
Presbyterian Women	1,042,450	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,042,450
Gifts, bequests, and grants	3,734,635	-	-	-	-	203,408	(35,000)	3,903,043
Special giving and special offering	-	-	-	-	-	43,737	-	43,737
Total contributions	17,709,444	-	-	-	-	13,641,766	(35,000)	31,316,210
Income from endowment funds held by the Foundation	3,358,798	40,869	-	-	87,971	544,728	-	4,032,366
Income on investments	1,544,907	-	52,094	-	-	109,332	-	1,706,333
Income from funds held by others	872,309	-	-	-	-	-	-	872,309
Realized and unrealized gains (losses) on investments, net	6,834,642	29,109	-	-	30,322	53,196	-	6,947,269
Interest income from loans	11,050	-	-	-	60,692	-	-	71,742
Change in value of beneficial interest in life income funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hubbard Press	-	-	1,671,890	-	-	-	-	1,671,890
Sales of resources and services	15,773,170	-	-	3,314,148	-	876,786	(525,200)	19,438,904
Other	(66,770)	2,852,683	1,239	-	700	469,936	(2,000,004)	1,257,784
	46,037,550	2,922,661	1,725,223	3,314,148	179,685	15,695,744	(2,560,204)	67,314,807
Net assets released from restrictions	52,967,189	1,305,331	-	47,330	(1,462,208)	102,262	-	52,959,904
Total revenue, gains, and other support	99,004,739	4,227,992	1,725,223	3,361,478	(1,282,523)	15,798,006	(2,560,204)	120,274,711
Expenses								
Programs								
Executive Director	1,620,567	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,620,567
Communication and Fund Development	7,415,622	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,415,622
Mission	65,395,263	449,794	-	3,222,131	-	-	-	69,067,188
Shared Services	10,151,192	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,151,192
Office of the General Assembly	-	-	-	-	-	10,496,542	-	10,496,542
General Assembly Council	-	-	-	-	-	2,617,743	-	2,617,743
Presbyterian Historical Society	-	-	-	-	-	556,905	-	556,905
Conference Center-Ghost Ranch	5,321,198	249,748	-	-	-	-	-	5,570,946
Conference Center-Stony Point	1,750,244	76,628	-	-	-	-	-	1,826,872
Church and Student Loans	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hubbard Press	-	-	1,444,281	-	-	-	(35,000)	1,409,281
Related bodies and other programs	5,897,173	2,319,427	-	-	-	-	(1,500,000)	6,716,600
	97,551,259	3,095,597	1,444,281	3,222,131	-	13,671,190	(1,535,000)	117,449,458
General and administrative								
Shared	3,165,321	-	-	-	-	1,161,753	(1,025,204)	3,301,870
Other	1,314,312	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,314,312
	4,479,633	-	-	-	-	1,161,753	(1,025,204)	4,616,182
Total expenses	102,030,892	3,095,597	1,444,281	3,222,131	-	14,832,943	(2,560,204)	122,065,640
Change in net assets	(3,026,153)	1,132,395	280,942	139,347	(1,282,523)	965,063	-	(1,790,929)
Net assets								
Beginning of year, as previously reported	106,280,561	29,217,802	2,080,896	-	-	14,045,873	-	151,625,132
Prior period adjustment	-	-	-	-	3,508,805	-	-	3,508,805
Beginning of year, as restated	106,280,561	29,217,802	2,080,896	-	3,508,805	14,045,873	-	155,133,937
End of year	\$ 103,254,408	\$ 30,350,197	\$ 2,361,838	\$ 139,347	\$ 2,226,282	\$ 15,010,936	\$ -	\$ 153,343,008

General Mission	Temporarily Restricted			Permanently Restricted				Consolidated Total
	Loans	Per Capita	Total	Endowments	Loans	Per Capita	Total	
\$ 4,791,612	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,791,612	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 31,118,592
42,000	-	-	42,000	-	-	-	-	1,084,450
3,010,351	-	-	3,010,351	1,831,285	-	27,968	1,859,253	8,772,647
<u>28,440,519</u>	-	-	<u>28,440,519</u>	-	-	-	-	<u>28,484,256</u>
36,284,482	-	-	36,284,482	1,831,285	-	27,968	1,859,253	69,459,945
3,912,491	13,757	65,453	3,991,701	-	217,815	-	217,815	8,241,882
1,598,566	-	604	1,599,170	-	139,365	-	139,365	3,444,868
155,901	-	-	155,901	-	-	-	-	1,028,210
9,569,473	18,774	(170,671)	9,417,576	4,889,776	162,520	-	5,052,296	21,417,141
-	98,029	-	98,029	-	202,701	-	202,701	372,472
(395,025)	-	-	(395,025)	(110,857)	-	-	(110,857)	(505,882)
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,671,890
666,352	-	-	666,352	-	-	-	-	20,105,256
<u>245,534</u>	-	-	<u>245,534</u>	-	<u>1,800</u>	-	<u>1,800</u>	<u>1,505,118</u>
52,037,774	130,560	(104,614)	52,063,720	6,610,204	724,201	27,968	7,362,373	126,740,900
<u>(52,810,939)</u>	<u>(115,569)</u>	<u>(33,396)</u>	<u>(52,959,904)</u>	-	-	-	-	-
<u>(773,165)</u>	<u>14,991</u>	<u>(138,010)</u>	<u>(896,184)</u>	<u>6,610,204</u>	<u>724,201</u>	<u>27,968</u>	<u>7,362,373</u>	<u>126,740,900</u>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,620,567
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,415,622
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	69,067,188
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,151,192
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,496,542
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,617,743
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	556,905
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,570,946
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,826,872
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,409,281
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,716,600
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	117,449,458
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,301,870
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,314,312
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,616,182
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	122,065,640
(773,165)	14,991	(138,010)	(896,184)	6,610,204	724,201	27,968	7,362,373	4,675,260
213,146,880	2,139,347	1,849,700	217,135,927	238,164,849	21,058,445	754,665	259,977,959	628,739,018
-	-	-	-	-	(3,508,805)	-	(3,508,805)	-
<u>213,146,880</u>	<u>2,139,347</u>	<u>1,849,700</u>	<u>217,135,927</u>	<u>238,164,849</u>	<u>17,549,640</u>	<u>754,665</u>	<u>256,469,154</u>	<u>628,739,018</u>
\$ 212,373,715	\$ 2,154,338	\$ 1,711,690	\$ 216,239,743	\$ 244,775,053	\$ 18,273,841	\$ 782,633	\$ 263,831,527	\$ 633,414,278

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND  
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS FOR LOAN FUNDS  
December 31, 2007

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>			<u>Total</u>	<u>Consolidated</u>
	<u>Church</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Total</u>		
	<u>Building Aid</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Loans</u>	<u>Building Aid</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Loans</u>	<u>Loans</u>	<u>Fund</u>			
Revenues							
Gifts, bequests, and grants \$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Income from endowment funds held by the Foundation	87,971	13,757	61,349	156,466	217,815	319,543	319,543
Income from funds held by others	-	-	-	139,365	139,365	139,365	139,365
Realized and unrealized gains on investments, net	30,322	18,774	-	47,066	47,066	96,162	96,162
Interest income from loans	60,692	98,029	115,454	202,701	318,155	476,876	476,876
Other	700	-	-	1,800	1,800	2,500	2,500
	<u>179,685</u>	<u>130,560</u>	<u>176,803</u>	<u>547,398</u>	<u>724,201</u>	<u>1,034,446</u>	<u>1,034,446</u>
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>(1,462,208)</u>	<u>(115,569)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,577,777)</u>	<u>(1,577,777)</u>
Change in net assets	(1,282,523)	14,991	176,803	547,398	724,201	(543,331)	(543,331)
Net assets:							
Beginning of year, as previously reported	-	2,139,347	5,042,071	16,016,374	21,058,445	23,197,792	23,197,792
Prior period adjustment	<u>3,508,805</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(3,508,805)</u>	<u>(3,508,805)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Beginning of year, as restated	<u>3,508,805</u>	<u>2,139,347</u>	<u>5,042,071</u>	<u>12,507,569</u>	<u>17,549,640</u>	<u>23,197,792</u>	<u>23,197,792</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 2,226,282</u>	<u>\$ 2,154,338</u>	<u>\$ 5,218,874</u>	<u>\$ 13,054,967</u>	<u>\$ 18,273,841</u>	<u>\$ 22,654,461</u>	<u>\$ 22,654,461</u>



**\*Item 09-01**

[The assembly approved Item 09-01. See pp. 53, 54.]

*On the Church Addressing Intergenerational Injustice in America—From the Presbytery of New Covenant.*

The Presbytery of New Covenant overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. **Declare that federal government practices and policies that create ever-increasing debt and unfunded or underfunded obligations for future generations of Americans are a grave moral concern as well as a clear danger to the republic.**
2. **Call upon public leaders to have the courage to address this economic and moral crisis while there is still time.**
3. **Call upon individual Presbyterians, sessions, presbyteries, and agencies of General Assembly to study, pray, and speak words of justice and morality into the present situation and to defend future generations who have no defense. We do not at this time call upon General Assembly agencies to prepare study documents or study papers, and we do not propose that the church at this time have a monolithic policy recommendation. We do call upon the church and the nation to study the policies and practices that have created this grave moral and economic crisis, to repent of the sins of greed and of stealing from future generations who cannot defend themselves, and to call upon our citizens and national leaders to make the sacrifices necessary to begin to solve this problem before it is too late.**
4. **Call on the nation for a day of prayer on this issue.**

*Rationale*

1. *The Problem*

According to the non-partisan United States General Accountability Office and the Honorable David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the United States (<http://www.gao.gov/cghome/d07937cg.pdf>), “saving our future requires tough choices today.” According to the GAO and the comptroller general, in 2006, explicit liabilities of the government were 10.4 trillion dollars, but implicit liabilities, based on future commitments to social security and Medicare, Parts A, B, and D, bring total federal government liabilities to 50.5 trillion dollars. At the same time the GAO estimates total household net worth in the United States in 2006 to be 53.3 trillion dollars, meaning that our liabilities make up 95 percent of total household wealth. The GAO also estimates that the per person burden is currently \$170,000 and the per-family burden is \$ 440,000. The GAO concludes:

- The “Status Quo” is not an option.
- We face large and growing structural deficits largely due to known demographic trends and rising health-care costs.
- GAO’s simulations show that balancing the budget in 2040 could require actions as large as
  - cutting total federal spending by 60 percent or
  - Raising federal taxes to 2 times today's level.
- Faster economic growth can help, but it cannot solve the problem.
- Closing the current long-term fiscal gap based on reasonable assumptions would require real average annual economic growth in the double-digit range every year for the next seventy-five years.
- During the 1990s, the economy grew at an average 3.2 percent per year.
- As a result, we cannot simply grow our way out of this problem. Tough choices will be required.

2. *The Role of the Church and of Christian Faith in Addressing This National Problem*

A majority of citizens of the United States are currently enjoying relative prosperity and are engaging in levels of personal consumption, which, while not shared by all, are purchased in part by our nation accumulating debt and other obligations for future generations of Americans to pay. The Christian faith is clear that exploiting future generations is both ungodly and immoral.

Proverbs 13:22 says, “The good leave an inheritance to their children's children. . . .” (NRSV). To leave debt is the opposite of leaving an inheritance.

In 1 Timothy 5:8, it says, “And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” (NRSV)

In the Old Testament, the Jubilee year was instituted so that even a profligate and irresponsible generation in the life of a family could not permanently endanger the inheritance of its heirs by selling off the family wealth forever—instead land was only rented and not sold and reverted back to the original family every fifty years (Lev. 25:10,13). Though we do not live in a society where land is the primary form of wealth, the lesson of Leviticus 25 for today is that our generation of Americans should be prevented from saddling future American generations with crippling and debilitating debt.

Part of the way the American political system normally works is that people who believe they are being damaged or exploited by national policies and practices can band together and organize politically to improve their lot. Unfortunately unborn generations as well as those who are only children cannot organize to protect themselves from what our society is doing to them. They have no voice or vote. We believe the Church of Jesus Christ is called to speak for them and to urge its members and the nation to stop and reverse this serious intergenerational injustice.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 09-01, from the Presbytery of New Covenant, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to: “declare that federal government practices and policies that create ever-increasing debt . . . are a grave moral concern as well as a clear danger to the republic.” Individual Presbyterians and all bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), public leaders, and the nation would be called upon to “repent . . . of stealing from future generations who cannot defend themselves” and make sacrifices necessary to reduce the debt burden. And finally, the overture requests the General Assembly to “call on the nation for a day of prayer on this issue.”

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that in response to this overture the following be approved:

1. Commend the presbytery for its strong concern and urge the Washington Office to include the problem of spiraling debt in its usual policy and education materials and in communication with elected officials as appropriate to context.
2. Request Presbyterian representatives to ecumenical bodies working on economic and environmental sustainability, and on such matters as the Social Creed for the 21st Century, include consideration of the intergenerational debt burden among justice concerns.
3. Include the call to prayer in materials prepared for Labor Day in relation to the Social Creed and other economic justice policies.

#### *Rationale*

The Presbytery’s concern for the debt burden on future generations is real. They ask the church not to prepare additional study documents, but ask that “the church and the nation (to) study the policies and practices that have created this grave moral and economic crisis . . .” and quote from a PowerPoint presentation by the comptroller general of the United States, David M. Walker, delivered at the University of South Florida, May 30, 2007. They quote several Bible texts to show that “our generation . . . should be prevented from saddling future American generations with crippling and debilitating debt.” They maintain that “the Church of Jesus Christ is called to speak for them and to urge its members and the nation to stop and reverse this serious intergenerational injustice.”

Because the overture does not specify who should do or be addressed by any of the actions suggested, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) suggests measures that would give the presbytery’s concerns visibility within on-going and already developed Presbyterian and ecumenical programs, and at little extra cost.

The problem of intergenerational debt has been addressed by the General Assembly on numerous previous occasions and in a range of study materials. Government documents, and those of many private agencies, also provide information on the topic, as the overture notes.



**\*Item 09-02**

[The assembly approved Item 09-02. See pp. 53, 54.]

*On the Use of Non-Disposable Food Service Items—From the Presbytery of Heartland.*

**The Presbytery of Heartland overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the General Assembly to request Presbyterian congregations and individual members to highly encourage the use of non-disposable food service items, and to refrain from the use of disposable food service products, particularly styrofoam and other non-biodegradables; to use non-disposable bags for packing items purchased in the commercial market, and to refrain from using plastic bags; to choose tap or home or church-filtered water instead of bottled water or soda, and to refrain from purchasing those liquids in plastic bottles. Even though this represents only a part of what we can do to live in a more environmentally just manner, it is extremely important in beginning to live sustainable, healthy lives.**

*Rationale*

Reaffirm the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215, and 216th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006) reflecting the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is an essential part of the Christian faith.

In Isaiah 6:3 the Seraphs “called to [one] another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of [God’s] glory.’” According to Isaiah, the visible presence of God is pulsing through creation, as Creator, Christ, and Spirit. We worship in this sanctuary called earth.

The *Book of Order* (W-7.5001a) states that “God calls the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit to participate in God’s work of creation and preservation.” In (W-7.5003), it reminds us that we are “stewards of God’s creation who hold the earth in trust . . . .”

The 217th General Assembly (2006) strongly urged all Presbyterians to live carbon neutral lives and to act boldly to lead the way in reducing our energy usage. This included reduction of emissions in transportation, food production, packaging, and shipment. It noted that “the urgency, injustice, and seriousness of this issue calls us as Christians to act NOW and to act boldly to lead the way in reducing our energy usage” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 896).

The urgency is also reflected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a group of 2,500 scientists. They have discovered that what we do in the next two to three years will determine our future. Their latest findings show “much stronger trends in climate change than previously thought,” and that if the world does not act quickly to reverse current trends, the results will be disastrous.

It has been found that the styrene in styrofoam and the metabolites and byproducts of many plastics can have toxic effects on humans (particularly children and childbearing women) and therefore on all of the web of creation. Styrofoam products, plastic bottles, and plastic bags are the cause of major environmental concerns. Plastic bags are a nonrenewable resource, are a major part of our landfill waste, and litter the environment, sometimes being deadly to animals.

Traditional plastic bottles can take 1,000 years to degrade, and more than 40 million bottles a day become trash or litter in the United States.

We may eliminate our opportunity for healthy living through our reliance on synthetic chemicals by acting as a disposable society. We cannot make God’s Creation a wasteland of things created, used, and then discarded and still expect people or the rest of Creation to prosper. By seeking safer and more sustainable alternatives, all of us and particularly future generations can live a more faithful and just life.

Justice, peace, and the environment are interrelated. Whenever we humans abuse the environment, whenever we engage in non-sustainable consumption of our earth’s finite resources, we are not only endangering the future of life on our planet, but we are committing acts of violence and injustice against other life—both present and future. Protecting and restoring creation is central to our own survival.

We in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a rich tradition of justice and reverence for life. Included in our mission is responsible and faithful stewardship of God’s earth. It is vital that we begin anew daily to find ways to care for others, our-

selves, and earth as our expressions of our love for God. We must find alternative, sustainable methods of living, so that not only future generations, but all of creation may have the opportunity to live healthy, full lives.

### *Historical References*

In 1954, the Presbyterian Church stated:

We call upon the Christian conscience to recognize that our stewardship of the earth and water involves both a land-use program that recognizes the interdependence of soil, water and man and the development of a responsible public policy which will resist the exploitation of land, water, and other natural resources, including forests, for selfish purposes and maintain intelligent conservation for the sustenance of all living creatures through future generations (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1954, Part I, p. 198).

This stewardship commitment has been repeated and reaffirmed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors, as follows:

1967 The Confession of 1967 stresses the justice of sharing resources and the interdependence of resources and living creatures.

1971 The 183rd General Assembly accepted the Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal statement that calls for a new order of values based on an “eco-ethic” and a Statement on Environmental Renewal (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 578–83).

1975 A recommendation is made to the 187th General Assembly (1975) to affirm advocacy of the protection of wild-life areas and parklands (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1975, Part I, p.59).

1980 The 192nd General Assembly (1980) votes to (1) develop educational resources on the adverse impact that careless technology has on the environment and health of the unborn; (2) instruct the Board of Investment Committee to review corporate responsibility regarding manufacture of dioxins (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1980, Part I, p. 56).

1981 The 193rd General Assembly pledges support of the United Nations Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade, 1981–1990, calling upon Presbyterians to develop lifestyles that are consistent with the necessity to conserve water (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 254).

1983 The 195th General Assembly (1983) urges the session of each congregation in the Presbyterian Church (USA) to consider making a “Commitment to Peacemaking” that included “making peace with the earth—involve the congregation in efforts to protect and restore the environment.”

1984 The 196th General Assembly (1984) calls upon Congress of the United States to reduce the emissions of sulfur dioxide and the oxides of nitrogen to a level that will protect the most sensitive environment and states that human stewardship is not a “dominion of mastery” and calls us to exercise respect for the integrity of natural systems and for the limits that nature places on economic growth and material consumption (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, p. 349).

1987 The 199th General Assembly (1984) votes to urge the United States government to assure acceptable disposal sites for high-level nuclear waste. It also votes to urge each presbytery and local church to encourage and support alternatives to pesticides and support the victims of pesticide poisoning (*Minutes*, 1987, Part I, p. 796).

1988 The Environmental Justice Office is created to study past environmental policies of the United Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Presbyterian Church in the United States to create a combined report of environmental concerns for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Environmental Justice Office is a ministry of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), lodged in the National Ministries Division, Social Justice Program Area, and is now actively involved in creation care and environmental justice issues.

1989 The 201st General Assembly (1989) calls for governments to strengthen regulations and enforcement regarding transportation of oil and hazardous substances, in response to the Exxon-Valdez tanker spill in 1989 (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 642).

1990 The 202nd General Assembly (1990) passes “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” affirming “creation cries out in this time of ecological crises,” calling the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respond to this cry and engage in an effort to make the 1990s the “turnaround decade,” providing the foundation for the work of the Environmental Justice Office. Also, the 202nd General Assembly calls attention to the problem of global warming and encourages the United States government to take steps toward incorporating environmental damage and depletion into “full-cost pricing” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp. 646–70).

The Affirmation of Faith from that General Assembly noted that “Restoring Creation is God’s own work in our time...” and that “The love of neighbor, particularly “the least” of Christ’s brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning,

the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death.—The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake. In this critical time of transition to a new era, God’s new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community.”

1992 The 204th General Assembly (1992) directs all future General Assemblies to print all official reports on recycled and recyclable paper and to direct all related bodies to use recycled and recyclable paper for all reports and publication (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 846).

1993 The 205th General Assembly (1993) reaffirms the “Call to Restore Creation,” receives the document “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity” as a prophetic word to the church, urges President Clinton to follow new policies from the Earth Summit, and directs the Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit to advocate for policies that will reduce carbon dioxide emissions (*Minutes*, 1993, Part I, pp. 896–97).

1994 The 206th General Assembly (1994), within the context of its “Resolution on the United States in Its Asia-Pacific Relations,” listed five basic principles by which past General Assemblies have been guided related to international affairs. One of the principles, and the resolution that follow it, relates specifically to the environment. “The General Assembly has advocated new understanding of the relationship among human life, institutions, and the total stewardship and care for the planet, which is the common heritage of all peoples”(*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 310).

1996 The 208th General Assembly (1996) approves the paper “Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development” as policy for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Just and sustainable human development is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future; it necessarily involves the integration of economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being.

1998 The 210th General Assembly (1998) calls upon the United States to ratify the protocol negotiated in Kyoto and urges Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and institutions to pursue energy efficiency and conservation in their buildings and property.

1999 The 211th General Assembly (1999) again calls upon the U.S. to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, urges the United States to go beyond Kyoto targets for carbon dioxide emission reductions, directs the Presbyterian Center in Louisville and all other properties of the General Assembly to minimize fossil fuel energy (along with urging local congregations to do the same), and directs the General Assembly to promote education regarding global warming and other environmental concerns (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 669–70).

2001 The 213th General Assembly (2001) calls to issue and disseminate the “Call to Halt Mass Extinction.” The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls Presbyterians, other citizens, governments, and societal institutions to face the severity of this threat and to take steps to prevent mass extinction and preserve the biodiversity essential to the flourishing of life (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 473–75).

2003 The 215th General Assembly (2003) calls on the United States government to join the world effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to develop and enact a national emergency response, underwritten by law, with adequate financial support, and economic enforcement mechanism, to be fully functioning by 2005, with targeted reductions by that time (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 617).

2006. The 217th General Assembly (2006) asked that the church ask its members to “make a bold witness by aspiring to carbon neutral lives” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 896). It was noted that “without significant changes in public policy and corporate behavior to complement actions of personal discipleship, massive and irreversible climate changes will only accelerate over the next century” (PC(USA) Memorandum; Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, December 4, 2006).

Notation: The overture was drafted by Earthkeepers, a mission unit of Mission Outreach and Social Justice; and Heartland Presbytery’s chapter of the national group, Presbyterians for Restoring *Creation*.

## **\*Item 09-03**

[The assembly approved Item 09-03. See pp. 53, 54.]

*On Requesting That the 218th General Assembly (2008) Celebrate the Mission “Living Waters for the World” and View a Video Describing That Ministry—From the Presbytery of Holston.*

**The Presbytery of Holston overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to celebrate with us the life-changing impact of “Living Waters for the World” as a clear, proven example of the shared future of mission as described in “An Invitation to Expanding Partnership in God’s Mission,” and respectfully re-**

**quests that the video, *Clean Water for All of God's Children*, or a portion thereof, be shown to the assembled body of commissioners.**

### *Rationale*

Living Waters for the World, a mission of the Synod of Living Waters, has proven to be a tangible way to share and show God's love, engaging in mission with, not for, others, by linking clean water for bodies with living water for our souls. Living Waters for the World trains and equips volunteer mission teams to partner with communities throughout the world in need of clean water. Teams trained by Living Waters for the World work closely with community leaders to install a water-treatment system, and to educate the community about the appropriate use of clean water.

Since the inception of the Living Waters for the World training program in 2004, the Holy Spirit has moved within this mission in amazing ways:

- More than 500 volunteers have been trained from 29 states and 8 other nations, including Mexico, Guatemala, Kenya, Ghana, and Madagascar. These volunteers span the ideological and theological spectrum, yet stand joyfully together on the common ground of Christ's call to mission.
- One hundred seventy water systems have been installed in 150 communities in 19 nations, dramatically impacting the long-term health and well-being of more than 50,000 of our brothers and sisters throughout the world.
- Living Waters for the World's approach of partners entering into a three-year covenant relationship exemplifies the concept of "mission in partnership" and helps to ensure sustainability of the project and the empowerment of the communities served.
- The potential for continued exponential growth is evident, as more training sessions are added each year, and awareness throughout the denomination continues to grow with recognition such as being a 2007 Presbyterian Women Birthday Offering recipient and the designated mission project of the 2008 Rainforest Adventure Vacation Bible School curriculum.

"An Invitation to Expanding Partnership in God's Mission," the vision document produced from the January 2008 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission consultation, "Renewed Call to Presbyterian Mission in the World: A Dialogue for our Shared Future," calls us to covenant to live and serve together in God's mission according to the following values:

1. Trusting in the Holy Spirit and trusting in one another as each discerns how God is moving us in mission. (Acts 10)
2. Doing mission in the way of Jesus who humbled himself, showing the way of self-giving and self-emptying. (Philippians 2)
3. Seeking to be faithful to God as we live and proclaim the fullness of Jesus Christ's good news; personal witness to those outside the church, justice for the oppressed and compassion for those in need. We accompany others in their efforts to be faithful. (Luke 4)
4. Affirming the complementary nature of God's gifts to all in the one body of Christ and encouraging one another in living out those gifts. (1 Corinthians 12)
5. Recognizing our responsibility to each other by communicating openly, acting transparently and speaking and hearing the truth in love. (Ephesians 4)
6. Striving in our mission to be aware of the context out of which we come, to respect the persons with whom we labor and to honor the context in which they live. In an era of massive global inequalities we commit ourselves to be sensitive to and address the issues of power that result from our differences. (Philippians 2)
7. Valuing long-term relationships, partnerships characterized by perseverance and long-term commitments that support and encourage global partners. (1 Thessalonians 2)

This presbytery believes that Living Waters for the World embodies these values and, in a desire to lift up this example to the greater church, respectfully requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approve this overture of celebration.

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**Concurrence to Item 09-03 from the Presbyteries of Blackhawk, National Capital, New York City, San Joaquin, and Transylvania.**

**Concurrence to Item 09-03 from the Presbytery of St. Andrew (with Additional Rationale)*****Rationale***

The Presbytery of St. Andrew is a mission partner with the Synod of Living Waters, hosting the training program of Living Waters for the World at our Hopewell Camp & Conference Center. Since beginning this program, called Clean Water U, in 2004, more than 500 volunteers have been trained from 29 states and 8 other nations, including Mexico, Guatemala, Kenya, Ghana, and Madagascar.

Volunteers attending the training at Camp Hopewell span the ideological and theological spectrum, yet stand joyfully together on the common ground of Christ's call to mission.

Living Waters for the World provides an opportunity for Presbyterians and others from all walks of life, with various skills and interests, to come together and receive the training and support resources they need to put their faith into action in practical, empowering way.

Living Waters for the World is a clear, proven example of the shared future of mission as described in *An Invitation to Expanding Partnership in God's Mission*.

The Presbytery of St. Andrew has witnessed that Living Waters for the World embodies these values and, in a desire to lift up this example to the greater church, respectfully requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approve this overture of celebration.

**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 09-03***Comment on Item 09-03—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council (GAC) affirms the initiative that Living Waters for the World, Waterlines, Inc., Marion Medical Mission, numerous Joining Hands Against Hunger Networks, international presbytery partnerships, Presbyterian Hunger Program, Church World Service, and other Presbyterian groups have taken to respond in different ways to the critical need for clean drinking water in hundreds of communities around the world. The GAC lifts up the work that Living Waters for the World has done to educate congregations about this issue as an example of a Presbyterian organization recognizing a critical need and working to address it. Because Living Waters for the World is only one of many mission initiators working to address this issue, it is appropriate for the General Assembly to both affirm and encourage all Presbyterians working on this critical issue.

Given the escalating worldwide water crisis and in the spirit of the Dallas Consultation on the Worldwide Mission of the Church (Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, January 16–18, 2008), staff from World Mission and Compassion, Peace & Justice ministry areas are inviting interested Presbyterians to attend a Mission Consultation on Water during which a new water network will be formed. This will allow the full spectrum of Presbyterians and others working on water issues to come together to share information and best practices. This initial consultation will take place in Sacramento, California, from November 13–16, 2008.

**Item 09-04**

**[In response to Item 09-04, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 53, 54.]**

*On Instructing PDA to Continue to Work on Nurturing Partnerships with Presbyteries Affected by the Storms of 2005—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana.*

The Presbytery of South Louisiana overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Commend the staff and volunteers of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, who, working under extremely difficult circumstances, created a framework for a continued and faithful response to the storms of 2005.

2. Instruct Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to continue the work of nurturing partnerships with the presbyteries affected by the storms of 2005, including regular consultations concerning volunteers and resources.
3. Affirms and endorses the agreements made with the presbyteries concerning volunteers and resources, allowing for continuing refinement and evaluation as circumstances change.

**Alternate Resolution Approved**

**In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:**

**[This item of business was generated by combining Items 09-04 and 09-17.]**

**Whereas Presbyterians throughout the General Assembly have been generous and gracious in responding to the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma with gifts of time, resources, and prayers; and**

**Whereas Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has been and continues to be abundantly helpful in providing leadership and resources in the affected areas and in coordinating relief efforts throughout the denomination; and**

**Whereas PDA and the presbyteries and synods involved in recovery efforts recognize that the work of rebuilding is far from complete and have worked together to develop a long-term financial response plan, therefore, be it**

**Resolved, that the 218th General Assembly (2008)**

1. **Thanks Presbyterians throughout the denomination for their generous giving, prayers, and volunteer services in recovery efforts working not only with PDA but also in partnership with local congregations.**
2. **Thanks and commends the staff and volunteers of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, who, working under extremely difficult circumstances, created a framework for a continued and faithful response to the storms of 2005.**
3. **Instructs Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to continue the work of nurturing partnerships with the presbyteries affected by the storms of 2005, including regular consultations concerning volunteers and resources.**
4. **Affirms and commends the long-term recovery plan for the Gulf Coast, which was developed jointly by PDA and the synods and presbyteries impacted by hurricanes Rita, Katrina, and Wilma. This plan, approved by the GAC, funds recovery efforts on the Gulf Coast through 2011 and allows for continuing evaluation and adjustments as circumstances change.**

***Rationale***

The destructive hurricanes of 2005, Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, affected many communities and churches in the Southeastern United States.

The members and churches of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through their own efforts and through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the agencies of the General Assembly, have made significant and continuing contributions to the ongoing work of rebuilding and recovery.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has worked as a significant partner in transmitting funds, recruiting and supporting volunteers, and developing partnerships with the affected presbyteries, including negotiating agreements concerning use of resources.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-04**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 09-04 instructs Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to continue to work on nurturing partnerships with presbyteries affected by the storms of 2005.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 09-04 be approved.

*Rationale*

This item compliments the recommendations of Item 09-15 “*Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future,*” in recognizing the need for long-term strategies and partnerships with communities and churches in the Southeastern United States.

**Item 09-05**

[The assembly approved Item 09-05 with amendment. See pp. 54, 55.]

*On Addressing the Tragedy of America’s Gun Violence—From the Presbytery of National Capital.*

The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

**1. Pastoral Recommendations for the Entire Church**

a. Pray for God’s comfort, courage, and peace for the eighty families who lose loved ones every day to guns in America [~~particularly remembering those who lost their lives in the most devastating massacre at Virginia Tech and to pray~~] [and] for the 1,000 families who daily experience death by guns in the developing world.

b. Commend those persons, congregations, organizations, and agencies who work to stop gun violence and dedicate their time, financial resources, talents, energies, and prayers to find viable solutions to this domestic and international plague and to applaud them for their courage in unmasking the idolatries of our time.

c. Encourage pastors and sessions of local churches and their communities to organize interfaith groups that will visit sites where there have been shootings and/or killings and lead brief worship services to demonstrate the concerns and hopes of the faith community in pursuing peace in our neighborhoods.

d. Study and act on the previously approved policies of the PC(USA) and its predecessor denominations concerning gun violence [and small arms trafficking].

e. Monitor diligently the political processes in cities, states, and the nation for opportunities to work for the passage of laws that control gun access and to seize these opportunities to support legislation that will make our streets, schools, and places of worship free from gun violence.

f. Work with legislators to take the following actions that will increase the safety and well-being of our nation and communities:

(1) ~~[Close the gun show loophole in the thirty five states where it remains open to ensure that all persons buying guns at gun shows undergo a background check.] [To ensure that all persons buying guns at gun shows undergo a background check, close the gun show loophole in the thirty-five states where it remains open.]~~ (The U.S. Department of Justice Statistics, “Background Checks for Firearm Transfers,” 2005, reveals since the Brady law was enacted in 1994, 1.4 million gun purchases were denied by background checks from licensed dealers for convicted felons, those who have serious mental illness, terrorists, minors, domestic abusers and other prohibited parties.)”

(2) Ban the sale and possession of large ammunition ~~[elips]~~ [magazines] and assault weapons that have no redeemable social purpose, and cannot legitimately be termed “sporting guns.”

(3) Support the introduction of new technologies, such as micro-stamping [in which identifying information from a gun is transferred onto bullet cartridges], which allow law enforcement to more easily trace guns and solve crimes.

(4) ~~[Affirm and support the work of the PC(USA), through its UN offices and The International Action Network on Small Arms and Light Weapons (IANSA), to stop illegal gun sales to the developing world in which the United States is complicit.]~~ [Affirm and support the work of the PC(USA) through the Presbyterian United Nations Office and other appropriate offices to stop illegal arms sales by the United States and others.]

~~[(5) To amend existing laws that call only for the issuance of warnings rather than the confiscation of guns from those who are issued restraining orders.]~~

## 2. Programmatic Recommendations for National Church Agencies

a. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with [the Office of Theology and Worship,] the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian United Nations Office, and the Presbyterian Washington Office, to prepare for the larger church a comprehensive study on the concerns raised in this overture. The study should [articulate a Reformed Theology of proactive, constructive nonviolence way of life and tactical method for bringing God's justice and peace to our communities and around the world;] assess the social and economic costs of gun violence; explore how gun violence fits into a larger national culture of violence, and identify ways that the church can effectively address gun violence issues domestically and internationally, and to report these findings along with proposed action items to the 219th General Assembly (2010).]

~~[b.—Direct the Office of Theology and Worship, in consultation with the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, to prepare a statement articulating a Reformed theology of proactive, constructive nonviolence as way of life and tactical method for bringing God's justice and peace in our communities and around the world.]~~

[e-][b.] Direct the national offices to provide annually to our pastors, educators, and members educational and worship resources to encourage and equip the whole church to engage fully in the struggle to reduce gun violence. (This is similar to Recommendation 3. of *Overture 00-95. On Gun Violence*—“From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 482.)

~~[d-][c.]~~ Direct the Washington Office and the Peacemaking Unit to make gun violence one of its highest priorities; and to direct the Peacemaking Unit to make an annual progress report to subsequent General Assemblies until this issue is resolved. (This is similar to a recommendation from the 1989 *Resolution on Assault Weapons, Minutes, 1989, Part I, p. 430, paragraph 35.118.*)

[e-][d.] Direct the Stated Clerk to distribute this resolution to all members of Congress; to the present and future president of the United States, to appropriate members of the Cabinet, and to members of state legislatures.

[f-][e.] Direct the Stated Clerk to specifically call on the U. S. government to enter into negotiations with its international partners in the United Nations to adopt a legally-binding trade treaty to counter the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, particularly to developing nations.

[g-][f.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate and commend these actions to other ecumenical faith communities, and to invite their active participation in the struggle to reduce gun violence, both domestically and internationally.

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$5,660; (2009): \$24,650; (2010) \$5,240 (Per Capita-GAC)]

### *Rationale*

Emboldened and encouraged by Scripture, we reaffirm our faith that God equips believers to love mercy, to do justice, and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). In particular, Jesus empowers us to be peacemakers in the midst of violence; to extend the open hand rather than a clenched fist; to name unjust and oppressive systems; to fight against practices that demean any human being made in the image of God; to wrestle with the principalities and powers in this fallen world; and to work so that “justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.”

The sixth commandment says, “You shall not kill.” John Calvin argued that this commandment not only forbids killing but carries with it the obligation to prevent harm and to preserve life and build shalom in human society. In the most practical of terms, Jeremiah calls us today as he called the Jews going into exile “[to] seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare” (Jer. 29:7).

Our Presbyterian polity reminds us that to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ we must be diligent to preach the Gospel for the salvation of humankind, and we must be equally diligent to preserve the truth; promote social righteousness; and exhibit the Kingdom of Heaven to the world (*Book of Order, G-1.0200*).

In obedience to these principles for four decades, the General Assemblies of the PC(USA) and its predecessor denominations have proposed responsible measures to confront a unique, annual national tragedy that no other developed nation permits. Some 30,000 Americans die by guns each year in the United States. An average of eighty people are killed by guns every day, including eight children. An American child is twelve times more likely to die by a gun than all the children of twenty-five industrialized nations combined.<sup>1</sup>



The church must also note that the exorbitant annual economic cost of gun violence is at least \$100 billion. Medical costs, decimated families, the court system, our jails and prisons, and security measures in airports, schools, and public buildings all contribute to this sum.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, gun death rates of our citizens in the United States are exponentially higher than the death rates of our military personnel killed in warfare: 1,490 of our military personnel were killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2001–2004.<sup>3</sup> In the same time frame, nearly 100,000 Americans were killed in our communities by guns.<sup>4</sup> Since John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, more Americans have died by gunfire within our own country than perished in all the wars of the 20th century.<sup>5</sup>

The 108th General Assembly (1968) of the PCUS petitioned Congress to enact, without delay, legislation to control the sale and possession of firearms of all kinds (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1968, Part I, p.103). The 201st General Assembly (1989) urged strong legislation to ban the private ownership of destructive automatic weapons such as AK-47 assault rifles, Uzis, and all paramilitary weapons, whether domestic or imported (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 430). A federal assault weapons ban was signed into law in 1994, but in September 2004, the U.S. Congress permitted the ban to expire, without a vote, which returned these dangerous weapons to the civilian market.

In each of the seven policy statements made by the respective General Assemblies since 1988, the church was called to diligently study the issue of gun violence. The 201st General Assembly (1989) directed the church to make an “annual progress report ... to subsequent [General] Assemblies until this issue is resolved” (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 430). The 212th General Assembly (2000) commissioners directed the Congregational Ministries Division to develop, on an annual, continuing basis, “additional curriculum to challenge the thinking of congregations about creative approaches to gun violence in America” (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 482).

In 1990, in the denomination’s most comprehensive policy statement on gun control, the General Assembly called on the church to begin a respectful and open dialog with all parties in order to solve this ongoing crisis. The church asked that governing bodies and congregations identify and train advocates on this and other public policy issues who will become actively involved in political dialog and the legislative process (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 606). While our church has made some bold and far-reaching statements and claims strong policies against gun violence, our actions have failed to live up to our words. That, in part, is why this overture begins with a call to repentance for the church.

Regretfully, the measures listed above, which reflect the hopes and dreams of a strong majority of the American people, including gun owners,<sup>6</sup> have fallen on deaf ears in most state and national legislatures and, to our shame, even in our churches.

We therefore strongly call the church to read and affirm this entire resolution in a spirit of repentance. We do not ask that we hang our heads or beat our breasts, but that we move forward into the future actively seeking the justice and peace our Lord calls us to pursue and put in place.

Trusting in God’s grace and forgiveness, we must acknowledge that our support of the sensible measures listed above to stop the killing has been less than we intended. Neither have we shown the respect due to the victims and families of those who are being killed and maimed every day by guns. The silence of pulpits and classrooms in addressing this ongoing tragedy is deafening. We would remind the church that to address this issue only by mourning those who have been killed and/or praying for comfort for their families and friends is not sufficient. Neither is it enough to only pray for a change of heart for the perpetrators of violence. God calls us to be persistent advocates for sensible legislation that will prevent this annual slaughter of children, women, and men.

While a strong majority of our citizens, including gun owners and sportsmen, support responsible gun control measures, the church, rather than being a light to the world, has mirrored our society and permitted a small minority of strident, well-funded persons to control the debate on the place of guns in our democratic society.

The unacceptable level of violence we experience in America because of weak gun laws is due in part to a culture of sound-bytes and unexamined public policy. Every American knows the familiar slogans: “Guns are the foundation of America’s freedoms”; “Guns save lives”; “Freedom First”; “The Second Amendment guarantees all the other amendments.” “We don’t need the government to make new laws, but to enforce the thousands of laws that are now on the books” etc. But, the most egregious slogan yet, was that used by counter-protestors at vigils where families and friends mourned the thirty-two persons who died in the massacre at Virginia Tech: “Here lie disarmed victims.”

The church must bear responsibility for permitting these and other simplistic slogans and catchy sound bytes to become what is erroneously perceived by many in the media, our legislatures, and our churches, as the authentic voice of the American public. IT IS NOT! We must not acquiesce or fail to speak the truth on this matter, and we must begin in earnest, comprehensive and compassionate education about gun violence, so we can distinguish fact from fiction.

We call on the church to regain its courage and its voice, to bring its moral authority to the table, and to lead honest and full discussions on the role and utility of guns in our democratic society. If the church of Jesus Christ is not part of the solution, then our silence is part of the problem. We acknowledge that this will not be an easy task. The strident, vocal, and well-funded minority that opposes all gun regulation will be there to cry “foul” and contend that the Church of Jesus Christ is not the venue to have this conversation. On the other hand, we believe that the church is the very place where this discussion needs to take place, for we are called by God to be healers and to bring peace where there is perpetual violence. Like Jeremiah, we dare not treat the wounds of God’s “people carelessly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace” (Jer. 6:14).

The consequence of avoiding the discomfort associated with this necessary and honest dialog within our fellowship is that we will continue to endure the equivalent of a 9/11 massacre every eighteen months. These deaths are too high a price to pay to maintain the embarrassing status quo, which the gun lobby often contends is “the price of freedom.”

Let it not be said of our generation of Christians that what we have learned from history is only that we do not learn from history. If nothing is done domestically, our lax federal and/or state regulations on the buying and selling of lethal weapons guarantee that incidents like Columbine and Virginia Tech will occur again and again. There will be the same tears, the same decimation of families, the same cries of pain, the same lasting physical and mental scars, the same escalation of fear, and the same lame speeches of nervous leaders who will tell the world how much they grieve for the victims and how they will remember their families in their prayers. Then, these speeches will be followed by a hasty retreat from the scene and an avoidance of discussing the real questions of the day: “Why do we permit this?” and “What can we do now, so that this will never happen again?”

Because violence in America is a major spiritual concern, we must listen to the warning that the 202nd General Assembly (1990) gave the church: “The religious community must also take seriously the risk of idolatry that could result from an unwarranted fascination with guns which overlooks or ignores the social consequences of their misuse” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 605, paragraph 40.105). It is past time to take this warning to heart and dedicate our best minds to the study of America’s trust in violence and in the instruments of violence.

Because God has made us citizens of the world and brothers and sisters to the entire human family, we must not only seek freedom from gun violence in our own cities and communities, but in the cities and communities of the developing world, which is today suffering from the sale of guns from U. S. manufacturers. The United States has surpassed Russia and France as the world’s leading exporter of small arms and light weapons, especially to developing nations with one billion dollars in sales per year. Even more shamefully many of these sales are illegal.<sup>7</sup> The General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in 1981 called the church’s attention to an increasing number of private gun sales that were made to Northern Ireland (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 85).

If the rule of law is to be honored, and if justice is to be sought, the church must come to terms with recent revelations from the Congressional Research Service, which documents the burgeoning trend of the U. S. in supplying military assistance and weaponry to countries that pledge their allegiance to us in our “global war on terror even though the state department has judged many of these countries to be unstable, lacking in democratic principles, and having a history of human rights abuses.”<sup>8</sup> One thousand people die each day in the developing world from small arms.<sup>9</sup>

As part of God’s one human family, we must be vigilant in recognizing the linkage between the gun violence we experience in America and the violence we purposefully export by supplying others with the tools of violence. It is certain that as guns and small arms are placed in the hands of vindictive militias and child soldiers, even if they should side with us in “our global war on terror,” the already high death rates of women and children in those regions will escalate even further. And as these guns make their way to the black market, an old AK-47 can be purchased for as little as \$100.<sup>10</sup> In reality, our nation is distributing weapons of mass destruction. Faithfulness to God demands that we challenge our government’s questionable actions and examine our nation’s trust in these weapons to produce international security and peace.

For additional information on how to be more involved in this issue, see [www.csgv.org](http://www.csgv.org).

#### Endnotes

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *WISQARS Injury Mortality Reports, 2004*; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Rates of Homicide, Suicide and Firearms-Related Death Among Children—26 Industrialized Countries, Morbidity and Mortality Report*, vol. 46, no.5 p. 103 2/7/97 Atlanta.
2. Philip Cook and Jens Ludwig, *Gun Violence: The Real Costs*, Oxford University Press, 2000.
3. Washington Post.com, *Faces of the Fallen; U.S. service members who died in Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, 2001–2004*.

4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *WISQARS Injury Mortality Reports, 2001–2004*.
5. *The Economist*, “America’s Tragedy,” April 19, 2007.
6. ABC News Poll on April 22, 2007, 6 percent of respondents favored stricter gun control laws in the country; 67 percent favored a ban on assault weapons. A CBS poll on the same day found that 66 percent of respondents favored stricter measures.
7. *Setting the Record Straight: The UN and Small Arms*, New York, June 26–July 7, 2006.
8. Congressional Research Service, *Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 1999–2006*, September 26, 2007.
9. *Setting the Record Straight: The UN and Small Arms*, New York, June 26–July 7, 2006.
10. William Hartung and Rachel Stohl, *Hired Guns*, Foreign Policy, May/June 2004.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Item 09-05 overtures the General Assembly to address the tragedy of gun violence in America.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the overture be approved with the following amendments:

1. Amend Recommendation 1. *Pastoral Recommendations for the Entire Church* as follows:

- a. Amend “1.a.” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

- “a. Pray for God’s comfort, courage, and peace for the eighty families who lose loved ones every day to guns in America [~~particularly remembering those who lost their lives in the most devastating massacre at Virginia Tech and to pray~~] [and] for the 1,000 families who daily experience death by guns in the developing world.”

- b. Amend “1.d.” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

- “d. Study and act on the previously approved policies of the PC(USA) and its predecessor denominations concerning gun violence [and small arms trafficking].

- c. Amend “1.f.(1)” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

- “(1) [~~Close the gun show loophole in the thirty-five states where it remains open to ensure that all persons buying guns at gun shows undergo a background check.~~] [To ensure that all persons buying guns at gun shows undergo a background check, close the gun show loophole in the thirty-five states where it remains open.] (The U.S. Department of Justice Statistics, “Background Checks for Firearm Transfers,” 2005, reveals since the Brady law was enacted in 1994, 1.4 million gun purchases were denied by background checks from licensed dealers for convicted felons, those who have serious mental illness, terrorists, minors, domestic abusers and other prohibited parties.)”

- d. Amend “1.f.(3)–(5)” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

- “(3) Support the introduction of new technologies, such as micro-stamping [in which identifying information from a gun is transferred onto bullet cartridges], which allow law enforcement to more easily trace guns and solve crimes.

- “(4) [~~Affirm and support the work of the PC(USA), through its UN offices and The International Action Network on Small Arms and Light Weapons (IANSA), to stop illegal gun sales to the developing world in which the United States is complicit.~~] [Affirm and support the work of the PC(USA) through the Presbyterian United Nations Office and other appropriate offices to stop illegal arms sales by the United States and others.]

- “(5) [~~To amend existing laws that call only for the issuance of warnings rather than the confiscation of guns from those who are issued restraining orders.~~] [Recognizing the deadly linkages between guns and domestic violence, particularly for

women, amend existing laws to call for the confiscation of guns from individuals who have been convicted of domestic violence and those who are subject to a restraining order. (*When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2003 Homicide Data*, Violence Policy Center, <http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2005.pdf>]

2. Amend Recommendation 2. *Programmatic Recommendations for National Church Agencies* as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“a. ~~[Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian United Nations Office, and the Presbyterian Washington Office, to prepare for the larger church a comprehensive study on the concerns raised in this overture. The study should assess the social and economic costs of gun violence; explore how gun violence fits into a larger national culture of violence, and identify ways that the church can effectively address gun violence issues domestically and internationally, and to report these findings along with proposed action items to the 219th General Assembly (2010).]~~ [Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to assess the social and economic costs of gun violence and how gun violence fits into the larger national culture of violence in its ongoing work on the Nature and Value of Human Life.]

“[b. Direct the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, in consultation with the Presbyterian United Nations Office, the Presbyterian Washington Office, and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, to analyze existing policy on gun violence and small arms trafficking paying attention to the significant impact of gun violence on communities of color and in situations of domestic violence and report the findings along with proposed action items to the 219th General Assembly (2010).]

“~~[b.]~~ [c.] Direct the Office of Theology and Worship, in consultation with the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, to prepare a statement articulating a Reformed theology of proactive, constructive nonviolence as way of life and tactical method for bringing God’s justice and peace in our communities and around the world.

“~~[e.]~~ [d.] Direct the ~~[national offices]~~ [Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian United Nations Office, and the Presbyterian Washington Office] to provide annually to our pastors, educators, and members educational and worship resources to encourage and equip the whole church to engage fully in the struggle to reduce gun violence. (This is similar to Recommendation 3. of *Overture 00-95. On Gun Violence—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 482.)

“~~[d.]~~ [e.] ~~[Direct]~~ [Encourage] the Washington Office and the ~~[Peacemaking Unit]~~ [Presbyterian Peacemaking Program] to make [addressing the problem of] gun violence ~~[one of its highest priorities]~~ [a high priority]; and to direct the ~~[Peacemaking Unit]~~ [Compassion, Peace, and Justice Program] to make an annual progress report to subsequent General Assemblies until this issue is resolved. (This is similar to a recommendation from the 1989 *Resolution on Assault Weapons, Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 430, paragraph 35.118.)

“~~[e.]~~ [f.] Direct the Stated Clerk to distribute this resolution to all members of Congress; to the present and future president of the United States, to appropriate members of the Cabinet, and to members of state legislatures.

“~~[f.]~~ [g.] Direct the Stated Clerk to specifically call on the U. S. government to enter into negotiations with its international partners in the United Nations to adopt a legally-binding trade treaty to counter the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, particularly to developing nations.

“~~[g.]~~ [h.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate and commend these actions to other ecumenical faith communities, and to invite their active participation in the struggle to reduce gun violence, both domestically and internationally.”

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 09-05 on addressing the tragedy of America’s gun violence.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s advice and counsel.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 09-05 urges approving a resolution addressing the tragedy of America’s gun violence.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that Item 09-05 be approved.

*Rationale*

Item 09-05 calls on the church to recognize that little has been done to counter the increasing rise in gun violence in the United States. The ACWC confirms the shocking statistics cited in the overture, and encourages advocacy by the denomination to reverse this trend.

In particular, domestic violence is a major component of all gun violence. Women account for 61 percent of deaths among intimate partners. This is a primary issue for ACWC, and deserves attention by the entire denomination.

**Item 09-06**

[The assembly approved Item 09-06 with amendment. See pp. 53, 55.]

**The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in partnership with the Office of Child Advocacy and in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, to create a resolution team to study the church’s policies on public education in relationship to the issues of desegregation, affirmative action, faith-based initiatives, [home schooling,] charter schools, and the No Child Left Behind law, with attention to [class] [name] as well as race; making appropriate recommendations [that would be presented to the 219th General Assembly (2010)] and, if appropriate, subsequently] preparing a study guide for individual and congregational use.**

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$170; (2009): \$20,940; (2010) \$11,655 (Per Capita-GAC)]

*Rationale*

## Public Education for the 21st Century

As Presbyterians, we believe that “an education of high quality for all children is an obligation of society and indispensable to the political and economic health of our democracy,” and that we are called “to respond in every possible way with measures that seek to evidence love and justice in the education of children and youth” (*A Call to Church Involvement in the Renewal of Public Education, Minutes*, 1987, Part I, pp. 481 and 485).

As Presbyterians, we have also acknowledged that the persistence of systemic racism and racial prejudice in our school systems continues to discourage and impede academic achievement for economically disadvantaged students and children of color.

On June 28, 2007, the Supreme Court found the voluntary desegregation plans in the Louisville, Kentucky, and Seattle, Washington, public school district programs to be unconstitutional. The debate around that decision reflects many of the challenges facing public education today. The public school system in many cities is effectively segregated on racial and economic lines, yet the Court has ruled out remedies in which race may play a deciding factor in school assignment. Certainly there is educational value in integrating classrooms in order to educate children to become leaders in a multiracial, multicultural society, but even when successful, integrating classrooms has not guaranteed a quality education for every child.

Nor is re-segregation (or continued segregation) the only challenge facing public education in dismantling racism. A growing number of school districts, especially in urban areas, have no majority group. They also struggle to ensure that each child receives the education she or he needs, including access to magnet and charter schools. Funding public education is also widely variable among and within states, generally to the disadvantage of children of color. The PC(USA) is committed in principle to a public education system that works for all children.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns believes it is time for the church to assess its long-held policies on public education, to revise and update them in light of the current social environment, and to provide better resources for Presbyterians as they seek to be advocates for children in the 21st century.

Presbyterians have always placed a high value on education and General Assemblies have been long time supporters of access to quality education. As issues of desegregation and affirmative action are being challenged in public school systems, we are being called to look at the variety in the make up of school districts and examine again the foundation of public education in the 21st century.

Because the social environment has changed and we are becoming a more global and technological society, models of education need to be re-considered in light of the intersections of race, ethnicity, language, class, and gender. Population demographics and social contexts all over the U.S. are changing quickly. For example, in some California school districts, eighty or more different primary languages are spoken. There are not enough teachers and not nearly enough experienced educators who are prepared to teach in multicultural and multilingual classrooms.

No Child Left Behind is having a major impact on schools across the country. Despite its lofty aims, NCLB as formulated is not producing the intended outcomes. Some children, particularly poor children and children of color, continue to be left behind. Inadequate funding to implement the provisions of the law, punitive measures used to punish schools that do not demonstrate adequate yearly progress, the use of disaggregated scores to call attention to groups that do not meet standards, and an over reliance on test scores as the key way of measuring progress are not only leaving our children behind, but are undermining the infrastructure of our public school system.

Changing immigration policies are also having a major impact on public schools. Particularly issues surrounding education for illegal immigrant children have been debated and measures such as the California Proposition 187 in 1994 attempted to deny public education for illegal immigrants. Although it is not a legislative issue yet, many illegal immigrants cannot register for college because they do not have a social security number.

Many Presbyterian statements on education are more than forty years old and need to be reconsidered for the current time, given changed educational methods and alternatives, including charter schools, and resources from the faith-based initiative program and private donors.

The recent 2007 Supreme Court ruling striking down two public school plans that used race as a factor in deciding where students attended school will also have impact on schools across the U.S. What were the issues in this case and how does the issue of desegregation play a role in the current context? These are questions that will continue to be asked of Presbyterian parents and other voters across the country.

## Item 09-07

**[In response to Item 09-07, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 53–54, 55.]**

*From Homelessness to Hope: Constructing Just, Sustainable Communities for All God's People—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the recommendations below and receive the attached study paper that provides their rationale and resources for social policy, social service, and education:

1. Commend the ongoing commitments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), its General Assembly and agencies in order to strengthen future witness:
  - a. Commend previous policies related to homelessness and affordable housing, including: “Building Community Among Strangers,” 211th General Assembly (1999); “Ending Homelessness for All Women,” 210th General Assembly (1998); “Lazarus at the Gate: A Call to Renewed Ministries in Housing,” 193rd General Assembly, UPCUSA (1981); “Statement on Housing,” 113th General Assembly, PCUS (1973).
  - b. Commend previous Presbyterian commitments to actions aimed at preventing poverty, e.g. education, job development, day care, living wage, health care, gambling, and so on—and thus strengthen individuals and families in their efforts to avoid homelessness.
  - c. Affirm the following principles, which underlie this resolution and its recommendations, as foundational to faithful ministry with persons who are homeless:

- Universal access to safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing is a measure of a truly just society and a sign of the coming Reign of God.

- The church is called to create communities of hospitality that assure all members of society, including persons experiencing homelessness, a right to basic economic and social well-being, including safe, affordable housing.

- The church is called to honor God’s gift of the earth and to create, through personal lifestyle choices and the structures of society, sustainable communities where people can be securely housed in just relationship with one another and the earth.

- The church is called to challenge society to provide safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing for all persons who cannot secure such housing through their own means.

d. Commend the more than 3,500 Presbyterian congregations reporting hands-on engagement and/or financial support for housing and homeless ministries, in cooperation with Habitat for Humanity in at least 25 percent of the cases (according to the annual Stated Clerk’s questionnaire; 53 percent of the 6,834 responses received). Celebrate this response and encourage other congregations, presbyteries, synods, and church-related entities to join them.

e. Commend the Presbyterian Washington Office and its interfaith work on housing and poverty issues, and direct it to include this action on homelessness and affordable housing in its advocacy work with communities of faith and members of Congress.

f. Commend the Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness, whose mission is to affirm, challenge, educate, and empower local churches, and the church as a whole, in the struggle to end homelessness.

2. Encourage a comprehensive response to the crisis of homelessness and affordable housing:

a. Encourage congregations, presbyteries, synods, and other church-related entities to take the lead in welcoming shelters, transitional housing programs, and affordable housing into their communities; to work in favor of mixed-income communities rather than exclusionary ones; and to counter Not In My Back Yard syndrome (NIMBYism) whenever it appears.

b. Urge congregations, presbyteries and synods, and other church-related entities, in all their responses to homelessness, to provide linkages to comprehensive services to meet the varied needs of persons facing the crisis of homelessness.

c. Urge congregations as employers and members who are employers, or in a position to exert influence regarding hiring and compensation practices, to educate themselves about the cost of living, especially housing, in their communities and to pay a living wage and provide benefits to all employees.

d. Urge congregations and members who are employers, or in a position to exert influence regarding hiring, to consider employing youth and adults reentering the workforce after being homeless or spending time in prison, drug or alcohol rehabilitation, or mental health treatment.

e. Encourage congregations to become part of national or local coalitions that strive to achieve worker justice and to work with employers in their communities to assure that workers are paid a living wage.

f. Urge congregations, presbyteries and synods, and other church-related entities to seek partners with whom they can further and deepen their response to the crisis of affordable housing and homelessness in their communities, including the construction of permanent, affordable rental housing and advocacy for policy change at local, state, and national levels.

g. Encourage congregations, presbyteries and synods, and other church-related entities to commend persons and organizations that work for and support “green” design in their homes and communities, and to partner with such persons and organizations in their own efforts to develop permanent, affordable rental housing.

h. Encourage congregations, presbyteries and synods, and other church-related entities to commend and support residents of public housing in their efforts to organize and exert residents’ voices in the decision-making structures in their communities.

i. Encourage congregations, presbyteries and synods, and other church-related entities to commend owners and landlords who act responsibly in their stewardship of rental property and seek justice in the face of economic inequities.

3. Expand utilization of church resources to address the crisis of homelessness and affordable housing:

a. Affirm that the church is called to offer its diverse resources in response to the crisis of homelessness and affordable rental housing, but also insist that the faith community cannot and should not be expected to address this crisis in isolation.

b. Urge the church at all levels to work in coalition with other agencies and in public-private collaboration to leverage and maximize resources available to address the crisis.

c. Encourage congregations, as they consider renewed stewardship of and/or renovation of their property, to allocate space for services for persons in need of housing assistance or the construction of affordable housing.

d. Encourage congregations, as they undertake capital campaigns for the expansion and/or renovation of their buildings, to be guided by good economic and environmental stewardship and to designate a significant portion of the campaign's proceeds for programs aimed at housing assistance, supportive services for persons with low income, and/or the construction of affordable housing.

e. Encourage congregations to make use of the Presbyterian Investment Loan Program (PILP) as they expand and/or renovate their buildings in order to make space for programs aimed at housing assistance or supportive services for persons with low income.

f. Urge the Presbyterian Foundation, in collaboration with the General Assembly Council, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and the office on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, to utilize its Creative Investment Program to invest meaningfully in the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) in order to create a revolving loan fund, which could be available to Presbyterian congregations, presbyteries, synods, and coalitions in which church entities are involved, for predevelopment loans to support the construction and rehabilitation of permanent rental housing for individuals and families with low income and/or a history of homelessness. The investment would accrue at an interest rate to be agreed upon between the Foundation and LISC and would result in a secure investment for the PC(USA).

g. Encourage Presbyterians and other persons of faith who, as homeowners, benefit from the current tax policy (e.g., the Home Mortgage Interest Deduction) to consider making an annual donation, in an amount equivalent to their housing-related tax savings, to programs that provide housing assistance, supportive services to families or individuals with low income, or the construction of affordable rental housing for those who do not receive such tax benefits.

4. Advocate legislative and policy directions in keeping with this resolution:

a. Policy Affecting Housing and Housing Services

(1) Preservation and expansion of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as administered by local housing authorities, as a means to provide affordable rental housing and other federally-supported housing assistance to persons with little or no income.

(2) Restoration and expansion of "Project-Based Section 8" and other federal subsidy and incentive programs that promote the construction of affordable housing.

(3) Development of Housing Trust Funds at state and municipal levels, as well as a National Housing Trust Fund, as means to making significant funding available to both urban and rural communities for the development of permanent, affordable housing.

(4) Enactment of inclusionary zoning policies and support for other strategies to achieve mixed-income communities.

(5) Improved education about and enforcement of existing nondiscrimination laws with regard to housing and home financing.

(6) Preservation and development of housing programs at all governmental levels that target households with low incomes and persons with special needs.

(7) Preservation and revitalization of the 2.5 million units of affordable housing funded under the Public Housing and Project-Based Section 8 programs.

(8) Provision of additional units of housing for persons with extremely low income to replace all units destroyed through community redevelopment initiatives.



## b. Policy Affecting Services for Persons Experiencing Homelessness or at Risk of Homelessness

(1) Revision of municipal zoning codes to include the temporary housing of persons (e.g. shelters, transitional housing, or supportive housing) as a permitted use.

(2) Revision of municipal zoning codes to encourage and facilitate the development of affordable rental housing.

(3) Revision of municipal ordinances to prohibit discrimination against persons based on their housing status.

(4) Sufficient resources for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and pertinent areas within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other departments to enable them to make progress toward and reach the goal of ending chronic homelessness. Two key elements to achieving this goal are increased funding for housing subsidy programs and the coordination of supportive services with permanent rental housing for all persons experiencing homelessness.

(5) Supportive Housing (housing plus services) for all people who have little or no income, are disabled, or were formerly homeless to aid them in living independent, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

(6) Continuation of and increased investment in the McKinney-Vento Act and related legislation, which provide funding for many services for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including amendments that would increase flexibility in program administration and make programs more performance-based.

(7) Expansion of Veterans Administration (VA) programs for veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to include funding for permanent housing and the creation of innovative new models for service, including programs to help reintegrate returning veterans into the community, encourage partnerships between the VA and community-based organizations, and link permanent housing for veterans and their families with supportive services.

(8) Renewal and expansion of federal funding to help communities prevent homelessness among youth and young adults, as well as persons with special needs as they reenter communities from jails and prisons, and to provide housing and supportive services.

(9) Expansion of programs for supportive housing targeted to people who are homeless with mental illness to prevent their recycling between the streets and shelters and jails or prisons.

(10) Restoration of funding for mainstream programs that have been utilized by states, cities, and counties to provide housing and services as part of their comprehensive plans to prevent and end homelessness. These include but are not limited to HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program, the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program (Section 202), and Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities (Section 811) as well as Medicaid, and other grants to states and localities.

## c. Lending Practices

(1) Confirmation of "A Reformed Understanding of Usury for the 21st Century" [(217th General Assembly (2006)] and its recommendations regarding the need for financial literacy and change in state and federal policies and legislation that "allow lenders to take advantage of either the naïveté or financial plight of borrowers" (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 805).

(2) Correction of abusive lending practices at all levels and the development of strategies to provide a safety net for households that have fallen victim to subprime lending.

(3) Development of foreclosure prevention strategies and programs to benefit households at risk.

## d. Taxation

(1) Replacement of the Home Mortgage Interest Deduction (HMID) with a 15 percent refundable Home Tax Credit, which a household could receive even if it has no tax liability, in order to encourage homeownership among households with lower income, distribute tax benefits more equitably, and significantly increase assistance to homeowners with low and moderate income.

- (2) Development of a targeted Rental Rebate Tax Credit at the state or federal level to benefit tenants with low or moderate income.
- (3) Expansion of the refundable Child Tax Credit by reducing the income threshold in order to reach more families of extremely low income.
- (4) Expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit to include workers not raising children.
- (5) Support of fiscally responsible federal budget priorities and adequate revenues to ensure long-term funding for critical housing assistance and other safety net programs for families with low income.
- (6) Advocacy for budget priorities at all levels of government that utilize incentives and tax credits to encourage “smart growth” and the development of sustainable communities.

5. Direct the communication and distribution of this resolution:

- a. Urge the office of Small Church and Community Ministries, in collaboration with the Presbyterian Washington Office and other church entities, to develop and/or make available resources to educate individual Presbyterians and congregations on the nature and extent of the crisis in homelessness and affordable housing, the types of housing that can address the needs of those caught in the cycle of homelessness, and ways to respond to and advocate for public policy directives.
- b. Direct the General Assembly Council to facilitate the development of a portion of its website to make information, resources, and advocacy suggestions related to this resolution easily accessible to the church at all levels.
- c. Direct the Office of the General Assembly, in collaboration with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, to publish this report in its entirety online and in hard copy, making copies available to each presbytery, resource center, synod, and requesting session, as well as colleges and seminaries related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and for distribution throughout the church through Presbyterian Distribution Services; and to notify the church of its availability through the PC(USA) Website.

**Alternate Resolution Approved**

**In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:**

**The 218th General Assembly (2008) approves the recommendations below and receives the study paper that was attached to the original item of business, which provides rationale and resources for social policy, social service, and education:**

**The purpose of these recommendations is to provide information and guidance for governing bodies and direction for denominational advocates. These recommendations affirm the complexity of issues surrounding homelessness and the need for a holistic approach that (1) addresses ministry to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness and (2) the structural components necessary for a comprehensive solution.**

**The historical witness of the PC(USA) affirms the following principles, as foundational to faithful ministry with persons who are homeless:**

- **Universal access to safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing is a measure of a just society and a sign of the coming Reign of God.**
- **The church is called to create communities of hospitality that assure all members of society, including persons experiencing homelessness, a right to basic economic and social well-being, including safe, affordable housing.**
- **The church is called to honor God’s gift of the earth and to create, through personal lifestyle choices and the structures of society, sustainable communities where people can be securely housed in just relationship with one another and the earth.**
- **The church is called to challenge society to provide safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing for all persons who cannot secure such housing through their own means.**

**1. Commend the ongoing witness, commitment, ministry and advocacy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), its General Assembly and agencies, the Presbyterian Washington Office, the Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness, and the more than 3,500 Presbyterian congregations reporting hands-on engagement in housing and homeless minis-**

tries. We commend previous Presbyterian commitments to actions aimed at preventing poverty, e.g. education, job development, day care, living wage, health care, and gambling toward strengthening individuals and families and individuals in their efforts to avoid homelessness.

2. Encourage congregations, presbyteries, synods, and other church-related entities to pursue comprehensive responses to the crisis of homelessness and affordable housing. The General Assembly Council ministries of Compassion, Peace and Justice will develop and provide resources (including this report) to help these entities in this task, covering such actions as:

- Shelters, transitional housing programs, mixed-income communities, and affordable housing in their communities;
- Links with service providers in the community;
- The impact of employment practices, including sustainable wages and benefits, employment of youth and adults reentering the workforce after being homeless or institutionalized;
- Links with local, regional, and national coalitions that advocate for worker justice and sustainable wages, green design in homes and communities, permanent affordable rental housing;
- Supporting residents of public housing in their efforts to organize and have voice in their communities;
- The application of stewardship strategies in the area of homelessness, such as allocating physical space for services for persons in need of housing assistance, tithing capital campaign proceeds;
- General Assembly resources available to congregations, such as the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Inc. (PILP).

3. Affirm that the church is called to offer its diverse resources in response to the crisis of homelessness and affordable rental housing, but also insist that faith communities cannot and should not be expected to address this crisis in isolation from governmental and private sector partnerships. Therefore, we advocate initiatives such as:

a. *Policy Affecting Housing and Housing Services*

(1) Preservation and development of housing programs at all governing levels that target households with low incomes and persons with special needs, especially the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program.

(2) Restoration and expansion of “Project-Based Section 8” and other federal subsidy and incentive programs that promote the construction of affordable housing, and revitalization of the 2.5 million units of affordable housing funded under this program.

(3) Development of Housing Trust Funds at municipal, state, and national levels, to make significant funding available to both urban and rural communities for the development of permanent, “green,” affordable housing.

(4) Enactment of inclusionary zoning policies and support for other strategies to achieve mixed-income communities, with attention to replacing housing units for persons with extremely low income when displaced through community development initiatives.

(5) Improved enforcement of existing nondiscrimination laws with regard to housing and home financing.

b. *Policy Affecting Services for Persons Experiencing Homelessness or at Risk of Homelessness*

(1) Revision of municipal zoning codes to include the temporary housing of persons (e.g. shelters, transitional housing, or supportive housing) as a permitted use, to facilitate the development of affordable rental housing, and to prohibit discrimination against persons based on their housing status.

(2) Increased funding for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other departments to progress toward the goal of ending chronic homelessness, such as:

(a) Expansion and adequate funding for Supportive Housing (housing plus services) for all people who have little or no income, are disabled, are formerly homeless, or are living with mental illness, to aid them in living independent, healthy, and fulfilling lives, and to prevent persons from recycling among the streets, the shelters, the jails, and the prisons.

(b) Continuation of and increased investment in the McKinney-Vento Act and related legislation, which provide funding for many services for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including amendments that would increase flexibility in program administration and make programs more performance-based.

(c) Expansion of Veterans Administration (VA) programs for veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to include funding for permanent housing and the creation of innovative new models for service, including programs to help reintegrate returning veterans into the community, encourage partnerships between the VA and community-based organizations, and link permanent housing for veterans and their families with supportive services.

(d) Renewal and expansion of federal funding to help communities prevent homelessness among youth and young adults, as well as persons with special needs as they reenter communities from jails and prisons, and to provide housing and supportive services.

(e) Restoration of funding for mainstream programs that have been utilized by states, cities, and counties to provide housing and services as part of their comprehensive plans to prevent and end homelessness. These include but are not limited to HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program, the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program (Section 202), and Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities (Section 811) as well as Medicaid, and other grants to states and localities.

*c. Policies Affecting Lending Practices*

(1) Development of foreclosure prevention strategies and programs to benefit households at risk.

(2) Restrict predatory and abusive lending practices, in consultation with the 217th General Assembly (1996)'s recommendations regarding "A Reformed Understanding of Usury in the 21st Century" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 805).

*d. Policies Affecting Taxation*

(1) Support of fiscally responsible federal budget priorities and adequate revenues to ensure long-term funding for critical housing assistance and other safety net programs for families with low income.

(2) Advocacy for budget priorities at all levels of government that utilize incentives and tax credits to encourage "smart growth" and the development of sustainable communities.

(3) Increase tax benefits for those living at lower income levels, so as to achieve a more equitable distribution of tax benefits for the purpose of achieving greater economic stability for individuals and families at risk of homelessness such as:

- expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit to include workers not raising children
- expansion of the refundable Child Tax Credit by making it available to more low-income workers, and
- development at the state or federal level of a refundable tax credit targeted to low-income renters, similar to the subsidy provided to homeowners through the federal mortgage interest deduction.

4. That the General Assembly urge the Presbyterian Foundation, in collaboration with the General Assembly Council, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and the office on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, to expand its Creative Investment Program to invest meaningfully in the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to create a revolving loan fund available to Presbyterian congregations, presbyteries, synods, and coalitions in which church entities are involved, for predevelopment loans to support the construction and rehabilitation of permanent rental housing for individuals and families with low income and/or a history of homelessness.

5. Direct the communication and distribution of this resolution:

a. **Direct the Office of the General Assembly, in collaboration with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, to publish this report in its entirety online and in hard copy, making copies available to each presbytery, resource center, synod, and requesting session, as well as colleges and seminaries related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and for distribution throughout the church through Presbyterian Distribution Services; and to notify the church of its availability through the PC(USA) Website.**

b. **Direct the General Assembly Council to facilitate the development of a portion of its website to make information, resources, and advocacy suggestions related to this resolution easily accessible to the church at all levels.**

c. **Urge the Office of Small Church and Community Ministries, in collaboration with the Presbyterian Washington Office and other church entities, to develop and/or make available resources to educate individual Presbyterians and congregations on the nature and extent of the crisis in homelessness and affordable housing, the types of housing that can address the needs of those caught in the cycle of homelessness, and ways to respond to and advocate for public policy directives.**

6. **Request that all PC(USA) members forgo one meal per week (if one is able) as an act of worship and humility. The value of that meal is to be pledged (in a manner of the donor's choice) to feeding those in need.**

### *Rationale*

#### I. Introduction

“Working a full-time job does not guarantee a family a decent, affordable place to live.”<sup>1</sup>

According to a 2007 report from the Center for Housing Policy, American households, whether renting or owning, are under increased pressure to maintain housing. Between 1997 and 2005, the number of working families paying more than half their income for housing increased 87 percent, from 2.4 million to 4.5 million. When families living in severely inadequate or dilapidated housing are included, the total of working families with critical housing needs rises to 5.2 million nationally. Housing needs exist across “the housing landscape” from large to small metropolitan areas, in urban and suburban counties alike. While the problem is most acute on the West Coast (Los Angeles, Anaheim, and San Diego areas) and East Coast centers like New York and Miami, the pattern exists in all regions of the country. Moreover, critical housing needs worsened in twenty-seven of the thirty-one metropolitan areas studied.

This picture is complicated by the turmoil in the subprime mortgage market, whereby households are brought into home ownership with teaser mortgage rates, which then fluctuate upward, quickly putting payments out of reach. General sluggishness in the housing market makes selling difficult and forces many households into foreclosure, which is at an all-time high. Mortgage companies themselves are being forced into bankruptcy, making hundreds of their own employees vulnerable.

These and other factors put pressure on the already tight affordable rental housing market. When eviction or several moves force a choice between being housed and being able to meet other expenses, individuals and families seek alternatives—doubling up with family or friends, moving into a cheap motel, or living out of their car. Then, not knowing where else to turn, they appear at the doors of churches or other service providers seeking a handout, a meal, or a place to stay. Piecemeal responses to such appeals, while compassionate, do not address underlying problems and issues—and can actually impede progress toward permanent solutions.

A far better response is to help persons find a path toward a comprehensive plan to end their homelessness. Without such a plan, individuals and families remain in poverty and cycle in and out of homelessness. Unless it is addressed comprehensively, this cycle of poverty and homelessness will continue to the next generation.

Though many programs and approaches to address the problem have emerged over recent decades, homelessness is still with us. In many ways, it is more insidious now than before. Nevertheless, it is at last becoming clear what must be done. This paper insists on two affirmations:

- The cycle of homelessness will be broken when each person or family experiencing homelessness is treated with dignity and respect and is offered hospitality and welcome to permanent housing.
- The cycle will be broken when everyone has access to resources to meet their needs for safety, food, housing, physical and mental health care, substance abuse treatment, child care, transportation, and freedom from violence.

These affirmations emerge from several principles, which underlie this resolution and its recommendations and are foundational to faithful ministry with persons who are homeless:

- Universal access to safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing is a measure of a truly just society and a sign of the coming Reign of God.
- The church is called to create communities of hospitality that assure all members of society, including persons experiencing homelessness, a right to basic economic and social well-being, including safe, affordable housing.
- The church is called to honor God’s gift of the earth and to create, through personal lifestyle choices and the structures of society, sustainable communities where people can be securely housed in just relationship with one another and the earth.
- The church is called to challenge society to provide safe, decent, accessible, affordable, and permanent housing for all persons who cannot secure such housing through their own means.

Homelessness and the struggle to find permanent, affordable rental housing is a crisis that spans the country. It can be found in a diverse range of communities, from rural/small town to suburban to urban/metropolitan. Thus programs of sustainable, supportive housing are needed across this vast range of communities. People of faith are a common thread running throughout these diverse communities as well, and the church can be a catalyst for building a comprehensive response.

In order to develop a faithful response to the crisis of homelessness, the church is called to a ministry of hospitality and beyond that to a ministry of home-making, “the creation of ... space where souls can thrive and dream—secure, protected, related, nourished and whole.”<sup>2</sup> The church is called to help people move from homelessness to hope through constructing just, sustainable communities for all God’s people.

## II. The Problem

The crisis of homelessness is inextricably linked to the crisis of affordable housing. As noted earlier, both are increasingly prevalent throughout the country, in diverse types of communities. In urban areas, where large numbers of persons who appear to be homeless can be seen on city streets and in public spaces such as libraries and bus stations, homelessness is very visible. However, about 14 percent of persons in need of shelter are in isolated rural areas where they may live in their cars or in parks, campsites, or abandoned buildings.<sup>3</sup> “Couch-hopping” or “doubling-up” with friends or family members is a less visible form of coping with homelessness in all types of communities. While it meets the immediate need, “doubling up” soon leads to stress for both children and adults. Moreover, housing additional persons who are not included on a lease leads to overcrowding and, if discovered, is grounds for eviction, which may result in two families at risk for homelessness.

### A. *What Is Homelessness?*

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)<sup>4</sup> defines the term “homeless” or “homeless individual or homeless person” as

1. an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and
2. an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:
  - a. a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
  - b. an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
  - c. a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

It is interesting to note that persons who “double up” (the most common first response to being without permanent shelter) are not counted among “the homeless” according to this HUD definition.

There are several levels of homelessness, from “precariously-housed” (persons who are dependent on others for shelter) to “chronically homeless” (persons who experience long-term homelessness or reoccurring episodes of homelessness). Some individuals or families—as a result of an interruption of income, fire, or a medical crisis—have a short-term need for housing assistance; they need housing, along with the time and resources to regain their footing after the crisis. They access the system, regain stability, and move back into independent living. The experience of homelessness can be a blip in an otherwise stable life. More often, however, it is not, and the crisis of homelessness is the predictable result of a complex interaction of losses and conditions.

Individuals and families needing assistance with housing nearly always need a complex array of other services in order to achieve enough stability to maintain permanent housing. The process of moving from shelter to stability is not simple, especially for the 150,000 to 200,000 persons in the U.S. who experience chronic homelessness. There are often setbacks, making the need for both a comprehensive plan and significant support along the way extremely critical.

#### B. *Who Is Homeless?*

During the 1950s and 60s, “skid row” flop houses and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels were available in cities to house single persons with low-income. Residents tended to be older (over fifty), white men, many of whom had problems with alcohol and were living apart from their families. They tended to work in the menial jobs that were readily available in center cities; because of the availability of these jobs, such persons were able to manage on modest incomes of about \$350 a month.

Today, a far greater number of persons experiencing homelessness are young, in their 30s, and members of a minority group. Approximately two-thirds have spent some time in jail, a mental hospital, or in drug rehabilitation, yet few have access to follow-up care. Youth and young adults who are homeless are likely to have spent time in foster care, a group home, or as a runaway. Due to economic shifts and the gentrification of downtown areas, persons who become homeless are largely unemployed (80 percent) or have extremely low income. Moreover, as a result of economic distress, the stress induced by being homeless, and inadequate access to health and mental health systems, persons who are without shelter are 30–40 percent more likely than the general population to have a substance abuse problem, mental illness, or a chronic physical disease. They are also mobile. It is estimated that families at risk for homelessness move an average of four times in the year prior to seeking refuge in a shelter.

While homelessness is not restricted to any one population group, three groups merit special mention.

- Veterans are heavily represented among persons utilizing housing services, and record numbers of veterans of our current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are seeking housing assistance within months of leaving the military.
- Families with children are increasingly at risk for homelessness. In 2002, families comprised 41 percent of urban homelessness, an increase of 5 percent in just two years. In rural areas, research indicates that families, single mothers, and children make up the largest group of people who are homeless. Nationally, approximately 39 percent of persons experiencing homelessness are children. It is estimated that 600,000 families and 1.35 million children are homeless in the U.S. each year.
- Between a million and 1.6 million youth and young adults experience homelessness each year.<sup>5</sup> Presenting issues include aging out of foster care, running away from home, or being abandoned or locked out by parents or guardians. Youth may have strained relationships with family due to domestic violence, mental illness or substance abuse among family members or from parental disapproval of their sexual behavior or sexual identity; they may also have experienced physical or sexual abuse by parents or guardians.

“Chronic homelessness” refers to persons, regardless of age, with an unaddressed disabling condition (substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or a chronic physical illness or disability), who have been homeless (1) continuously for one whole year, or (2) four or more times in the past three years. The plight of such persons is exacerbated by policy changes and budget constraints within the medical, mental health, and other sectors, which all too often result in indigent persons being released to communities that are ill-prepared to provide housing or continuing care for persons with special needs.

Thus common precedents to homelessness include: unemployment, underemployment, inadequate wages and benefits, inadequate or depleted social benefits, inadequate services for mental illness or drug dependency, and the inability to maintain even the lowest-cost housing. An important underlying factor is the loss of manufacturing jobs and other employment that enabled wage earners to provide for themselves and their families. Overall, wages have not kept pace with the rapidly increasing cost of housing, and most communities have an extreme affordable housing deficit.

#### C. *What Is Affordable Housing?*

Housing is considered affordable when the cost of housing (rent or mortgage/tax payments), plus basic utilities apart from telephone, does not exceed 30 percent of the household’s income. In 1997, 2.4 million households spent more than half their income on housing, some of which was severely inadequate or dilapidated. By 2005, this number had jumped to 5.2 million—an 87 percent increase. From 2000 to 2002, the national housing wage (the hourly wage required for a worker to afford a two bedroom home) increased by 18 percent. By comparison, the overall inflation rate for 2001 was 1.6 percent. The lack of affordable housing and the limited scale of housing assistance programs are the primary causes of homelessness.

In recent years, rents have soared, putting housing out of reach for thousands of Americans. In 1999, only 4.9 million rental units were available to 7.7 million renters with extremely low income—a shortage of 2.8 million units. Stagnant incomes among households at the low end of the income distribution, combined with a shrinking pool of affordable units due to demolition or condo conversion and the lack of political will to develop new affordable units, perpetuate the affordable housing crisis. More than 37 million households pay so much for housing that they cannot afford other necessities such as food and medical care. Furthermore, increasing rents in 2005 and 2006 predicted escalating housing cost burdens or homelessness for households with low income.<sup>6</sup>

#### D. *How Can the Crisis of Homelessness Be Addressed?*

The primary legislation to address homelessness is the McKinney-Vento Act, first passed in 1987 as the Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act. Previously, the Reagan Administration had viewed homelessness as a problem best handled by state and local jurisdictions. However, pressure for the federal government to be an active participant in addressing the needs of constituents experiencing homelessness led to strong bipartisan support for federal help in providing emergency relief (shelter, food, mobile health care, transitional housing, etc.). Recent revisions have increased the number of federally-supported shelter beds, mandated that school systems make education available to children who are homeless, and increased the focus on permanent housing. While the availability of public funds to address homelessness is variable and severely limited, these funds are an essential component as communities work to garner all available resources to meet the needs in their area.

An ideal policy would have three foci: prevention, housing assistance, and supportive services.

#### E. *Prevention*

A key element in overcoming the crisis of homelessness is to keep people from becoming homeless in the first place. Public policy that strives to keep people housed would focus on: enhancing the low-cost housing supply, eliminating unemployment, providing adequate wages and benefits, reducing discrimination, and implementing support systems for persons who are precariously housed. Over the long term, homelessness prevention must involve:

- An adequate supply of affordable housing.
- An adequate supply of jobs that pay a living wage<sup>7</sup> and provide benefits.
- Adequate community-based health and mental health services.
- Strategic intervention when households are at risk.
- Adequate discharge planning to ensure that persons exiting foster care, hospitals, jails, prisons, or other institutions have immediate access to supportive housing.
- Development of social networks.
- Investment in programs for youth who are homeless and aging out of foster care.

#### F. *Housing Assistance*

Housing assistance can mean the difference between stable housing, precarious housing, or no housing at all, but the demand for assistance dramatically exceeds the supply. Most families and individuals who seek housing assistance are placed on long waiting lists. The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, a major source of housing assistance, experienced a decrease of nearly 150,000 vouchers between February 2004 and August 2006.<sup>8</sup>

Most Americans believe that government-based housing assistance, i.e. housing assistance utilizing tax dollars, is aimed primarily at families with low income and involves programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and local housing authorities. In actuality, the opposite is true. The majority of housing assistance in the United States comes through tax breaks to homeowners, the majority of whom have middle to high income. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, there were \$154 billion in indirect, housing-related tax breaks (the invisible part of the national budget that doesn't get voted on each year) in 2006. In comparison, direct expenditures on federal housing assistance in 2006 (the visible budget that does get voted on each year) totaled \$38.3 billion. The Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University asserts that “federal assistance to very low-income households reaches only about one-quarter of eligible renters and virtually no homeowners.”<sup>9</sup>

Housing assistance programs are often the critical factor between being housed and not being housed, yet programs for households with low income reach only a fraction of families who are poor enough to qualify for them (around five million households are served).<sup>10</sup> We must do better.



### G. *Supportive Services*

Supportive services are a critical part of a comprehensive plan to break the cycle of homelessness. Communities seeking to provide a comprehensive approach to ending homelessness need to: (1) identify who can provide the necessary services, and (2) address the urgent question of resources to address a wide variety of needs. Such needs include:

#### *Housing Services:*

- Safe and affordable housing
- Housing vouchers for market rate housing
- Supportive services in permanent housing for persons with mental illness, addiction, and other disabilities

#### *Educational Services for Adults:*

- Literacy training
- Employment training
- GED classes
- Tenant education
- Financial literacy
- Tax assistance

#### *Programs for Children and Youth:*

- Safe and affordable childcare, available 24/7
- Early childhood education
- Head Start
- Tutoring
- After-school programs
- Job training
- Counseling to enhance self-worth and identity

#### *Other Support Services:*

- Domestic violence assistance
- Public assistance (food stamps, temporary assistance to needy families, utility assistance, nutritional programs such as WIC)
- Transportation
- Advocacy for jobs that provide a living wage and benefits

#### *Health Care:*

- Mental health-care evaluations and treatment
- Preventive care including immunizations, nutrition, and prescriptions
- Dental care
- Free clinics
- Addiction treatment and counseling

The crisis of homelessness is complex, as are the components needed to break the cycle and enable families and individuals to live independently in safe, secure and affordable permanent housing. Yet it is to this crisis in all its complexity that Jesus Christ calls the church to respond.

### III. Theological-Ethical Framework

L: Christ is present wherever food is shared and drink is given to those who thirst. Jesus practiced a hospitality that made room at the table for those looked down upon and ordinarily left out. Against the custom of His day, He ate and drank with sinners and tax collectors, with strangers and enemies.

Yet when people came together with Jesus, amazing things happened. Strangers became friends. The hungry were fed. People were healed. A new community was formed.

ALL: WE LONG TO BE PART OF SUCH A COMMUNITY. (Communion liturgy, St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Tucson, Arizona)

In biblical times, hospitality was the foundation for all morality. The people of Israel, with their experience of being strangers and sojourners before coming into the land, understood covenant with God to include care for vulnerable strangers in their midst. Worship and outreach to those in need could not be separated.

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house.... (Isa. 58:6-7)

Much of Jesus' ministry as recorded in the Gospels is marked by acts of hospitality; his choices about where and with whom to share his meals break down the prevailing walls of division and exclusion. His ministry and that of his followers are dependent on the hospitality of others. Moreover, he characterizes the coming Reign of God in terms of a banquet where all are welcomed and find a seat. Paul, in his nurturing of young congregations, emphasized welcoming one another as Christ had welcomed all, especially those deemed "unclean" by society. Such restorative hospitality is both a participation in and an anticipation of God's hospitality by which "strangers" become "partners"<sup>11</sup>

God wants a chair for everyone at the banquet table. The table is of God. It is not the property of the rich and powerful. The table is God's creation. It is meant as a gift to be shared in sustainable hospitality for all. God makes a home and a place for all at the table, but humans, through sin, have excluded particular groups of people. Rather than sharing for sustainability, we have hoarded and destroyed God's gift. Due to human sin, hospitality too often becomes a matter of sharing our crumbs rather than offering an abundant loaf; such remedial solutions provide only a momentary respite from social stratification and its stigma. People who are poor remain poor and on the margins.

In contrast, true hospitality is equated with justice. Each person is provided not only a chair and a meal, but a bed and a place of shelter, indeed the opportunity to become an ongoing part of the community, the extended household. True hospitality requires the emancipation of slaves and economic redistribution, so all may find a place to be at home.

Ancient Israel envisioned its world, indeed the whole of creation, as a household or a village of households, where residents not only lived together but also nurtured and protected one another. Persons who were poor were seen as "sibling" or "neighbor" to be loved as oneself. Leo G. Purdue writes,

In the formation of our own ethical paradigm, informed by scripture, we, too, must learn to envision not only our own society but also all creation as a place for human dwelling ... a collection of family households, in which all peoples and creatures have a place to dwell. ... [and in which we] are responsible to and for one another, for the "good creation," and to [God] who ... not only continues to love and nurture us but also expects us to love and care for our neighbors as ourselves.<sup>12</sup>

How is the church called to respond in faithful ministry in response to the crisis of homelessness? There is no one answer. However, the call to true biblical hospitality compels us to go beyond compassion and charity. Our response must empower people to move from homelessness to hope. Our response must include elements of justice, community, and the sustainable sharing and use of God's gift of creation.

#### A. *Justice*

In the culture surrounding Jesus and the early church, Greek and Roman views of benevolence and hospitality stressed formal, reciprocal obligations between host and guest. This tradition emphasized the worthiness and goodness of recipients rather than their need. In fact, relations were often calculated to benefit the benefactor.<sup>13</sup> Lactantius, a tutor to the son of Constantine, took a different view. To him, hospitality to strangers was ultimately equated with justice: "But in what does the nature of justice consist than in our affording to strangers through kindness, that which we render to our own relatives through affection."<sup>14</sup> Jesus himself modeled such an approach when he urged hospitality to those who could not reciprocate: "When you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed because they cannot repay you" (Luke 14:13-14).

Theologically, we serve God when we respond with compassion to our brothers and sisters, when we feed, welcome, clothe, and care for persons in need (Matt. 25:31-46). Seeing the face of Jesus in the face of "the least of these," churches often begin with a direct response—by collecting food or clothing, opening soup kitchens and shelters, or allocating space to counseling programs or health clinics. While these responses are necessary, they do not address the causes of homelessness, do little to break the cycle for individuals and families in need, and may be offered in ways that do not empower them.

Churches can also respond on a deeper level by getting involved in partnerships to create affordable housing. Such efforts, whether aimed at making housing affordable or actually constructing low-income housing, come closer to approaching

justice since housing is a basic step to success in other societal arenas. Even so, the way churches develop partnerships and provide affordable housing will determine whether people who are homeless experience them as empowering or paternalistic.

The church should be involved in both of these levels of hospitality. However, to truly be about the work of constructing just, sustainable communities, the church also needs to be involved in advocacy for public policies that prevent people from becoming homeless and remedy the injustices inherent in the vicious cycle of poverty.

### B. *Community*

Hospitality, as envisioned here, includes economic restructuring so that people can meet their basic physical needs (have a place at the table). It also includes an even more basic element: respect, the recognition of the worth of all who are seated at the banquet. In the early Christian church, communities of hospitality distributed goods to persons in need, but they also ate meals together, lived simply, and praised God through worship and prayer.

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possession and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (Acts 2: 44–47)

They intentionally sought to form relationships of love and care with one another and with God. Such intentionality depends, theologically, on a view of each person as created in the image of God (*imago dei*) and a commitment to the discipline of listening to and taking seriously all voices at the table, especially those that are usually ignored. Too often, rather than paying attention to the stories and insights of people who are homeless, we fall into the easier pattern of assuming that, because a person is dirty, he or she is also ignorant, lazy, and of little worth. We lump all people who are homeless into one category; we do not acknowledge that each person, whether housed or without shelter, has a personal narrative. A revolutionary first step towards creating communities of hospitality is simply to affirm that all people have dignity, equal worth, and the capacity to contribute special gifts in community.

As the story of the starving widow who serves Elijah (1 Kings 17–18) attests, those who are poor and outcast can be just as hospitable as those who are rich and powerful, if not more so. Love of neighbor entails both being a neighbor to others and allowing others to be neighbor to us. How easily we forget that our titles and possessions, even our well-being as persons, are a gift from God. How easily we forget that the bountiful goods at the banquet table are neither deserved nor earned; as gifts they are to be shared, not hoarded at the expense of others.

Developing community requires breaking down the exclusionary boundaries we have erected, both individually and structurally. People who are homeless are often disconnected from the basic relationships that make people secure in the world. Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutierrez spoke of the difference between a church for the poor and a church of the poor. We must do the same.

Hospitality means moving beyond having a commitment to welcome (in the abstract) to proactively thinking about how our churches can become communities of hospitality. It is easy to preach love of neighbor, but to truly be a community of hospitality means going beyond the abstract to concrete action, on both individual and structural levels. Every aspect of a congregation's ministry must be viewed and evaluated through the lens of community reconciliation. How can each element of its ministry work to break down cultural, class, and racial boundaries? How can congregations interact on a broad scale to create flourishing communities where all have the capacity to become participating members?

With regard to homelessness and affordable housing, churches and other communities of faith can play a unique role. The public voice of churches of the poor, or communities of hospitality that include people in need, is authentic. Such an authentic voice of justice can be especially potent when communities strive to close doors and refuse access, when the goal of community life becomes exclusion rather than inclusion. The church's emphasis on the need for communities of hospitality can supplement society's emphasis on human rights; communities of hospitality can offer the human connection and rootedness that give people a sense of home. Even so the church cannot do this alone. Religious communities can offer connections of care and meaningful identity, but the state is needed to protect basic human rights and ensure that decisions by private church and/or church-based organizations about who is "deserving" of care do not lead to discrimination.

### C. *Sustainability*

Biblically, creation is a gift from God. Humans, as part of God's creation, are given the opportunity to share life with other creatures in land that belongs to God. With God's gracious gift comes responsibility: to care for the land, to tend it, and to honor the One by whose grace it is ours to enjoy. This was a prime theme when Israel came into the land of promise:

You shall observe my statutes and faithfully keep my ordinances, so that you may live on the land securely. The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live on it securely. The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants. Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land. (Lev. 25:18–19, 23–24)

Neglectful of this biblical insight, however, we have increasingly depleted the earth's resources. Sustainability requires that we think not only about how all are going to be seated at the table but how we are even going to have a table!

Hospitality requires that we all live more simply so that the earth can continue to sustain itself and the growing human population. We must ask what type of houses and communities we are building. For example, do we think about how to provide simple yet sustainable housing that is affordable for all? Or do we see "housing assistance" as property tax and home mortgage deductions for homeowners, even those with more than one home, while others have no home at all?

God has provided enough for all but, in our greed, we misuse and misappropriate God's gift. Thus the call for sustainable hospitality is strongest for those who consume the most. Such an emphasis on sustainable hospitality also calls for structural changes that would move the housing industry's emphasis away from investment in high-end housing and toward earth-friendly housing and community planning. This would include increased commitment to mixed-income communities, so persons who work in a community can more easily find affordable housing near their workplace. Added benefits would include shorter commutes—and thus more time for involvement in family and community life as well as lessened dependency on fossil fuels and highways.

#### IV. Constructing Just, Sustainable Communities

Presbyterians and other persons of faith have responded valiantly to the crisis of homelessness over recent decades. Of the 6,834 congregations that responded to questions about their involvement in ministries in homelessness and housing in 2006,<sup>15</sup> over 53 percent indicated that they had provided either volunteers or financial support or both to a ministry with persons who are homeless or in need of housing assistance. Responses show that both financial support and volunteers were nearly evenly split between Habitat for Humanity and other ministries. Presbyterians are responding to this social crisis, which reaches literally to the doorsteps of our churches. This response is worthy of celebration, yet the problem persists.

How can the cycle end? The answer is both simple and complex.

##### A. *Strategies for Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness*

To become involved or to deepen their current involvement, individuals and congregations can:

- Become educated about homelessness and its causes;
- Identify who is already at work on homeless issues and join them;
- Determine if their community or state has a "Plan to End Homelessness"<sup>16</sup> and find ways to work within it;
- Provide space within church buildings for programs that address homelessness and housing-related needs;
- Partner with other churches and religious communities;
- Partner with secular agencies to provide linkage to comprehensive services;
- Provide in-kind donations and services: direct service volunteers, volunteers to serve on boards and committees, access to church property, transportation, and goods that agencies need to provide services (clothing, toiletries, furniture, meals, other equipment, etc.);
- Provide financial support.

Whether offered by one organization or through a collaborative effort, a replicable, community-based strategy for breaking the cycle of homelessness has several components. These components include:

- Prevention, which helps people keep their housing;
- Individualized, comprehensive programs of housing and services for those who become homeless;
- Affordable, permanent housing with a variety of support services so that residents are able to maintain their housing.

There must also be a process to measure outcomes both for these components and for the individuals and families who are engaged in the services.

An effective response can take many forms and be developed in a community of any size. Churches and religious communities can and should play a significant role, providing resources (financial support, volunteers, in-kind donations, and advocacy) to make the model successful. The goal is:

- To support families or individuals who are able to become totally self-sufficient, and
- To provide those who are not able to be self-sufficient with the support services they need to maintain permanent housing.

When persons who have experienced the trauma of homelessness have a home, they can more successfully address other aspects of their lives. Adults can seek appropriate training or employment. Parents can focus on parenting and increasing family resources. Children are less likely to experience depression and behavioral problems and thus are more able to achieve appropriate developmental milestones. Persons who struggle with mental illness, physical disabilities, learning limits, and addiction may not be able to become totally independent but with permanent housing in association with needed services, they too can live with dignity and in safety.

The key to success is a comprehensive plan for a spectrum of programs developed to meet varied needs. Such a plan should link the needs of each individual and family with critical elements of service. Communities, depending on their size, location, and resources, may have one program, which provides all the elements needed, or a variety of programs that work together to provide comprehensive services. For some individuals and families, an end to homelessness may involve living independently in permanent, affordable housing with no further need for services. For another family or individual, an end to homelessness may mean living indefinitely in permanent housing with supportive services. In both cases, however, the cycle of homelessness has been broken because there is a comprehensive system of services, families and individuals have participated in their success, and the community has collaborated to make this possible.

Critical elements of a comprehensive approach to breaking the cycle of homelessness include:

1. *Community Planning and Participation:*

Communities, and public and private organizations within the community, including churches, should identify who is providing services, identify gaps in services as well as additional partners, and develop an overall plan. All service components should be linked, and they must be easily accessible by individuals and families in need. This kind of partnership requires commitment, flexibility, and the acknowledgment that significant change will only come about through collaboration at all levels.

2. *Homelessness Prevention:*

Strategies to prevent homelessness and funds to assist individuals and families facing loss of their housing should work together within a comprehensive system aimed at preventing repeated or chronic homelessness. Funding (a combination of private, governmental, not-for-profit, and faith-based funds) used in conjunction with strategic interventions can prevent evictions. For example, a mediator can help tenants and property manager reach an agreement on past-due rent and reasonable future payments. Follow-up assures accountability on the part of both recipients and housing providers.

3. *Emergency Shelters:*

Many communities have developed seasonal emergency shelters to keep persons from dying on the streets during seasons of extreme cold or heat. Ideally, however, such programs are available year-round and provide temporary shelter, meals, supportive services, and a thorough assessment of guests' needs. Emergency services, by definition, are aimed at meeting a critical, emergency need, but they can also provide an entry point for beginning to address longer-term needs and the means to maintain a safe and healthy way of life. In order to leave the shelter and prevent their homelessness from recurring, individuals and families need a comprehensive assessment and plan. Strong linkages between shelters and other services assure that plans are not only developed but fully implemented.

4. *Transitional Housing Leading to Permanent Supportive Housing:*

Transitional housing, along with a complete spectrum of support services, is the next step in breaking the cycle of homelessness. Program staff help families and individuals develop a comprehensive plan and assure that they receive both appropriate housing and the services needed to live in that housing successfully.

5. *An Individualized Comprehensive Service Program:*

Breaking the cycle of homelessness is dependent on access to both housing and appropriate services. A successful program will assess and address critical issues such as chemical dependency, domestic violence, education, physical and mental health, life skills, job skills, self-esteem, and history of sexual assault, and recommend ways persons can develop successful living routines.

### 6. *The Assessment Specialist:*

Key to this approach is the assessment specialist who works with families or individuals and helps them choose training to advance their skills or find full- or part-time employment. If persons are unable to work, due to health or other limitations, their plan will focus on enabling them to live in stable housing with appropriate services.

### 7. *Measuring Success:*

“Success” in ending homelessness differs for each individual or family. Nevertheless, it is very important for communities and participating programs to measure the outcomes of their work. Are individuals and families remaining housed for six months or a year? Are programs providing appropriate and necessary services? Is there enough safe and affordable housing to meet the community’s needs? Are service providers working together to assure the success of the comprehensive model? Is the community-at-large participating? Is the religious community active in helping to bring about an end to homelessness?

### B. *Models of Faithful Ministry with People Who Are Homeless*

Examples of comprehensive and effective response to the crisis of homelessness abound throughout the country. A few are described here to demonstrate the various forms that a just, sustainable and community-based approach can take.

Providence House, Shreveport, Louisiana, ([www.theprovidencehouse.com](http://www.theprovidencehouse.com)) is a residential development center for families with children. Located on the edge of downtown Shreveport in an area with a mix of churches, businesses, and vacant buildings, Providence House serves more than fifty families daily. It provides or accesses comprehensive support services from the community to help families gain the resources necessary to reach their highest self-sufficiency and move to permanent independent living. Begun as a mission of First Presbyterian Church, Shreveport, Providence House now functions as an ecumenical, community-wide collaboration of most expressions of the faith community and the private sector. An eighteen-year-old program, it started as an emergency shelter but began addressing the need for long-term solutions fifteen years ago. The success rate for “graduating” families is 84 percent.

A 14,000 square foot main building provides a private room for up to twenty-eight families with children; each family shares a bathroom with another family. A licensed Child Development Center serves thirty-nine preschool children daily and provides meeting space, a library, and a computer and education center. Once stabilized, the family moves into one of more than thirty scattered-site apartments available to the program; apartments are selected based on the program’s assessment of what the family will be able to afford at graduation. Apartments are fully furnished with donated furniture, household items etc. Upon graduation, the lease is transferred to the family, enabling them to remain in the community where they now reside, thus enhancing their move toward stability.

The Campus for Human Development (CHD), Nashville, Tennessee, ([www.chd-nashville.org](http://www.chd-nashville.org)) is a service-based model in a medium-sized city. “Emphasizing the scriptural ideals of love and community through service to the homeless,” the programs offer “the grace of hospitality” and are “centered around an atmosphere of mutual respect.” The result of a 1995 merger of three organizations (some predecessor programs—food pantries, soup kitchens, etc.—go back to 1969), the program now represents an outreach ministry of more than two hundred congregations. With fellowship with the poor at the heart of its approach, CHD offers a continuum of care that provides both residential and educational programs with a focus on both emergency and long-term needs. Programs include:

- Room at the Inn: More than 150 congregations provide food, shelter, and transportation during the coldest months.
- Educational programs: Classes, ranging from Anger Management and GED Preparation to Art and Drama, are taught by volunteers.
- Respite Care: Facilities for medically frail persons to recover and assess future needs.
- Alcohol and drug treatment.
- Guest House: Around-the-clock shelter for those in substance-abuse treatment.
- Day Services: Showers, meals, clothing, work identification, case management, referrals, mail, bus passes for work, hospitality.
- Hispanic services.
- Congregational Helpline to help congregations screen requests for benevolence assistance.

CARE 66, Gallup, New Mexico, ([www.care66.org](http://www.care66.org)) strives “to create opportunities to end homelessness” in Gallup and surrounding McKinley County in rural New Mexico. It does this by addressing both poverty (through job creation and com-

munity development) and the lack of affordable housing. CARE 66 is an abbreviation for Community Area Resource Enterprise; the “66” refers to their location on U.S. Highway 66.

The program focuses on providing transitional and supportive housing, along with case management, a daytime opportunity center, and other services leading toward self-sufficiency. A low-income housing development project will provide thirty multi-bedroom units for families, and they will soon utilize a \$7 million tax credit to create additional units of housing. Enterprise creation includes a salsa-making company and other job creation, training and micro-enterprise developments. The long-term hope is that housing development and enterprise creation efforts will generate enough revenue for the program to achieve operational self-sufficiency.

Some programs are focused on a particular aspect of the cycle of homelessness or a particular portion of the homeless population. Presbyterian Senior Services Grandparent Family Apartments, Bronx, New York, ([www.pssuse.org](http://www.pssuse.org)) develops and provides supportive services and programs for older adults who are raising grandchildren due to the inability or unavailability of their children to do so. Fifty apartment units (ten, three-bedroom units and forty, two-bedroom units) are available, along with social services and activities on site for both the children and the grandparents. Another such program is Interfaith House in Chicago ([www.Interfaithhouse.org](http://www.Interfaithhouse.org)), which uses the crisis of illness or release from hospitalization to provide case management leading to independent living with ongoing supportive services as needed. Another program, Seventh Landing in St. Paul, Minnesota, was designed to accommodate young adults who have spent the better part of their lives moving between foster care, treatment facilities, and homeless shelters. Twelve efficiency apartments give residents needed privacy and independence; on-site supportive services include job training. On the street level, a coffee shop offers living wage job experience for residents and provides an important service to the surrounding community.

*Testimony:*

In 2002, Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in Manhattan began an Overnight Shelter Ministry. With guidance from local organizations involved in homelessness, we were quickly able to organize inspections, beds, linens, toiletries, and a food budget from the city, all at no cost. Our main responsibility was to staff the shelter with volunteers. After three months of preparatory work, the shelter opened, with services available one night a week. (In collaboration with two other congregations, we are now open five nights a week and hope to expand to seven nights soon.)

It didn’t take long, however, to realize that the root causes of homelessness needed to be addressed. Luciano Kovacs at Jan Hus Presbyterian Church contacted me about creating an interfaith advocacy effort in support of affordable housing. Calling ourselves East Side Congregations for Housing Justice (ESCHJ), a broad representation of East Side religious leaders came to the table. Housing agencies quickly got wind of our organizing and joined forces with us, providing expertise and even a blueprint for ending homelessness in New York City within ten years.

The ESCHJ and the Overnight Shelter ministry feed each other. When you work night by night at the shelter level, it is easy to become overwhelmed by the staggering numbers of persons who are on the streets and the stories of individual heartache. The fact that we can take concrete steps to make significant change is energizing. It also works the other way: To know the story and see the face of a person experiencing homelessness motivates us to work even harder for systemic change.

Dawn Revella, Outreach Ministries Coordinator,  
Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York

*C. Faithful Response to Homelessness Through Advocacy*

... Enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is an intolerable violation of God’s good creation. Because Jesus identified himself with the needy and exploited, the cause of the world’s poor is the cause of his disciples. ... A church that is indifferent to poverty, or evades responsibility in economic affairs, or is open to one social class only, or expects gratitude for its beneficence makes a mockery of reconciliation and offers no acceptable worship to God. (“The Confession of 1967,” *The Book of Confessions*, 9:46c)

As Presbyterians, we are led from worship into the world where, guided by Scripture, we act out our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ. Our *Book of Order* is instructive:

God sends the church in the power of the Holy Spirit to exercise compassion in the world, ... feeding the hungry, ... comforting the grieving, ... caring for the sick, ... visiting the prisoners, ... freeing the captives, ... sheltering the homeless, ... befriending the lonely. ...

The call [to compassion] is accepted as the faithful respond in prayers of confession and intercession, in acts of self-offering, and in offering material goods to be shared in ministries of compassion. ...

The church is also called to engage those structures and systems which create or foster brokenness and distortion. Christians respond to these calls through acts of advocacy and compassion, through service in common ministries of the church, and through cooperation with agencies and organizations committed to these ends. (*Book of Order* W-7.3001–.3003)

While individual acts of mercy and compassion are well understood as “Christ-like,” and providing financial support to groups and ministries engaged in the relief of misery and injustice is common, many Christians are reluctant to become directly involved themselves. Fewer still accept the call of the gospel to “engage those structures and systems which create or foster brokenness and distortion.”<sup>17</sup> Yet as Reformed Christians, our heritage is filled with examples of such faithful engagement, and the church has again and again affirmed the efficacy of such action.<sup>18</sup> This commitment stems from a strong belief in the sovereignty of God over all aspects of life: “... No area of life—personal, social, political, or economic—is beyond [God’s] rule and redemption (UPCUSA, 1958).

As a community of discernment, the church seeks guidance for its responsibility in the world, including the public realm, through continual dialogue with the living word of God (Christ) through the witness of Holy Scriptures.<sup>19</sup> In Scripture, inescapable themes are found: The Hebrew prophets continually remind God’s people of their responsibility “to do justice ... love [mercy], and walk humbly with [their] God” (Micah 6:8) and to “let justice roll down” (Amos 5:24). They do not hesitate to speak the Word of God to the political, religious establishment. Specific warning is given to those who ignore the well-being of persons who are marginalized and oppressed.

In the New Testament, Jesus demonstrates profound continuity with the exodus tradition and the prophetic witness of the Hebrew Scriptures. In anticipation of his birth, Mary, in the Magnificat, sings of the One who has “exalted those of low degree” (Luke 1:52). Jesus draws on Isaiah’s vision, deeply rooted in the exodus, to interpret his call to ministry (Luke 4:18–19). And with the death and resurrection of Jesus come the gifts of divine healing, forgiveness, reconciliation, and empowerment. As Christ’s Body in the world, “the church is given the responsibility to discern the work of Christ in the world and for the world, and to act on what it believes faithfulness to Christ entails.”<sup>20</sup>

Part of the role of the church in relation to social witness and engagement is to call other parts of society to account and to solicit their collaboration in addressing injustice. While the church’s resources are considerable, they pale in the face of other sources, both public and private, that can be brought to bear on the needs of the world. While some would claim that tending to people who are poor and homeless is the rightful work of the church—and not the government—the religious community cannot do it all. A vital role of the church and its resources is to call government to account and to leverage governmental funds to address the agendas in which the church and the society agree action is needed. This is called advocacy.

Advocacy is needed and can be carried out at any level, from the local church to the local community and at municipal, state, regional or national levels. Sometimes, churches are drawn into advocacy by the plight of their own members. Such was the case in San Francisco’s Chinatown some years ago.

#### 1. *Testimony:*

San Francisco’s Chinatown has one of the highest population densities in the country, and like much of the city, affordable housing is a huge challenge. In the 1970s, as demand for housing forced rents sky high, evictions were rampant. Rather than sleeping in the streets, senior citizens and large families squeezed into the only housing available: 8-foot by 10-foot single room occupancy (SRO) hotel rooms, with no bathrooms or kitchens.

Though small and theologically conservative, the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown (PCC) got involved in a housing ministry for two reasons: (1) housing was such a crushing need for the community, and (2) Chinatown was not getting its fair share of government support to build affordable housing.

During the late 1970s, PCC organized to push San Francisco’s Redevelopment Agency and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to create an affordable housing development in Chinatown on land available directly across the street from its historic Mission Center, Donaldina Cameron House. Working through the Chinatown Coalition for Better Housing, the church took major leadership in this communitywide effort. After months of attending zoning board hearings and other meetings, the church and the coalition were victorious.

The Mei Lun Yuen Housing Project, the first such development in Chinatown, built with funding through HUD and the city’s Redevelopment Agency, was completed in 1982. Aimed at addressing a broad need for affordable housing, the project’s 186 units include one-bedroom units for seniors, studios, and three- and four-bedroom units for families.

My own family was poor, and we found ourselves evicted, with few options for finding affordable housing. To us, the experience of our church’s struggle for affordable housing was a powerful witness for Jesus Christ; in fact, it was through this experience of the church that I chose to go to seminary. Today, twenty-five years later, the Chinatown Coalition for Better Housing continues to advocate for affordable housing. Churches can never build enough homeless shelters and affordable housing on their own. We can do a lot more by pushing our government to prioritize “food, shelter, and clothing” as a basic human right for all God’s children.



Norman Fong, Presbytery of San Francisco  
 Chair, Justice, Advocacy and Caring Committee  
 Co-Chair, Chinatown Coalition for Better Housing

## 2. *Municipal and State-Level Advocacy*

As with direct engagement, advocacy often begins with what is obvious and at hand, and then grows in complexity. To begin, individuals and congregations can:

- Identify landlords who provide safe and affordable housing and assist families with low income to find affordable housing.
- Develop partnerships with private landlords; help agencies develop partnerships with private landlords.
- Welcome affordable housing and housing assistance programs such as shelters into their communities.
- Support shelters and other service providers when community conflicts arise over the presence of programs for persons who are homeless or of low-income.
- Assure that the congregation as an employer and members as employers pay a living wage and provide benefits.
- Encourage members who are employers, or are in a position to exert influence regarding hiring, to consider employing youth and adults reentering the workforce after being homeless or spending time in prison, drug or alcohol rehab, or a mental health facility.
- Encourage church members who own rental property to offer safe, affordable housing to their tenants.

From small beginnings such as this, advocacy can expand as issues and opportunities present themselves. Churches can then:

- Advocate for community employers to pay a living wage and offer benefits.
- Advocate for policies and resources that prevent homelessness.
- Advocate for policies and resources that address the needs of individuals and families who are homeless.
- Become involved in organizations that support mixed-income communities and inclusionary zoning policies; attend zoning board hearings and report back.
- Initiate or support efforts to develop municipal or statewide housing trust funds.
- Collaborate with existing coalitions working on issues of homelessness and affordable housing; develop communitywide coalitions to respond to issues as they emerge.
- Advocate for policies that address poverty, inequity and discrimination and aim to create communities that are just and sustainable.

More detailed descriptions of some of these suggestions follow.

## 3. *Living Wage Campaigns*

One of the ways that the church can be involved in working to prevent homelessness is through coalitions of organizations that support workers in their struggle for a living wage. Such campaigns, in which the church is one participant among many, have been mounted in numerous cities across the country. In addition to giving church support to significant organizing efforts, the presence of clergy and laity can bring emotional and spiritual support to the workers engaged in the struggle for justice.<sup>21</sup>

One such program is Clergy and Laity United For Economic Justice (CLUE), Los Angeles ([www.cluela.org](http://www.cluela.org)), an inter-faith association of more than six hundred religious leaders who came together to respond to the crisis of the working poor in Los Angeles. In 1996, religious leaders joined the effort to pass a living wage law, which mandated that businesses with city contracts must provide adequate wages and health benefits. Since the legislation passed, CLUE, working in partnership with

activist unions and community organizations, has continued to channel religious support for low-wage workers. Programs include campaigns to support hotel workers, security guards, nursing home workers and residents, and grocery workers. They also support immigration reform and legislation to hold “Big Box stores” such as Wal-Mart accountable to both workers and communities.

#### 4. *Inclusionary Zoning Policies*

Inclusionary zoning policies lead housing developers, through legislative mandate or development incentives, to make a percentage of units in new housing developments affordable to households with low- and moderate income. These policies have been adopted by hundreds of cities around the country and have produced thousands of units of affordable housing in mixed-income communities. Multiple studies have shown that mandatory inclusionary zoning programs do not dampen development nor decrease property values in surrounding neighborhoods. Generally, developers receive density bonuses (i.e., they are allowed to build larger buildings), tax relief, zoning variances, and/or expedited permitting to offset the costs of affordable housing production.

#### 5. *Strategies to Counteract Neighborhood Exclusivism*

When communities are not inclusive, NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard syndrome) is a major obstacle to faithful ministry with persons who are homeless or in need of affordable housing. Congregations that reach out to persons in need of housing assistance are not always located in low-income areas, and their ministry can prompt outcries from neighbors, local businesses, schools and day care providers. Fears of having “those people” in the neighborhood range from concerns about safety and disease to fears that “community values” (i.e., property values) will be adversely affected by the presence of a shelter, transitional housing, or an affordable housing development in the area.

Public forums to allow neighbors to raise their concerns are helpful and necessary. Even so, congregations and service providers can find themselves faced with bad press, hostile phone calls and letters, pickets, zoning complaints and lawsuits. All this leads to enormous legal, programmatic and emotional costs to staff, volunteers and program participants.

Agencies and congregations need to be proactive in addressing the broad concerns of the community before there is a need to seek their support for expansion or new programming. Relationships with coalitions of religious congregations and other potential community allies must be kept current. On the policy level, NIMBYism can be addressed through municipal policy reform in two areas: (1) zoning ordinance change to make “temporary housing” (e.g. shelters, transitional housing) a permitted use, and (2) human relations policy change that would prohibit discrimination against persons based on their housing status.

#### 6. *Case Study*

Some years ago, Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, located in a highly gentrified area of Chicago’s north side, undertook a major campaign to renovate its building and, in doing so, provide a permanent home for Lincoln Park Community Shelter ([www.lpcsonline.org](http://www.lpcsonline.org)), which, for most of its twenty-two years, had rotated services among several area church buildings. Then, as plans for its building were being developed and capital campaigns for both the church and the shelter were getting underway, Lincoln Park found that a significant piece of its effort to expand its ministry with persons who are homeless would involve confronting NIMBYism.

A number of neighbors opposed the church’s becoming the base for a full-time transitional housing program. They pursued legal action and organized other neighbors. Complaints were filed with both the zoning board and the building department. Meanwhile, church leaders and shelter staff met with the alderman regularly, and neighboring churches mounted a campaign in support of the shelter’s expansion, with between 200 and 500 people present for every zoning board hearing. After a delay of nearly two years, clearance for the program was given, and construction finally began. Even so, neighbors continued to challenge both the shelter and the congregation. Spring 2007 saw the dedication of the new program—full-time, in permanent space, focused on transitional housing; intense case management, and several “On Track” programs (Substance Abuse Recovery, Mental and Physical Health, and Job Training and Employment) are provided to help participants gain stability and move toward permanent housing.

The struggle, despite exacting an extremely heavy toll on both the congregation and the shelter, brought area churches closer together in regard to both LPCS and homelessness and affordable housing issues in general. Many other community residents, including students from nearby DePaul University became involved in advocacy efforts in support of the shelter.

#### 7. *National Level Advocacy*

While arenas for advocacy at the municipal, county and state levels are widely diverse, depending on locale, there are several policy directions which the Presbyterian Church (USA) at all levels is called to support at this time.

a. *Investment in Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)*

When a not-for-profit housing development organization identifies a site and begins to amass the needed financing to construct or rehabilitate affordable housing for people with low income, there are certain predevelopment expenses that must be met in order for the project to reach fruition. Such expenses include environmental site assessments and mitigation, architectural and engineering plans, zoning assessments and the like. Most nonprofit groups do not have access to predevelopment funds, and reliance on conventional lending for these expenses can significantly drive up the cost of the project.

Help is available through intermediaries such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) ([www.lisc.org](http://www.lisc.org)). A national organization founded in 1980, LISC is dedicated to helping nonprofit community development organizations transform distressed neighborhoods into healthy and sustainable communities. LISC has created mechanisms to extend predevelopment loans through the underwriting of a particular project in order to assess its likelihood of success. LISC accepts investments from corporations, foundations and other institutions, which it then uses in a revolving predevelopment loan fund. Funds invested in LISC pay a determined rate of interest and are secure, risk-free investments. They also spin off significant social benefit as a concrete investment in the lives of people in desperate need of affordable housing alternatives.

The PC(USA) can participate in LISC through entities such as the Presbyterian Foundation's Creative Investment Program. Congregations are also encouraged to invest.

b. *National Affordable Housing Trust Fund*

The goal of the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund is to construct, rehabilitate, and preserve 1,500,000 units of housing over the next ten years. Current legislation seeks to accomplish this through a program modeled on successful, state level programs. Funding—three-quarters of which would be earmarked for families with extremely low income (below 30 percent of median income or below the national poverty level)—would be parceled out to local jurisdictions (60 percent) and states, Indian Tribes, and insular areas (40 percent), which would then award grants to entities that build and rehabilitate housing. Awards may be granted to any organization, agency, or other entity (including for-profits, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations) that has demonstrated the experience and the capacity to carry out the proposed Trust Fund activity. Within each state, a proportionate amount of funds must go to rural areas. In exchange for Trust Fund dollars, a proportionate number of units would be set aside for families with low income, thus encouraging healthy, mixed-income development.

Trust funds will be available for construction, rehabilitation, acquisition, preservation incentives (including for manufactured housing and community land trusts), and operating assistance to facilitate affordability. Funds may be used for both rental housing that is affordable and for down payment and closing cost assistance by first time homebuyers. A formula for matching funds includes a provision that up to 33 percent of the match may be provided through binding commitments to provide services for residents. The fund would be financed through contributions from government-backed mortgage programs, e.g. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, with additional revenue generated by the Federal Housing Administration, which insures mortgages.

c. *Budget Priorities and Adequate Revenue*

Adequate municipal, state and federal revenue is key to the availability of housing assistance and comprehensive supportive services for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Tax cuts constitute the single largest contributor to budget deficits. The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities notes that, "tax cuts just for the top one percent of taxpayers (people with incomes exceeding \$402,000 in 2006) will cost nearly twice as much as HUD's entire budget."<sup>22</sup> HUD support for low-income housing assistance programs has deteriorated since 1980; continued budget deficits will exacerbate this ongoing problem.

d. *"Smart Growth" Development and "Green" Construction*

Another budget prioritization factor that affects the availability of affordable housing is "Smart Growth," an urban planning and transportation theory that concentrates growth in order to avoid urban sprawl and advocates compact, transit-oriented land use, including mixed-use development with a range of housing choices, including affordable housing. "Smart Growth" values long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over a short-term focus on profits. Locating people near jobs, shopping, and each other has a positive impact on travel time, transportation infrastructure costs, the environment, and personal/community life. Beyond community planning, "green design" incorporates environmental responsibility within the design and construction of particular buildings. Policy that provides financial incentives and tax credits to developers to encourage affordable housing development utilizing "green" design and construction methods within mixed-use and "Smart Growth" development, without leading to gentrification, is recommended as a way to enhance the growth of just and sustainable communities.

e. *Taxation*

As discussed earlier in this paper, most Americans believe that government-based housing assistance, i.e. housing assistance utilizing tax dollars, is aimed primarily at families with low income and involves programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and local housing authorities. In actuality, the majority of housing assistance in the United States comes through tax breaks such as the Home Mortgage Interest Deduction (HMID), deductions for state and local property taxes, and the capital gains exclusion for home sales, which only benefit homeowners.

According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, these tax breaks cost the federal treasury an estimated \$154 billion in 2006. Furthermore, 80 percent of the 2006 tax benefits of the Homeowners Mortgage Interest Deduction went to households in the highest income quintile.<sup>23</sup> As of 2005, homeowners could deduct mortgage interest on two homes, up to a loan value of \$1.1 million; they could also deduct interest on home equity loans up to \$100,000.<sup>24</sup> In the meanwhile, half of all homeowners do not claim itemized deductions because their mortgage interest is less than the standard deduction. Tenants, of course, do not qualify. Thus, while the majority of homeowners, those with low- and moderate income, cannot deduct interest on even one home, those who are rich can deduct interest on two.

A better approach would be to replace the HMID deduction with a fifteen percent refundable Home Tax Credit, which would encourage homeownership, distribute tax benefits more equitably, and help significantly more homeowners with low- and moderate income. Structured as a refundable credit, which a household would receive even if it has no tax liability, it is estimated that this approach would increase the percentage of homeowners receiving tax benefits for home ownership from 54 percent to 90 percent.

A targeted Rental Rebate Tax Credit at the state level would provide similar assistance to tenants, who do not qualify for any such assistance under current policy.

Increasing family income is an important part of any comprehensive strategy to make housing more affordable for families with low income. Changes in tax law in recent years have exacerbated the problem of rising inequity; tax credits can provide good remedies for households adversely affected by those changes.

One approach would expand the refundable Child Tax Credit by reducing the income threshold so it reaches more families with very low income. The current income threshold—\$11,750 in 2007—excludes ten million children whose families are too poor to claim the credit. The threshold rises with inflation, which increases the tax burden on the poor and drops many families from the benefit altogether. According to the Tax Policy Center, in 2005 half of all African American children, 46 percent of Hispanic children, and 18 percent of white children received either no Child Tax Credit or a reduced amount because their families' earnings were too low. Lowering the income threshold on the refundable Child Tax Credit would allow millions of children and families with the greatest need to receive at least some portion of the credit, allowing them to better provide for life necessities including housing.

Another approach would expand the Earned Income Tax Credit to include workers who are not living with children. According to the Center for Budget Policies and Priorities, adults with no children are the only group of working tax filers who begin to owe federal income taxes before their incomes reach the poverty line. In 2006, workers in this group, though eligible for a maximum \$412 credit, received an average of only \$230. Increasing the amount of the credit for workers with low income who are not living with children would increase work incentives and economic security for millions of Americans.

f. *The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program*

Unaffordable housing is a primary cause of homelessness. HUD's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, the nation's largest low-income housing assistance program, provides rental assistance to nearly two million households. Vouchers, available through local housing authorities, allow families to rent apartments in the private market at no more than 30 percent of household income; the housing authority pays the balance of the full market rent to the landlord. About 60 percent of households using vouchers are families with children; nearly one-third include people who are elderly or have disabilities. Because vouchers are portable, they provide families with opportunities to assert greater independence and choice about where they wish to live.

Despite being widely recognized as a very cost-effective way to house families with low income, the program has suffered significant setbacks over the past three years, and about 150,000 vouchers were cut nationwide between February 2004 and August 2006.<sup>25</sup>

Advocates are hoping to strengthen the current program by raising payment standards, increasing access to housing, and authorizing new incremental vouchers. Ongoing advocacy to retain and expand the Section 8 Program is a continuing priority.

g. *Preservation of Existing Affordable Housing*

Thousands of units of housing for families with extremely low income are being lost every year to decay, demolition, gentrification, the expiration of government contracts, and other factors. The preservation and revitalization of the 2.5 million units of affordable housing funded under the Public Housing and Project-Based Section 8 programs is an essential part of addressing the crisis of affordable housing. It is also essential that housing destroyed through community development initiatives be replaced with housing that is affordable to persons with extremely low income.

h. *Supportive Housing*

Supportive Housing—permanent, affordable housing linked to services—provides people with low income, disabilities, or a history of homelessness the help and support they need to stay housed and live more independent, healthy and fulfilling lives. Supportive housing is the single most effective way to reduce homelessness for persons with special needs. It strengthens communities and helps integrate people with disabilities and other special needs into the life of their neighborhoods. Further, numerous studies attest to the cost-effectiveness of supportive housing. Not only is it significantly less expensive than the institutional alternatives that people who are homeless and disabled often cycle through—including shelters, institutions, and hospitals—but it also ends tenants' dependence on emergency services for health care and treatment. Moreover, it offers persons who are formerly homeless the dignity of life in community, highlighting the values of interdependence and recovery from the experience of being homeless.

i. *The McKinney-Vento Act*

The McKinney-Vento Act, through numerous revisions, has been the primary source of federal support for services to persons who are homeless for over twenty years. A comprehensive national strategy for ending homelessness at its root causes depends on the continuation of and increased investment in such legislation. Amendments that would increase flexibility in program administration and make programs more performance-based would improve the Act's ability to move people out of the cycle of homelessness into permanent housing.

j. *Department of Health and Human Services*

While most programs aimed at assisting persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless have been centered in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is also involved in some services for such persons. In order to better serve people who are homeless in this country, HHS must become a full partner in the effort to end chronic homelessness and meet the services needs of all persons experiencing homelessness. Programs such as, but not limited to, Project for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) and Health-care for the Homeless must receive adequate funding and provide linkage with affordable and supportive housing programs administered through other governmental departments.

k. *Veterans Administration*

Large numbers of persons experiencing homelessness in this country are veterans. While Vietnam era veterans tended to become homeless a decade after leaving the military, many veterans returning from service in Iraq and Afghanistan have sought housing assistance almost immediately. The role of the Veteran's Administration (VA) in helping to fund supportive housing for veterans who are at risk of long-term homelessness must be expanded. Legislation is also needed to expand VA programs for veterans who are homeless to include funding for permanent housing and the creation of innovative new models for service, including programs to help reintegrate returning veterans into the community, encourage partnerships between the VA and community-based organizations, and link permanent housing for veterans with special needs and their families with supportive services.

l. *Community Reentry Programs*

Each year thousands of persons reenter American communities from jails and prisons. Many suffer from mental illness or are in other ways at risk of becoming homeless and/or returning to prison. Federal funding is critically needed to help communities prevent and end homelessness for people with special needs who are reentering communities from jails and prisons. Funding that would provide housing and services for prisoners reentering the community must be renewed and expanded. Expansion of programs that fund supportive housing targeted to people who are homeless with mental illness, who often cycle between the streets and shelters and jails or prisons, is also needed.

m. *Restoration of Flexible Federal Funding to States, Cities, and Counties*

Many programs that offered federal funding to states, cities, and counties, enabling them to define their own priorities and enhance funding for affordable housing and supportive services as part of their comprehensive plans to prevent and end

homelessness, have been eroded or abolished in recent years. These include but are not limited to HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program, Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program (Section 202), and Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities (Section 811), as well as Medicaid, and other grants to states and localities. This flexible funding is critical and must be restored.

n. *Subprime Mortgage Lending Market*

Subprime mortgages are a relatively new and rapidly growing segment of the mortgage market. While expanding home ownership opportunities for persons who might otherwise not be able to finance home purchases, this expanded opportunity has come at a cost. Unscrupulous lenders often hide the true cost of subprime loans from unsophisticated borrowers.<sup>26</sup> When an initial period at a low "teaser" rate is complete, monthly payments increase dramatically, often putting homeowners at risk for foreclosure or even homelessness. In 2007, there were \$1.3 trillion in subprime loans outstanding, up from \$65 billion in 1995 and \$332 billion in 2003.<sup>27</sup>

During 2007 and 2008, 1.8 million hybrid Adjustable Rate Mortgages (ARMS) are due to be reset. The weakening housing market environment plus the vulnerability of many holders of these mortgages will lead to even more foreclosures, especially among the families and older adults with low income who are targeted for such loans. As these persons are forced out of their homes, the demand for affordable rental housing increases, putting further strain on an already inadequate affordable housing market. Foreclosure prevention programs cost approximately \$3,300 per household and have obvious social benefit. Conversely, households and their communities lose an estimated \$80,000 when foreclosures are carried out.<sup>28</sup>

Policy responses to the subprime crisis should be designed to correct the abuses in this market, prevent future foreclosures, and create a safety net for families who have fallen victim to subprime lending.

## V. Conclusion

As Presbyterians, led from worship into the world, we are guided by Scripture and act out our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ. In this time we are called to respond to the crisis of homelessness and affordable housing which, despite many programs and approaches aimed at ending homelessness, is still with us. Nevertheless, it is at last becoming clear what is needed. Each person or family experiencing homelessness (1) must be treated with dignity and respect and offered hospitality and welcome to permanent housing, and (2) must have access to the necessary resources and services to enable them to meet their needs and be able to maintain housing. The path from homelessness to hope is challenging, but the church is called to respond to this crisis with all its resources—people, property, influence, advocacy, energy and finances—as it works to construct just, sustainable communities for all God's people.

## VI. Resources

### Websites Related to Homelessness and Affordable Housing

American Bar Association, Commission on Homelessness and Poverty: [www.aba.org](http://www.aba.org)

The commission was founded in 1991 to educate lawyers and the public about legal and other problems of people who are poor and/or homeless and to train lawyers to provide pro bono assistance to persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Issues addressed include education of children who are homeless and strategies for addressing NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard syndrome).

Center for Law and Social Policy: [www.clasp.org](http://www.clasp.org)

With the goal of strengthening policy for families with low income, the center produces a variety of reports and data sheets on issues related to poverty, child welfare, disconnected youth, and reentry issues facing persons released from prison or mental health facilities.

Center on Budget Policy and Priorities (CBPP): [www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org)

One of the nation's premier policy organizations, CBPP works at both federal and state levels on fiscal policy and public programs that affect families and individuals with low- and moderate income. They conduct research and provide analysis to inform public debate on proposed budget- and tax related matters to ensure that the needs of persons with lower income are considered. They also develop policy options as alternatives to existing or proposed policies.

Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH): [www.csh.org](http://www.csh.org)

The CSH helps communities create permanent affordable housing with services through loans, grants and other forms of assistance. It works through hubs in eight states and has target projects in several more. CSH and its allies have committed to a campaign of coordinated effort to end long-term homelessness through supportive housing; their "Compact to End Long-

Term Homelessness,” along with an endorsement form, may be downloaded. The CSH website offers such resources as “Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing” and “Toolkit for Ending Long-Term Homelessness.”

Family Housing Fund: [www.fhfund.org](http://www.fhfund.org)

This nonprofit intermediary organization partners with nonprofit housing providers, federal and state agencies, funders, and others to preserve and produce affordable housing for families with low- and moderate income in the seven county area of Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. Several 2007 reports focus on foreclosure prevention and safeguards against predatory lending practices.

Interagency Council for the Homeless (ICH): <http://www.ich.gov/>

Recognizing that homelessness is affected by factors that cut across federal agencies and programs (e.g., housing costs, job readiness, education, mental health), the goal of ICH is to develop a comprehensive approach to ending homelessness within the federal government itself. One section of their website shares experiences of innovative approaches to a variety of issues related to homelessness. It also lists every state or community that has developed a Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness.

Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ): [www.iwj.org](http://www.iwj.org)

The IWJ is a network of people of faith that strives to educate, organize, and mobilize the religious community in the U.S. on issues and campaigns that will improve wages, benefits and conditions for workers and give voice to workers, especially those of low income.

National Alliance to End Homelessness: [www.endhomelessness.org](http://www.endhomelessness.org)

A leading voice on issues of homelessness, the alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, cost-effective policy solutions. They work collaboratively with public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity, leading to stronger programs and policies to help communities end homelessness. They also provide data and research to policymakers in order to inform the debate and educate both the public and opinion makers. Their document “A Plan, Not a Dream: How to End Homelessness in Ten Years” sparked a major movement toward a coordinated, service-based approach and the development of Ten Year Plans in communities throughout the nation.

The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth [www.naehcy.org](http://www.naehcy.org)

This national grassroots membership organization serves as a voice and social conscience for the education of children and youth in situations of homelessness. The network (educators, parents, advocates, researchers and service providers) works to ensure school enrollment and attendance, and the success of the children and youth whose lives have been disrupted by the lack of safe, permanent and adequate housing.

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE): [www.serve.org/nche](http://www.serve.org/nche)

The NCHE provides research, resources and information to help communities address the educational needs of children experiencing homelessness. It is related to SERVE, a U.S. Department of Education program associated with the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

National Center on Family Homelessness: [www.familyhomelessness.org](http://www.familyhomelessness.org)

The only national organization devoted solely to helping homeless families, the center creates and evaluates programs and services and helps service provider improve practices and learn from each other.

National Funders Group: [www.nfg.org/](http://www.nfg.org/)

This U.S. network of foundations and other philanthropic organization, while not a grant making organization itself, supports community-based efforts to improve economic and social conditions in low-income communities through research, analysis and other services. Publications, several of which focus on homelessness and affordable housing issues, may be downloaded or ordered in hard copy.

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty: [ww.nlchp.org](http://ww.nlchp.org)

Operating as the legal arm of the nationwide movement to end homelessness, the center works to (1) impact litigation, (2) advocate for effective policy, and (3) educate the public about both the root causes of and solutions to homelessness. Issues they address include housing, domestic violence, income, and children and youth.

The National Low-Income Housing Coalition: [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org)

This organization is dedicated to ending America's affordable housing crisis, a problem they feel Americans are capable of solving. Their focus is on those with the most serious housing problems, households with the lowest income. They also have state level organizations throughout the US. An annual web resource ("Out of Reach 2006" is the latest) outlines affordability housing issues.

The National Network for Youth: [www.nn4youth.org](http://www.nn4youth.org)

This thirty-year-old network works with not-for-profits and advocacy groups on education, training, materials and policy for youth who are homeless and/or in poverty. Their mission is to champion the needs of runaway, homeless and other disconnected youth through advocacy, innovation and services, one community at a time.

The National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness: [www.npach.org](http://www.npach.org).

The mission of this grassroots antipoverty organization is to ensure that national homelessness policy accurately reflects the needs and experiences of local communities. Their website links to other groups, including national faith-based national efforts.

Policy Link <http://www.policylink.org/EDTK>

Policy Link is a national research and action institute aimed at advancing economic and social equity. Its website offers a unique resource, the Equitable Development Tool Kit, a comprehensive set of policy options to help community builders achieve diverse, mixed-income neighborhoods that provide access to employment, education and safe, affordable housing.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF): [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org)

While largely concerned with issues of health care, the RWJF has been a major participant in research and the development of significant initiatives in health-related aspects of supportive housing programs.

Smart Growth Online: [www.smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)

This web-based catalogue of "Smart Growth"-related news, events, information and research is a service of the Smart Growth Network, which was founded in 1996 as a collaboration between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and various environmental and professional groups and governmental entities. The Network works to encourage development that serves the economy, the community and the environment.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation: [www.aspe.hhs.gov](http://www.aspe.hhs.gov).

This office advises the Secretary of Health and Human Services on a variety of matters involving health, disabilities, etc. A number of key reports on their work with persons who are homeless are available, including a 2007 update of their "Strategic Action Plan on Homelessness (2003)."

#### Books and Journals

*A Work of Hospitality: The Open Door Reader 1982-2002*, Peter R. Gathje, ed., The Open Door Community, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-4212, \$15 donation if possible. The Open Door Community in Atlanta, founded in 1981, has gained notoriety for its street actions on behalf of Atlanta's homeless, inmates on Georgia's Death Row, and the primarily poor patrons at Grady Memorial Hospital. In this anthology of pieces from their longstanding newsletter, the theme of hospitality, in one form or another, plays through sections on homelessness, work with prisoners, sacrament, the community's saints and martyrs, and the theology of hospitality.

*Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*, Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (published three times a year, each issue is devoted to various perspectives on a topic; individual articles or the entire issue may be downloaded from [www.huduser.org](http://www.huduser.org) or a hard copy may be purchased for \$5.00).

*Community and Growth: Our Pilgrimage Together*, by Jean Vanier, Paulist Press (revised ed) 1989.

People need companions, friends with whom they can share their lives, their vision and their ideals. In short, they need community. This classic book is a series of "starting points for reflection" on the nature and meaning of community by the founder of l'Arche community for persons who are mentally-handicapped and their helpers.



*Ending Poverty in America: How to Restore the American Dream*, edited by John Edwards, New Press, 2007, \$25.95.

Published in conjunction with one of the country's leading anti-poverty centers, the Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity in Chapel Hill, NC, this book brings together respected social scientists, journalists, activists and business leaders, both liberal and conservative, to explain why poverty is growing and outline concrete steps that can be taken to start turning the tide.

*Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, by Christine D. Pohl, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999. For centuries, practicing hospitality was central to Christian identity, yet our generation knows little about this rich, life-giving spiritual practice. Pohl combines biblical and historical research with a look at contemporary communities of hospitality. A Study Guide by Pohl and Pamela J. Buck (2001) provides discussion questions, activities and further resources to assist readers and small groups.

*NIMBY: A Primer for Lawyers and Advocates*, American Bar Association, Commission on Homelessness and Poverty (\$10, order form is available online at [abanet.org](http://abanet.org)). This book discusses the potential roadblocks that come into play when establishing a facility such as a shelter, group home, or soup kitchen in a community. The book addresses the issues and possible reaction within the community, tips on how to work with the community, the zoning process, and the legal tools to combat NIMBY attitudes and exclusionary zoning ordinances.

*Religious Collaboratives for Social Justice*, by Nile Harper, Wm. B. Eerdmans (forthcoming June 2008). This book provides ten case studies (local, regional and national) of collaborative movements that resulted in significant social change. The Living Wage Campaign and several efforts around affordable housing are represented.

*Urban Churches, Vital Signs: Beyond Charity Toward Justice*, by Nile Harper, Wm B Eerdmans, 1998, 2005. This book, now out of print but available through Amazon.com, presents case studies of 28 congregations that are deeply involved in their community in ways that move from a charity/ service orientation to one of justice. The marks of a justice orientation include: a focus on public policy; investment for the long haul; long-term improvement for large sectors of society; efforts directed to basic/root causes of injustice; goals focused on change in policy/priorities, structures/institutions; participant engagement in self-development and empowerment; involvement requires time, risk, hard work, compromise and financial resources—and may lead to conflict.

*What Every Church Member Should Know About Poverty; A Framework for Understanding Poverty; Hidden Rules of Class at Work*, by Bill Ehlig and Ruby K. Payne, aha! Process, Inc, 1999, 143 p. Available from Amazon or [www.rubypayne-poverty.com](http://www.rubypayne-poverty.com). Congregations, though often perceived as open, welcoming environments, can be inhospitable to people from poverty. The authors illustrate the way people from poverty view middle-class churches—and how to change those perceptions; they also provide approaches for teaching church members and leaders some of the special considerations that can be afforded persons who are economically disadvantaged.

#### Research and Resources on Homelessness and Affordable Housing

“‘. . . *A Stranger and You Invited Me In*’; Affordable Housing Advocacy for Presbyterians,” by Erin Hoekstra and Bill Emerson, Presbyterian Washington Office. Available at [www.pcusa.org/washington](http://www.pcusa.org/washington) or [www.pcusa.org/smallchurch/housingsunday](http://www.pcusa.org/smallchurch/housingsunday).

This resource includes updated statistics on homelessness, brief articles on links between housing and wages and housing and hunger, an annotated list of Federal Housing Programs, Programs at Risk in the federal budget, and “Housing Advocacy 101,” a quick guide to advocacy on local, state and federal levels.

*Christian and Citizen*, Presbyterian Church (USA), Public Policy Advocacy Team, edited by the Presbyterian Washington Office ([www.pcusa.org/Washington/christiancitizen/newstudyguide/pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/Washington/christiancitizen/newstudyguide/pdf)).

Updated after each General Assembly, this extensive resource provides: (1) a theological and biblical framework for Christian public witness, and (2) a sampling of church statements on major policy issues that may be at stake in upcoming local and national elections.

*Hate, Violence and Death on Main Street USA: A Report on Hate Crime and Violence Against People Experiencing Homelessness*, 2006, National Coalition for the Homeless (download from NCH at [www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org) or order a hard copy for \$10 + \$2.75 shipping/handling).

During the last eight years, in 200 cities in 44 states and Puerto Rico, 614 violent acts have been committed against homeless individuals; this violence has resulted in 189 deaths. This report updates and documents the situation and draws attention to a clear correlation between homeless-directed violence and efforts by cities to criminalize homelessness.

“Homelessness: The Church Responds to an Enduring Tragedy,” *Church & Society Magazine* (91:5) May/June 2001. Available through Presbyterian Distribution Services, 1-800-524-2612 (PDS 72-630-01-603, \$2.50 plus shipping) or order via website: [www.pcusa.org/churchandsociety](http://www.pcusa.org/churchandsociety).

“The Link between Housing Affordability and Growth Management: The Academic Evidence,” Anthony Downs, ed, Brookings Institution, 2002.

Critics of growth management accuse it of driving up housing prices. However, this study found that families with lower- and lower-middle income are often priced out of housing in areas that lack growth-management measures. Indeed, they frequently are deliberately screened out through exclusionary zoning practices. The authors conclude that “Smart Growth” policies that attempt to ensure each jurisdiction provides its fair share of affordable, workforce housing can mitigate against these problems. Related material, based on a Brookings symposium, is available in book form as *Growth Management and Affordable Housing: Do They Conflict?* (2004).

“State of the Nation’s Housing 2007,” Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University ([www.jchs.harvard.edu/son/index.htm](http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/son/index.htm)).

This report is an analysis of the 2006 turnaround in the U.S. housing market, which led to high inventories of unsold homes and record numbers of foreclosures, while affordability remained a pervasive problem. Remedies, they say, will require an unlikely combination of structural and public policy shifts at state, local and federal levels, as well as sufficient economic growth to dramatically lift the real income and wealth of the bottom quarter of households.

#### Presbyterian National Offices and Websites

Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, [www.pcusa/acswp](http://www.pcusa/acswp). Click on “Social Policy Compilation” to track policies on topics of interest.

Office for Small Church and Community Ministry, [www.pcusa/smallchurch/](http://www.pcusa/smallchurch/). This site includes a list of additional pertinent websites as well as resources for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Sunday, which is celebrated in August each year.

Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), [www.pcusa/phewa/](http://www.pcusa/phewa/) PHEWA is the base for eleven networks, several of which are of particular interest to persons and congregations engaged in ministries with persons who are homeless, i.e., Presbyterian Association for Community Transformation, Presbyterian Health Network, Presbyterians for Addiction Action, Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network, and Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network.

Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness, [www.pnteh.org](http://www.pnteh.org) This network connects individuals, congregations and organizations that are involved in direct service and advocacy around the epidemic of homelessness.

Presbyterian Washington Office, [www.pcusa.org/washington/](http://www.pcusa.org/washington/) The Washington Office advocates for policies adopted by the General Assembly on Capitol Hill and serves as a resource for individuals and congregations involved in advocacy efforts.

#### Additional Models of Comprehensive Service Organizations

Bridge of Hope, Exton, PA (<http://www.bridgeofhopeinc.org/template/index.cfm>)

“Ending and preventing homelessness one church and one family at a time.” Bridge of Hope’s focus is to move single women and their children out of homelessness to wholeness by calling the church into action. A staff person and a mentoring group of eight to ten persons covenant to work with a family for twelve to eighteen months; intensive case management and housing assistance is provided, along with ongoing support as the family moves toward goals such as permanent housing, financial self-sufficiency, growth and wholeness. Their website provides information on how to start a Bridge of Hope program in your congregation or community.

Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS), Burlington, VT, [www.cotsonline.org/](http://www.cotsonline.org/)

From humble beginnings in 1982, COTS has become a comprehensive program providing a full range of services of families and individuals who are marginally housed or homeless. In the process, several historic buildings in Burlington have been preserved and given new life in the service of area persons with low income. They also work in collaboration with other groups to address issues of affordable housing.

The Open Table, Paradise Valley, Arizona ([www.theopentable.org](http://www.theopentable.org))

A Methodist church near Phoenix, Arizona welcomed a man from a nearby shelter into worship, and then gathered members with various connections in the community to work with him until he was housed and able to live independently. “The Open

Table” model, which works to move persons suggested by area shelters “from homelessness to wholeness one life at a time,” has spread to many other congregations. A “Get Started Manual” and other resources are available to interested groups.

Weingart Center, Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty, Los Angeles <http://www.weingart.org/>

Based in an eleven-story former Skid Row Hotel, the Weingart Center is a comprehensive one-stop service center for homeless men and women in Los Angeles. Its aim is to provide innovative solutions to break the cycle of homelessness and end poverty. The center can house 600 clients nightly in fully furnished rooms and dormitories. A variety of other programs, including a medical clinic, meals, a drop-in center for inebriates, long-term alcohol recovery, and extensive case management, are also available.

#### APPENDIX A

Members of the Homelessness Work Group included: Dr. Marilyn Bruin, St. Paul, Minnesota; the Reverend Norman Fong, San Francisco; Simone Hennessee, Shreveport, Louisiana; Elder Howard Jackson, Baltimore; the Reverend Laura Jervis, New York City (chair); Dr. Gail Russell, Chicago; Dr. Laura Stivers, Misenheimer, North Carolina; and Donna C. Bradley, Tucson, Arizona (liaison from ACSWP). Staff services were provided by the Reverend Phil Tom, Small Church and Community Ministry office; the Reverend Dr. Christian T. Iosso, coordinator, ACSWP; and the Reverend Dr. Bobbi Wells Hargleroad, HR, consultant. The group gathered information from related church entities as requested by the General Assembly, held hearings, and met face-to-face two times and several times by conference call in order to complete its work.

#### Endnotes

1. “The Housing Landscape for America’s Working Families, 2007,” Center for Housing Policy, August 2007, 1. Available on line at <http://www.nhc.org/housing/landscape2007>.
2. Sharon Daloz Parks, “Home and Pilgrimage: Companion Metaphors for Personal and Social Transformation,” *Soundings* 72 (1989): 297–315.
3. Martha Burt, Laudan Y. Aron, and Edgar Lee with Jesse Valante, *Helping America’s Homeless: Emergency Shelter or Affordable Housing*, The Urban Institute Press, 2001, p. 43.
4. <http://www.hud.gov/homeless/definition.cfm>
5. N. Robertson and P. Toro, “Homeless Youth Research Intervention and Policy: Practical Lessons,” National Alliance to End Homelessness, 1998.
6. “The State of the Nation’s Housing 2007,” Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2007.
7. “Living Wage” is the term used to describe the minimum hourly wage necessary for a person to achieve some specific standard of living. In the context of developed countries, this generally means that a person in a particular area, working forty hours a week, with no additional income, should be able to afford a specified quality or quantity of housing, food, utilities, transport, health care, and recreation. This concept differs from the minimum wage in that the latter is set by law and may fail to meet the requirements of a living wage. Living Wage campaigns have been conducted in numerous cities in the U.S. For further information, go to [www.livingwagecampaign.org/](http://www.livingwagecampaign.org/).
8. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (<http://www.cbpp.org/pubs/housing.htm>) accessed 9/20/2007.
9. “The State of the Nation’s Housing 2007,” Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University, 2007, p. 3
10. “The Effects of the Federal Budget Squeeze on Low-Income Housing Assistance,” by Douglas Rice and Barbara Sard, February 1, 2007, Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, p. 2.
11. See John Koenig, *New Testament Hospitality: Partnership With Strangers as Promise and Mission* (Overtures to Biblical Theology) Fortress Press, 1985.
12. Leo G. Purdue, “The Household, Old Testament Theology and Contemporary Hermeneutics,” *Families in Ancient Israel* (Family, Religion and Culture Series) Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997, p. 223ff.
13. For a more complete review of this aspect of Christian hospitality, see Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, William B. Eerdmans, 1999, especially chapter 2, “Ancient and Biblical Sources.”
14. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 176-77, cited in Pohl, p. 19.
15. Stated Clerk’s Annual Questionnaire for Year Ending December 31, 2006, Question 15; copies of the data may be requested by email to [acswp@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:acswp@ctr.pcusa.org).
16. To do so, go to Interagency Council for the Homeless, <http://www.ich.gov/> and click on “10 Year Plans.”

17. For a comprehensive outline to advocacy, go to <http://www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/advocacy/circle.htm> While developed around issues related to health care, it provides general advice that can be easily adapted to issues of homelessness and affordable housing.
18. For a comprehensive discussion of this history, go to [www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp). Click on “Social Policy Compilation,” then Chapter One: “Theological Basis for Social Action.”
19. “Why and How the Church Makes a Social Policy Witness,” Presbyterian Church (USA), 1993, available at [www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp), “Social Policy Compilation.”
20. Ibid.
21. Interfaith Worker Justice is a major actor in the effort to bring religious values to bear on issues of economic justice. Go to [www.iwj.org](http://www.iwj.org).
22. Ibid., 13.
23. “Encouraging Homeownership Through the Tax Code” by William G. Gale, Jonathan Gruber, and Seth Stephens-Davidowitz, Urban Institute and Brookings Institute Tax Policy Center, Tax Facts June 18, 2007, [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/1001084\\_Encouraging\\_Homeownership.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/1001084_Encouraging_Homeownership.pdf), accessed July 1, 2007
24. Peter Dreier, “Will President Bush Reform the Mansion Subsidy?” National Housing Institute, <http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/144/mansionsubsidy.html>, accessed June 29, 2007
25. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, <http://www.cbpp.org/pubs/housing.htm>, accessed 9/20/2007.
26. For further information on predatory lending practices that “take advantage of either the naiveté or financial plight of borrowers,” see “A Reformed Understanding of Usury for the 21st Century,” 217th General Assembly (2006). Go to [www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp) and click on “Social Policy Compilation.”
27. Statement by Scott M. Polakoff, Deputy Director, Office of Thrift Supervision, before the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, U.S. Senate, March 22, 2007.
28. Ana Moreno, “Cost-Effectiveness of Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention,” Family Housing Fund, November 1995.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 09-07 Homelessness to Hope: Just, Sustainable Communities for All God’s People.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 09-07 be approved.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 09-07 is the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s “From Homelessness to Hope: Constructing Just, Sustainable Communities for All God’s People” report.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that Item 09-07 be approved.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns recognizes the damaging and lasting affects that homelessness has on families, especially on women and children. Additionally, ACWC is concerned about the undeniable links between intimate partner violence and homelessness. The National Coalition for the Homeless in 2007 reported that women often experience homelessness resulting out of the need to leave abusive and violent relationships. They state that:

- Battered women who live in poverty are often forced to choose between abusive relationships and homelessness.
- In a study of 777 homeless parents (the majority of whom were mothers) in ten U.S. cities, 22% said they had left their last place of residence because of domestic violence (Homes for the Homeless, 1998).

- A 2003 survey of 100 homeless mothers in 10 locations around the country found that 25% of the women had been physically abused in the last year (American Civil Liberties Union, 2004).
- In addition, 50% of the 24 cities surveyed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors identified domestic violence as a primary cause of homelessness (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 2005).
- Studying the entire country, though, reveals that the problem is even more serious. Nationally, approximately half of all women and children experiencing homelessness are fleeing domestic violence (Zorza, 1991; National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2001).

The ACWC is encouraged by this report to help address this important issue.

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### COGA AND GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 09-07

*Comment on Item 09-07—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

In order to be good stewards of our resources, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council urge the 218th General Assembly (2008) not to make exceptions to Standing Rule H.2.a.(12).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council remind commissioners and advisory delegates of Standing Rule H.2.a.(12), which reads: “(12) As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly’s proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk.”

This rule was added to *Manual of the General Assembly* several years ago to help control expenses and maximize distribution of documents.

If the General Assembly decides to make an exception to the rule, it will be necessary for the assembly to suspend the Standing Rules, which requires a 2/3 affirmative vote of the total enrollment of commissioners.

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## Item 09-08

[The assembly approved Item 09-08 as amended. See pp. 54, 55.]

### God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) do the following:

1. As “the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all of humanity” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0200), that the 218th General Assembly (2008) commend the PC(USA)’s commitment to the equality of women in society and church, to ending discrimination against women, and to economic justice for women through “equal pay for jobs of comparable worth” (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, p. 508).

2. As a demonstration of “the new reality in Christ” through “the quality of its common life” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0300c(2)), that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following recommendations to uncover and correct unjustified pay disparities in the church caused by gender and/or race stereotypes:

a. That local congregations participate in the PC(USA)’s goal of assuring gender equity in pay by doing the following:

(1) fully completing and submitting in a timely manner the Session Annual Statistical Report and the Change in Terms of Call;

(2) using the data and tools of their presbytery, and the counsel of the committee on ministry, to evaluate the equity of their level of clergy compensation, with particular regard to women clergy and racial/ethnic clergy;

(3) assuring that unjustified pay disparities do not exist between male and female employees or white and racial/ethnic employees who are doing comparable work;

(4) prorating the compensation and benefits of part-time workers with full-time equivalents; and

(5) where women clergy are not employed, providing the congregation with the experience of women clergy leadership by, for example, inviting women clergy to serve as pulpit supply and in other leadership capacities.

b. That presbyteries participate in the PC(USA)'s goal of assuring gender equity in pay by doing the following:

(1) reviewing annually the terms of call of pastors in order to assess whether stereotypical patterns about race, ethnicity, and gender unfairly affect terms or task assignments;

(2) using evaluative tools to be provided by the Office of Vocation to determine if unjustified pay disparities exist among clergy of the presbytery due to gender or race/ethnicity;

(3) aiding congregations in their understanding of pay equity issues, including ways that inequitable compensation contributes to differential impacts on families of all racial/ethnic backgrounds;

(4) developing an annual report to the presbytery identifying the ratio of gender representation by staff position (including support staff) in small-, medium-, and large-sized congregations;

(5) setting progressive goals toward equal gender and racial/ethnic representation at all levels of church leadership within the presbytery;

(6) using the tools of a pay equity study to determine whether unjustified pay disparities exist among the presbytery's male and female employees or white and racial/ethnic employees who are doing comparable work; and

(7) establishing mentoring programs in Committees on Preparation for Ministry for women candidates.

c. That the Board of Pensions (BOP) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) participate in the PC(USA)'s goal of assuring gender equity in pay for clergy by providing the following data from members' annual reports to entities of the PC(USA) as requested for pay equity studies: total effective salary, gender and race/ethnicity of clergy member, year of ordination, position held, part-time or full-time, presbytery and size of congregation served.

d. That the Presbyterian Foundation (FDN), Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC), Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), and Board of Pensions (BOP) participate in the PC(USA)'s goal of assuring gender equity in pay for its employees by providing the following data to entities of the PC(USA) as requested for pay equity studies: salary, position held, part-time or full-time, gender and race/ethnicity, date of hire, and highest level of educational achievement.

e. That the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) participate in the PC(USA)'s goal of assuring gender equity in pay for its employees, including mission personnel, by providing the following data to entities of the PC(USA) as requested for pay equity studies: salary, position held, part-time or full-time, gender and race/ethnicity, date of hire, and highest level of educational achievement.

f. That the Office of Vocation, in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), presbyteries, and congregations, participate in the PC(USA)'s goal of assuring gender equity in pay for clergy by developing by 2010 a tool to enable presbyteries' committees on ministry to analyze clergy terms of call and compensation offers for pay equity purposes; and that this tool be placed on the PC(USA) Website that would include a place for presbyteries' committees on ministry accessing the tool to register their interest; and that the Office of Vocation report on the use of this tool to each General Assembly through 2020.

g. That the Office of Vocation, in consultation with the Office for Cultural Proficiency, participate in the PC(USA)'s goal of assuring gender equity in pay for clergy by developing and providing on-going training modules for committees on ministry and the councils of presbyteries and synods with regard to gender and racial/ethnic sensitivity in hiring and employment practices. Such training modules should include the identification of discriminatory questions and stereotypical assumptions in interviews about women's abilities to fulfill essential aspects of the position as well as ways to ensure that task assignments do not disproportionately assign women clergy to caring and nurturing activities and men to decision-making and leadership positions; and that this guidance be placed on the PC(USA)'s Website; and that the Office of Vocation report on its development and promotion to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

**h.** That the Office of Vocation and Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), participate in the PC(USA)’s goal of assuring gender pay equity by designing a program for women clergy interested in preparing to serve as heads of staff; and that the Office of Vocation report on this program to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

**i.** That the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), in consultation with Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry Area and the Office of Vocation, update the PC(USA)’s 1983 “Theology of Compensation” report (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, pp. 82, 116, 689–704) to provide theological guidance to church and society with regard particularly to the impact of secular market assumptions on the compensation practices of the PC(USA).

**j.** That the Human Resources Department and the Offices of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and other appropriate entities, participate in the PC(USA)’s goal of assuring gender pay equity by conducting a pay equity study covering the employees of the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and report the results of this study to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

**k.** That seminaries[, Presbyterian colleges, universities, and schools (as listed in Item 12-06)] participate in the PC(USA)’s goal of assuring gender equality by implementing a pay equity study for seminary employees and by developing educational opportunities, including curricular content and continuing education programs, to prepare women clergy to serve at all levels of church leadership.

**l.** That Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) participate in the PC(USA)’s goal of assuring gender pay equity by including pay equity and equal gender representation as criteria in its evaluation and monitoring of the businesses in which the church invests.

**m.** That the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry Area, in consultation with Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, prepare and distribute a user-friendly instrument based on the Reformed tenets of our faith for helping congregations achieve racial, ethnic, and gender justice in compensation and other employment issues.

**n.** That Presbyterian retirement centers review criteria for residence to assure that women are not disadvantaged.

**o.** That the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly communicate the PC(USA)’s appreciation to the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) for their global efforts on behalf of women’s equality.

**3.** For the “promotion of social righteousness, and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0200), that the 218th General Assembly (2008) commend the PC(USA)’s commitment to women’s equality in society by

**a.** recommitting itself to the support of institutional policies and legislation that would:

- (1) expand women’s civil protections to include equal pay for work of comparable worth;
- (2) provide prorated compensation and benefits for part-time employees;
- (3) heal work/family conflict through adequate financial support for those providing childcare and elder care, more flexible work hours, paid medical and family leave, family-supporting wages for all workers, and universal access to quality health care;
- (4) establish quality education as a basic human right;
- (5) uncover and eliminate racial bias in hiring and employment practices;
- (6) reduce the growing inequality in wages, benefits, and wealth; and

**b.** directing the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO) and the Presbyterian United Nations Office (PUNO) to advocate for ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention;

**c.** urging synods, presbyteries congregations, and individuals to advocate for local, state, and federal legislation that support these policies; and

**d. directing the Stated Clerk to publish the entire report, “God’s Work in Women’s Hands,” in the *Minutes* and the Office of the General Assembly to place the report on the PC(USA)’s Website.**

**[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$3,000; (2010): \$0 (Mission) for Recommendation 2.h.] [Financial Implications: (2008): \$6,565; (2009): \$12,960; (2010): \$3,220 (Per Capita-GAC) for Recommendation 2.i.]**

### *Rationale*

#### I. Introduction

This report is in response to a referral (*Overture 99-17. On Affirming the Equality of Women and Men—From the Presbytery of North Puget Sound* [*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 80, 591–93]) from the 211th General Assembly (1999). That assembly “requested the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns to initiate a church wide study on the current status of women in the church and society, with particular attention to issues of aging women, pay equity, child care, family/medical leave, and relations between women and men in places of work, home, and family; with a report and any relevant action to be brought to the 214th General Assembly (2002)” (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp.80, 591). Having addressed the other issues in subsequent years, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, convened a resolution team on pay equity in 2007. Members of the resolution team included: Gloria Albrecht (who served as consultant and primary writer), Esperanza Guajardo (chair), Andy Jacob, Vicky Lovell, Donna Misterly, Kirk P. Perucca, and Sandra Robertson.

Staff to the team were Molly Casteel, associate for Women’s Advocacy, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns; and Belinda M. Curry, associate for policy development and interpretation for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

The goal of realizing equity in the church and the world for all of God’s children is sealed in Scripture, rooted in the Reformed tradition, and consistently mandated in Presbyterian policy statements. From its founding, God’s church has been called to provide a prophetic witness wherever and whenever equity remains unrealized. Whenever there are patterns of inequality that profoundly distort what is equitable—what people deserve and need to sustain themselves—not necessarily strict equality, then both the witness and the unity of the church are at stake.

In the church and in the world today there is a disturbing disparity in how people who work are compensated for their labor. Particularly distressing is the pay disparity that exists based on gender and race/ethnicity. As people who believe and proclaim that vocation is a gift from God, pay inequity stands as a sinful violation of God’s covenant with all of humanity.

The above recommendations provide steps in the journey toward realizing pay equity for all women in both church and society. They are being offered faithfully, humbly, and hopefully: that they will help lead and guide our church and world in a prophetic witness for just compensation for all women.

In this paper the term “women” refers to all females of all races or ethnicities unless otherwise specified. While the expressions of racism and sexism are distinct, they become intricately entangled in the lives of women of color and impossible to separate. However, addressing the full range of issues raised by racial and ethnic discrimination, especially as it affects men as well as women, is beyond the mandate and capacities of this Resolution Team.<sup>1</sup> The Team has, however, documented the unjustified disparities that exist between white women and women of color, particularly African American women, as experienced in access to jobs and in wages. Living in the fullness of Christ requires that the experience of white women not be taken as the experience of all women. Nor are the experiences of African American women the same as those of other racial/ethnic women. Limitations in research limit the data that is available for some racial/ethnic groups. For purposes of this paper the term “white” refers to people of any European heritage. The team is aware that these terms do not accurately reflect the experiences of many people with multiple racial or ethnic heritages.

#### II. Biblical and Theological Foundations in the Reformed Tradition

Twice in the gospel accounts of the life of Jesus Christ does the Savior weep. In the Gospel of John, Jesus sheds tears of compassion while standing with Mary over the lifeless body of her brother Lazarus. He arrived in response to her desperate plea to intervene in the cycle of life and death. In his account of this event, John is very clear: Jesus’ tears are the product of his being “greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved” (John 11:33, NRSV). The account goes on to suggest that Jesus’ deep compassion is the result of his even deeper relationship with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Like Jesus, we have an immense capacity for compassion. And, also like Jesus, our compassion is often sparked by the pain we experience through others with whom we are in deep and abiding relationships.



The Gospel of Luke provides the other ground nourished by the tears of Jesus. On the brow of a hill overlooking Jerusalem as he prepares to descend on Palm Sunday, Jesus weeps for the city. Through his cloud of tears Jesus says, “If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace!” (Luke 19:42, NRSV).

In contrast to his compassion at the tomb of Lazarus, these Palm Sunday tears are not produced by the pain from an individual, personal relationship. They are rather the expression of the anguish—even anger—in witnessing corporate and systemic oppression and injustice in the wider community. Jesus’ Palm Sunday tears mark how far the world is from God’s plan for an abundant creation in which all is shared with justice and equity. In the following pages, facts, statistics, trends, and stories serve as markers for how far the world and the church are from sharing God’s abundant creation equitably.

So, why this meditation on the tears and compassion of Jesus? Or on the righteous, prophetic anger expressed by Jesus? In lieu of offering a new and fresh biblical interpretation related to pay equity, we offer this meditation for two reasons.

First, we commend these stories as a clear and biblically based call to action. Both stories illustrate the centrality of, and capacity for, compassion in the life and ministry of Jesus. Both stories demonstrate the need to see, hear, and feel beyond ourselves. Nothing less than genuine compassion is called forth from the followers of Christ.

Most importantly, both of these stories illustrate the core truth that when faith culminates in compassion it is incomplete. After Jesus weeps with Mary for Lazarus, he raises him to new life. After Jesus weeps for Jerusalem he bursts into the temple, turns the tables, drives out the merchants, and pronounces, “My house shall be a house of prayer” (Luke 19:46, NRSV). Tears of compassion and expressions of concern that fail to nourish the seeds of action are hollow and lifeless. Thus, if this resolution taps our denominational capacity for compassion—even producing tears—but does not lead to concrete, prophetic, life-giving action, it is incomplete.

Secondly, these two accounts also provide a process—albeit a painful one—for prophetic action. Jesus’ response to Mary was so quick and resolute exactly because of his emotional ties to her and her family. Compassion, action, and justice must be practiced at home with the ones whose pain we know and understand best. Therefore, even while ascending to a hill above the city to issue prophetic pronouncements about the injustices in the wider community, the church that faithfully claims Jesus Christ as Savior needs to recognize and address its complicity in those same injustices.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has established a strong foundation for such prophetic action both in church and society:

1. Grounded in the biblical affirmation of the equality of women and men, each created in the image of God, the PC(USA) has developed a history of support for the equality of women in society and church as exemplified by these statements from previous General Assemblies:

- “In the church, men and women must act as equal partner. . . . The church must challenge and change anything which interferes with a person’s full development and wholeness. It must reject attempts to force persons into stereotypes which destroy personhood and deny human freedom and creativity” (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, p. 299).
- “. . . God calls upon the church to act in society to end discrimination on the basis of sex and to challenge anything which interferes with women’s full development and wholeness” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1972, Part I, p. 178).
- “A political, economic, and social system that translates unalterable human differences—race, ethnicity, gender, age, and physical ability—into occasion for oppression, exploitation, and hopelessness, is incompatible with Reformed theology” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 59, 426).
- “. . . God works through all persons in a variety of ways without regard for a hierarchy based upon gender” (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 80, 591).

2. Grounded in the biblical revelation that creation is God’s first work and that humanity, women and men, are called by God to join in the work of sustaining and healing God’s creation through our work, Reformed theology understands work as one of God’s blessings: a vocation of service to God and neighbor. The holy God who works sanctifies work. Through work we not only fulfill our material needs, but we contribute to the well-being of the community as we exercise our God-given capacities. This theology, summarized in *God’s Work in Our Hands*, includes the following principles:

- “Work, paid and unpaid, is an integral part of the believer’s response to God’s call” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 59, 426).
- “The foundation upon which all just employment policies are built is access to employment at a level of compensation that allows people to live in dignity and security” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 59, 426).

- “Inequalities in compensation and working conditions demand the strictest scrutiny” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 59, 426).

- “All conditions of paid employment, including compensation and working conditions, should sustain and nurture the dignity of individuals, the well-being of households and families, the social cohesiveness of communities, and the integrity of the global environment” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 59, 426).

3. Grounded in the prophetic biblical witness to God’s passion for justice in economic life, hearing Jesus preach that he came “to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18–19), the church recognizes poverty as “a moral scandal of maldistribution and unsustainability” (“Hope for a Global Future,” *Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 546–47). The poverty of women and children, known as “the feminization of poverty,” due in part to an enduring, gender-based pay inequity, has been of special concern to the PC(USA).

- “The reconciliation of [humanity] through Christ makes it plain that enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is an intolerable violation of God’s good creation. Because Jesus identified himself with the needy and exploited, the cause of the world’s poor is the cause of his disciples. The church cannot condone poverty, whether it is the product of unjust social structures, exploitation of the defenseless, lack of national resources, absence of technological understanding, or rapid expansion of population. . . . A church that is indifferent to poverty, or evades responsibility in economic affairs, or is open to one social class only, or expects gratitude for its beneficence makes a mockery of reconciliation and offers no acceptable worship to God” (The Confession of 1967, *The Book of Confessions*, 9.46).

- “...affirming the goal of equity in economic life and particularly expressing support for economic justice for women” (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 360).

- “Reaffirms the urgency of issues related to women and economic justice and calls congregations, governing bodies, and individual Presbyterians to become familiar with the policies of the General Assembly on economic justice for women and their families and to advocate and support measures that would make those policies effective” (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 327–28).

- “Reaffirms the goals of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women . . . .” These goals included, “Enabling the churches to free themselves from racism, sexism, and classism; from teachings and practices that discriminate against women. . . .” (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 80, 592).

Guided by these biblical and theological convictions of our Reformed tradition, the Resolution Team on Pay Equity re-examined the issue of gender pay equity in church and society for the purpose of determining what God’s call “to do justice” (Micah 6:8 NRSV) demands of us, our churches, and the society in which we live today. In the following pages there is painful evidence of ongoing systemic pay inequity in the church of Jesus Christ, Presbyterian, and in the world, based on gender and race. Like Jesus, our compassion—and our action—must take effect in our own denominational home, as well as in our world. We must share our tears—and our action—with those in our own family whose labor is recognized neither adequately nor equitably. As the church of Jesus Christ strives to achieve within itself the just relationships to which God calls us, then we can, with integrity, seek to hold the wider community accountable to that same justice.

May God bless the compassion that the Spirit calls from these pages and guide the actions that seek to deliver God’s justice.

### III. Pay Equity in Church and Society

#### A. *Understanding Pay Equity*

##### 1. *Equal Pay for Equal Work*

Currently, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 require that employees doing the same work for the same employer be paid the same. This reflects the value that wages should be based on a measure of the education, skills, experience, responsibilities, risks, and other working conditions required by the job regardless of the gender, race, or ethnicity of the worker. The concept of using a job evaluation system to measure and correct inequities in pay caused by gender and race bias is not new. During WWII, the National War Labor Board, in response to customary disparities in wages paid to women and racial/ethnic minorities, required equal pay for equal work, regardless of the gender or race of the worker. It is interesting to note that it also ordered equal pay for workers doing “comparable quantity and quality of work on the same or similar operations,” but with very limited actual success.<sup>2</sup>

However, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not follow this broader precedent. These laws require equal pay for workers who are doing the *same* work: equal pay for equal work. Even this protection is not always adequate. In a recent Supreme Court Case (*Ledbetter vs. Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company*, 2007), the Court decided that employees had to file a complaint within 180 days of the company's first discriminatory paycheck. It rejected the idea that each subsequent paycheck was a new act of discrimination. It rejected the reality that most employees do not know what other employees are being paid. Thus, the plaintiff, Ledbetter, lost her suit even though she had been given lower wage increases than her male co-workers in each year of her long employment.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. *Equal Pay for Comparable Work*

Anti-discrimination laws were critical to opening doors for women and moving toward equal employment opportunities. However, because women and men rarely do the same work, these laws have not been sufficient to close the gender wage gap. The term pay equity, therefore, has come to mean a strategy of comparing the relevant characteristics of different jobs. Jobs that are different, but which have the same characteristics, are evaluated as similar in value. Thus, workers in jobs that have been evaluated as similar in value, although of different categories within a company, would be paid similarly. The goals are:

- to base wages on the actual value of the work being done within an organization;
- to eliminate wage disparities created by past traditions about what women or racial/ethnic employees should be paid; and
- to eliminate embedded stereotypes about the value of work traditionally assigned to women or racial/ethnic groups.

The basic goal is fairness: women and racial/ethnic employees who perform work comparable with that of white males should not be disadvantaged by lower wages and benefits due to their gender or racial/ethnic identity. It should be noted, however, that other forms of injustice related to compensation, such as the growing disparity in median compensation between the highest paid executives and other employees, are not resolved even if pay equity is fully achieved.

## 3. *Pay Equity and Biblical Justice*

Biblical justice evaluates how the benefits and burdens of human life are shared so that all can live together with respect for the God-given dignity of each, including all genders, races, and ethnicities. Biblical justice calls for the healing of brokenness inherited from the past and the reconciliation of social divisions that burden some groups over others. In light of the disparity between women's and men's wages that existed in 1984, the 196th General Assembly adopted a *Resolution on Equal Pay for Work of Comparable Worth*. This resolution affirmed God's call for "justice and equity for all people," including "economic justice for women." It noted that the law of equal pay for equal work did not resolve the gender pay disparity. Therefore, it endorsed "... the concept of equal pay for jobs of comparable worth as a particularly effective means of obtaining economic justice for women" (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, p.508).

In the Reformed tradition, glorifying God includes, indeed, requires, the just ordering of public life. Our response of love for one another must take the form of establishing justice in social life. To that end, the 200th General Assembly (1988) adopted the study paper, *All the Live Long Day: Women and Work* and urged every part of the church "... to advocate for public policies that support existing General Assembly policy statements on economic justice for women, including pay equity, child care, welfare reform, employment, and collective bargaining."<sup>4</sup>

Eleven years later, the 211th General Assembly (1999), expressing continuing concern for economic justice for women, mandated a review of the issue of gender pay equity. The persistence of the gender pay gap makes the goal of pay equity more relevant today than it was in 1984 since, at its present rate of closure, it will take 50 more years to achieve equal pay.<sup>5</sup>

## B. *The Gender Wage Gap*

### 1. *A Brief History*

Women have always been a part of the U.S. workforce. In the 1700s, the low wages of most male workers drove low-income women of European heritages into domestic and agricultural employment, and, in the 1800s and 1900s, into the factories of the northeast. Legal slavery, sustained by landowners' desire for cheap labor, forced women of African heritages to work in fields and manor houses. After emancipation, continuing racial segregation required them to toil as agricultural and domestic workers.

However, gender stereotypes, enforced by laws and customs, severely restricted the kinds of jobs women could hold, the social value "women's work" commanded, and the wages provided. Employers refused to hire women for jobs they deemed

unsuitable for females. Jobs were legally advertised as “men only” and “women only,” as well as “white only” and “colored only.” Women could be fired for getting married or becoming pregnant. Hours of work were often dictated by gender stereotypes. These stereotypes, enforced by both law and custom, were further refined by race and class biases. Women of color were typically assumed to be suitable for hard menial labor—labor deemed inappropriate for most white women. Low-income women of any race or ethnicity did work unsuitable for “gentlewomen.” Despite the economic necessity of paid work for many women, a long-standing social norm cast a disapproving eye on any woman who worked outside the home, especially a mother.

## 2. *The Current Context*

Today, almost 50 percent of the U.S. workforce is female. This figure illustrates the remarkable shift that occurred in women’s employment in the last half century. In 1950, only one-third of all U.S. working-age women were in the workforce, including about 40 percent of all working-age black women.<sup>6</sup> By 2005, almost 60 percent of all working-age women were in the workforce.<sup>7</sup> In the 1950s only about 20 percent of all married couples had employed wives; today about 50 percent of all wives are employed.<sup>8</sup>

Most surprising, perhaps, is the fact that almost 70 percent of all mothers with children under the age of 18 are in the labor force today,<sup>9</sup> including nearly three-fourths of single mothers,<sup>10</sup> and 54 percent of all mothers with children under one year of age.<sup>11</sup> Mothers, like fathers, are working to provide economic support for their families as well as for the personal fulfillment and social contribution such work provides. According to the Economic Policy Institute, if mothers in married, middle-income families had not entered the workforce, the average real income of these families would have increased by only 5.8 percent in the twenty-one years between 1979 and 2000. Because of mother’s paid work, these families experienced an increase in income of 25 percent.<sup>12</sup> Working outside the home has become a necessity and a norm for most modern women and for their families.

Yet, a significant wage gap continues to persist between men and women. Each year the median annual earnings of full-time, year-round female workers is compared with that of full-time, full-year male workers. In 1955, the gender wage gap was 63.9 percent. Fifty years later, 2005, the gender wage ratio was 77.0 percent.<sup>13</sup> This means that the median annual earnings of a woman who worked full-time, year round was 23 percent less than that of a man who worked full-time all year. The gender wage gap of African American and Hispanic American women workers (compared with white male workers) is much larger: 62.5 percent and 52.5 percent, respectively, in 1999.<sup>14</sup> as women age, the gap grows, disadvantaging women at the point of retirement. Long-term studies indicate that progress toward closing the gender wage gap in the 1980s was due more to a decline in male wages than to an increase in female wages. Since 1996, the annual gender wage gap has fluctuated up and down, generally hovering around 75 percent.<sup>15</sup>

## 3. *The Cost of the Gender Wage Gap on Women and Families*

This disparity has enormous consequences for the well-being of all women and their families.

### a. *Impact on All Women*

- In 2005, the median annual earnings of all women were almost \$10,000 less than that of men.<sup>16</sup> When couples experience such a gap in pay, it is likely that the demands of the husband’s better paying job will be prioritized over those of a wife’s lesser paid job. Any accommodation of employment to the demands of family care work will logically be assigned to the lower-paid woman. This exacerbates lifetime earnings differences and jeopardizes women’s economic security in the event of divorce and in retirement.

- Childcare costs may make employment unfeasible for lower wage women workers.

- In 2001, the median family income of single mother families was \$28,142, more than 40 percent less than that of single father families (\$40,715).<sup>17</sup>

- The average woman working full-time and all year, over the course of a forty-year career, will lose about \$523,000 due to the gender wage gap, seriously impacting her economic security both during her working years and in retirement via lower pension and Social Security income.<sup>18</sup>

- Almost 30 percent of all women workers make poverty-level wages or less.<sup>19</sup>

- It is estimated that the poverty rate of U.S. women would be reduced by 50 percent, “if women’s jobs were fairly paid—even taking into account the fact that many women work less than full-time.” The income of nearly 40 percent of poor white women would rise above the Federal poverty threshold.<sup>20</sup>

- Families with a parent working in underpaid female- or race-segregated jobs, regardless of their gender or race, bear unfairly the burden of greater economic distress.

b. *Greater Impact on Racial/Ethnic Women*

- The average black woman worker earned \$17,400 less than the average white male worker in 2006. Over a thirty-five-year-long career, this would add up to a difference of \$696,600, jeopardizing economic security during working years and retirement.<sup>21</sup>

- Racial/ethnic couples must make up this difference in income by working more hours than white couples to achieve similar incomes. In 2000, black, middle-income couples worked 500 more hours per year to achieve the same level of income as white middle-income families.<sup>22</sup> This adds up to ten more working hours per week each week of the year.

- College-educated African American women typically work more hours per year than do college-educated white women. This disparity in hours worked is over a month more of full-time work by college educated African American women workers.<sup>23</sup>

- In 2005, 25 percent of white women, 37 percent of black women, and 46 percent of Hispanic women earned poverty level wages.<sup>24</sup>

- If women of color were paid fairly, it is estimated that the income of nearly 50 percent of poor racial/ethnic women would rise above the Federal poverty threshold.<sup>25</sup>

What causes this pay gap now that women are almost half of the workforce? Interest in pay equity is a response to this situation.

C. *Why Women Earn Less Than Men*

There are several causes for the existence and persistence of the gender pay gap: segregated occupations by gender and race, differences in education and work skills, and gender discrimination.

1. *“Women’s Work” and Segregated Occupations*

One cause of the gender wage gap is that women and men still tend to be employed in different occupations and industries: occupational segregation. Researchers find that occupational segregation accounts for as much as 30 percent of the gender wage gap.<sup>26</sup> Today 55 percent of all women workers are concentrated in female-dominated occupations (jobs where women comprise 70 percent or more of the workforce). These occupations reflect traditional gender stereotypes of women as caregivers, servers, and assistants: for example, childcare workers, receptionists, typists, bookkeepers, LPNs, legal assistants, and retail sales.<sup>27</sup> Racial/ethnic women are overrepresented in health and educational service work, private domestic work, retail sales, and institutional cleaning. Of course, occupational segregation also subjects men to gender stereotyping that can restrict their options or expose them to unhealthy working conditions. Religious institutions are not immune to these stereotypes.

In addition to the restrictions such stereotyping places on women’s contributions to society and their opportunities to develop their full human capacities, studies comparing sex- and race-segregated occupations with other occupations have uncovered a number of troubling conclusions that specifically disadvantage women:

- Workers in gender- or race-segregated occupations earn less than workers with similar education and skills in other occupations.<sup>28</sup>

- Even when the characteristics of different jobs are similar, jobs held primarily by white men pay more than jobs held primarily by women or racial/ethnic men. For example, in 1984, Minnesota found that state-employed zookeepers (primarily male) were paid a great deal more than state-employed childcare workers (primarily female) even though the state’s job evaluation system scored the jobs similarly.<sup>29</sup> A national survey reported in 1999 that childcare workers (primarily female) were typically paid less than parking lot attendants (primarily male).<sup>30</sup>

- As the percentage of female or racial/ethnic male employees increases in an occupation, the average pay for workers in that occupation decreases.<sup>31</sup>

These studies suggest that the value society places on some occupations, such as elementary school teaching or home health care, continues to reflect the biases of previous times, rather than an occupation’s actual contribution to the workplace or to society. Susan, a single mother, works as a nurses’ aide:

Basically the job is to give care to the residents of the nursing home. We wash them, we feed them, we take them to the bathroom. You have to lift them out of bed into their wheel chairs. ... I've been doing this for six months and just passed my certification exam last month. ... I work from three in the afternoon until eleven at night. It pays \$5.70 an hour.<sup>32</sup>

## 2. *The Role of Human Capital*

Two main variables in the qualifications of workers influence the jobs for which they may be considered: education/training and labor force experience. The term “human capital” refers to the job-related qualifications that workers gain through education and work experience. To the extent that women and racial/ethnic minorities do not have as much human capital as white men, one would expect to see a disparity in wages. However, as the data below show, the large differences that once existed between men and women, and between racial groups, have been closing. Thus, while differences in human capital may explain as much as 50–70 percent of the gender wage gap, researchers find that 30–50 percent of the gender wage gap is still left unexplained after taking human capital differences into account.<sup>33</sup>

### a. *Educational Attainment*

To the extent that the average educational achievement of women and racial/ethnic minority workers is less than that of the average white male worker, one would expect to see a wage gap. However, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the gender gap in educational attainment has been largely closed for about a decade:

For the population 25 to 29 years in 2003, educational attainment levels of women exceeded those of men ... 88 percent of young women and 85 percent of young men had completed high school, while at the college level, the proportions were 31 percent and 26 percent, respectively. The last year young women and men had equal rates of high school and college attainment was 1995.<sup>34</sup>

The gap in educational attainment by race/ethnicity is closing, but still significant. Among 25 to 29 year olds, in 2003, 89 percent of whites, 80 percent of blacks, and 57 percent of Hispanics had received a high school diploma. There is a much larger racial disparity in achieving a bachelor's degree among these young adults: 34 percent of whites, 17 percent of blacks, and 11 percent for Hispanics. Of all those over the age of 25, 30 percent of whites, 17.3 percent of blacks, 49.8 percent of Asians, and 11.4 percent of Hispanics have earned a bachelor's degree or more.<sup>35</sup> The multiple reasons for these disparities include the inequalities in both income and wealth that exist between white households and those of color, the unequal quality of public school education, the rising cost of college education, and the reduction in aid available to students through Pell grants and the G.I Bill. Since the early 1990s, in each racial/ethnic group, women have exceeded men in college enrollment and in degree attainment.<sup>36</sup>

### b. *Labor Force Experience*

In the 1950s, women's pattern of participation in the workforce tended to include employment before marriage, absence from the labor force between the ages of 25 to 34 while raising young children, and a return to the workforce after age 35 and especially after age 45. At every age level, men's workforce participation rate was about double that of women's. This pattern has changed drastically since the 1970s. Today, at every age level, women's participation rate has come within 15 percentage points of men's.<sup>37</sup> Most wives and mothers remain in the workforce and more than 75 percent of all women workers work full-time, yearround.<sup>38</sup> African American women have always participated in the labor force at higher rates than white women. For example, in 1900, 41 percent of African American women were in the workforce as were 16 percent of white women.<sup>39</sup> By 2005, the labor force participation rate of African American women reached 61.6 percent and that of white women reached 58.9 percent, almost closing that gap.<sup>40</sup>

### c. *Closing the Human Capital Gap*

While the strategy known as pay equity is important in addressing the gender wage gap, it does not address the differences that still persist in attaining education and work experience. These differences are particularly acute for people of color. Fully addressing the gender wage gap requires addressing those gender and race inequalities that continue to shape other social institutions. The PC(USA) is enriched by its tradition of support for racial equality and opposition to any form of racial discrimination in church or society. For example, the PCUSA stated, "... the Church [must] demonstrate in every phase of its life and work the reality of brotherhood in which no person or group is penalized by virtue of minority status" (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1951, Part I, p.257). The PC(USA) has also developed a long tradition of support for ensuring quality public education for all children, but especially for children most at risk. The 208th General Assembly (1996) stated: "Education is a basic human right and is essential to human development because it enhances human capacities, improves opportunities, and widens the range of choices" (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p. 532). The 211th General Assembly (1999) spoke out against "resegregation and the withdrawal of resources from Black children" (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp.77, 681). The goal of gender equality for all women calls the church beyond the strategy of pay equity and raises again the challenge of creating a society in which no person is disadvantaged in educational attainment or employment opportunities by gender or race.

### 3. *Gender Discrimination*

When a significant wage gap exists between similarly educated and experienced workers, a suspicion of employment discrimination seems reasonable. One recent study compared the average earnings of full-time, year-round, college-educated male and female workers at five-year intervals between college graduation in 1984 and 2004. At each point a gender wage gap existed. A gap of \$11,001 in 1984 increased to a gap of \$36,842 in 2004 when these workers were in their forties.<sup>41</sup> Some of this gap may be due to the different college majors and subsequent professions that women and men choose. However, as the American Association of University Women points out, men in female-dominated professions, such as education or nursing, still earn more than their female counterparts. They also note that, “In biological sciences, a mixed-gender major, women earn only 75 percent as much as men earn.”<sup>42</sup> How much of the gender pay gap can be attributed to gender discrimination?

In 1998, the President’s Council of Economic Advisors came to this conclusion:

... there still exists a significant wage gap that cannot be explained by differences between male and female workers in labor market experience and in the characteristics of jobs they hold. ... Some studies have tried to measure discrimination directly by looking at pay differences among men and women in very similar jobs or by comparing pay to specific measures of productivity. These studies consistently find evidence of ongoing discrimination in the labor market and support the conclusion that women still face differential treatment on the job.<sup>43</sup>

For example, a comprehensive study of restaurant hiring practices found gender segregation related to “high” and “low” end restaurants. Male waiters were concentrated in restaurants where the meal service was more formal and more expensive. The authors concluded: “Our findings provide strong evidence of discrimination against women in high-price restaurants. ...” Moreover, the earnings for wait staff are significantly higher in high-price restaurants, leading to gender differences in earnings among wait staff workers.<sup>44</sup>

#### a. *The Dilemma of Women’s Work Choices*

Explaining the “unexplained” gender pay gap that exists after differences in human capital and segregated occupations are taken into account has led researchers to consider how women’s “choices” about employment and their employment experiences are impacted by traditional gender expectations. While the decisions that women make are often referred to as “choices,” it is important to keep in mind that these are decisions made under conditions that limit women’s full options. The way a society organizes employment and domestic work and the relationship between the two shapes the decisions that individual women and men must make. For example, while most employed women work full-time, a majority of part-time workers are women—many trying to balance family and work demands by working part-time but others working part-time due to the lack of available full-time jobs. Other stereotypes affect how women “choose” to handle a variety of workplace situations. For example, much research shows that women are less likely to enter into negotiations over salary offers. However, additional research has shown that women who initiate salary negotiations are perceived more negatively than men. “What we found across all the studies is men were always less willing to work with a woman who had attempted to negotiate than with a woman who did not.” Women’s reluctance to negotiate salary is a reasonable reaction to how they will be treated if they do.<sup>45</sup>

#### b. *Stereotyping Women Employees*

In our society, the traditional assumption that men “work” and women care for the home and children continues to create stereotypes and workplace practices that disadvantage women employees. Single women are disadvantaged by the assumption that they may, at some point, marry and have children. Simply becoming a mother makes women vulnerable to stereotypes. Studies show that even when motherhood has not reduced women’s paid working hours, mothers who are employed are likely to earn less than women who have no children or men who become fathers.<sup>46</sup> Regardless of their actual job performance, employees who are mothers may be perceived as not fully committed to their employment or as less competent, less available, or less competitive. They may be given less important and less demanding projects by supervisors who presume that mothers have particular work-hour constraints. In May, 2007, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued guidelines for determining when different treatment of caregivers is illegal: “Because stereotypes that female caregivers should not, will not, or cannot be committed to their jobs are sex-based, employment decisions based on such stereotypes violate Title VII.”<sup>47</sup> However, because caregivers, per se, are not a protected class of people under Title VII, the law is not violated if employers treat mothers and fathers in a similar unfavorable manner.

The EEOC Guidelines discuss a variety of practices that could violate Title VII, including:

- Subjecting women who become mothers to less favorable employment treatment without evidence of changes in their work performance;
- Treating female workers less favorably based on gender assumptions about how caregiving responsibilities might interfere with work performance;

- Treating less favorably mothers who work part-time, or who take advantage of flexible working hours;
- Overlooking mothers as candidates for relocation on the assumption that mothers would not want to relocate;
- Interviewing women applicants, but not men, about how they will manage their current or future caregiving responsibilities.

c. *Family Responsibilities and Care Giving*

Much is being written today about work-family stress. In a competitive economy, employees who devote time to caring for dependents may be penalized whether they are women or men. However, despite most women's participation in the paid workforce and the economic importance of their work to employers and wages to their families, women are still society's primary unpaid caregivers for the young, the elderly, the chronically ill, and the disabled. With persistent cuts in health care, the burden of care, even for patients needing more skilled care, is shifting from a paid labor force of women workers in health-care institutions to an unpaid labor force of women in the home. The conflict created for women as the demands of employment and the demands of caregiving clash is sometimes called "the maternal wall."<sup>48</sup> In our society, the traditional assumption that men "work" and women care for the home and children continues to shape our social institutions in ways that create a real disjuncture between the important work of caregiving and the important work of employment. For example, the practice of mandatory overtime ignores the equally important family responsibilities of women and men. While employers may choose to provide paid leave, the Family and Medical Leave Act only requires employers of a certain size to provide unpaid leave to attend to sick children or parents making this leave difficult and costly especially for lower wage workers and racial/ethnic workers. In a survey of those caring for elderly relatives for more than eight hours a week, two-thirds of the caregivers reported having lost promotions and training opportunities at work.<sup>49</sup> There is much research showing that women work fewer hours in employment than they would like and interrupt their hours more than men because of childcare concerns. The cost of childcare absorbs 15 percent of the average working mother's income and 35 percent of the income of mothers in low-income families.<sup>50</sup> For the most part, the work place still assumes that workers have, or should have, no responsibility for caregiving work.

Women in lower-paid work, who are disproportionately women of color, experience this conflict more severely. Stable childcare, that is affordable and of good quality, is often out of reach of low-income workers. They may have to rely on public transportation to get to childcare and to work. And low-income workers are typically employed in work characterized by nontraditional and unstable working hours, mandatory overtime, and rigid workplace policies regarding lateness and absences. Julie has an associate's degree and two children in elementary school:

I went to work and told them I could not work nights any more because of the two children. The manager had a ten o'clock meeting at night. It is one of the coldest winters in history. My oldest daughter has asthma. He said, "You will be there at that meeting or you'll be fired." I said, "I can't bring my children out in that kind of weather. Find a baby-sitter. I can't find a baby-sitter, not at ten at night." He said, "Either you be at the meeting or you are fired." So I quit.<sup>51</sup>

Higher income and professional women do not escape these conflicts as evidenced by the findings of the Glass Ceiling Commission in 1995 and the report of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 2004.<sup>52</sup> Taking time out, even occasionally, to respond to the needs of children or other dependents is seen by supervisors as a loss of labor market experience and commitment that hurts career opportunities, including future wages.

Faced with this conflict, some women choose to work fewer hours, take less demanding work or, in other ways, structure their paid employment to fit their caregiving responsibilities. For example, although about 25 percent of women employees work part-time, women make up a majority of part-time workers. For low- and moderate-income families, however, part-time work has a high cost: lower wages per hour as well as fewer hours and less access to pensions, health insurance, family leave, and unemployment or disability insurance. It has long-term negative consequences for Social Security benefits. By taking up the important and necessary unpaid work of caregiving, some women pay the price of greater economic vulnerability and less opportunity to develop their full human capacities. Jessie has two elementary-age children:

I need to work during the day so I can be here with my kids at night. ... My kids are first. My kids are always first. Basically everything I work for or think of working for is around them ... the hours, the pay, the kind of work I do—all the decisions revolve around them.<sup>53</sup>

d. *Closing the Work-Family Gap*

Do women need to become like men (that is, free of primary caregiving responsibilities) to achieve economic justice? In fact, this is the claim of some who deny the reality of gender discrimination and the gender wage gap. According to Denise Venable:

When women behave in the workplace as men do, the wage gap between them is small. June O'Neill, former director of the Congressional Budget Office, found that among people ages 27 to 33 who have never had a child, women's earnings approach 98 percent of men's. ... Rather than being "funneled" into low-wage, low-prestige and part-time positions, women often choose these occupations. ...<sup>54</sup>



One problem with this perspective is that it limits its focus to this specific, young age group. This focus allows it to ignore the impact of marriage and childbearing on women's wages at any age. It also illustrates the underlying error of our society's current concept of work. The secular meaning and value of "work" is limited to only those activities that earn a wage by serving the marketplace. In this conception, the broad range of families' needs and what parents do to meet those needs is not "work." In fact, family responsibilities detract from real work. Wages and hours of employment that are insufficient to support the income needs of workers are justified as the free choice of less-skilled workers, or the free choice of mothers. According to this view, those who "choose" to respond to the care needs of families and dependent persons can be said to have freely chosen to deny themselves and their families' economic well-being.

In the Reformed tradition, both paid and unpaid work, work that produces material things and work that forms families and communities, are essential to human well-being. Societies literally cannot survive without the work of families. Both are of equal dignity. This broad and encompassing biblical meaning of human labor is celebrated in the Reformed tradition as vocation, a blessing, and a response to blessing. We serve God and receive God's blessings by serving the well-being and reconciliation of all people and the care of God's creation. Given this foundation, economic justice for women requires the mending of the work-family division. It requires society's commitment to the value of caregiving, to the economic well-being of all caregivers, paid and unpaid, and to men's and women's equal sharing of the joys and burdens of caregiving. It requires a workplace fit for parents and other caregivers.

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the policy, *Transforming Families*, which clearly acknowledged the destructive effects of work-family conflict on women, men, and families:

As we strive to fulfill our covenantal vocation as Christians in both work and family life, we struggle with the difficulties of balancing the two and of bringing about conditions in our society that are truly family friendly and that recognize the great value of reproductive, nurturing, and caregiving work. (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 781)

In response, the assembly called on all levels of the PC(USA), including individual Presbyterians, to advocate for legislation that would:

- "Make generous financial support available for the care of children and other dependents. Such support should not discriminate among those who choose to have dependent family members at home, those who choose commercial care, and those who choose other care arrangements. The goal is to ensure quality, affordable, and safe care for every child and dependent" (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 759).
- "Induce employers to offer more flexible work hours, more paid leave for the care of dependent persons and child-related activities, more telecommunications options, more possibilities for part-time jobs with prorated wages and benefits, family-supporting wages for all workers, and more available, affordable, and flexible child-care programs" (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp.57, 759–60).
- "Ensure 'the right of every person to have access to quality health care that is adequate, affordable, and accountable' as a necessity for family life" (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp.57, 760).

To fully address the gender wage gap, the church must recommit itself to healing work-family conflict and to public policies that value all families and their work of nurture and caregiving (refer to Recommendation 2.c. of this report). A number of secular organizations provide information on pay equity tools and companies that are trying to reduce work-family conflict.<sup>55</sup> Appendix 2 provides an example of an investment company's screening criteria for gender equity.

#### IV. Women in the Global Workforce

While it is far beyond the scope of this paper to analyze adequately women's experiences of employment around the world, the globalization of trade, labor markets, and finance creates ties between U.S. Christians and workers worldwide.<sup>56</sup> According to the International Labour Office (ILO), women now make up 47.9 percent of the world's wage and salaried workforce. About 52 percent of working age women participates in the world's workforce. In 2006, most employed women worked in service sector jobs (42 percent) or agricultural jobs (40 percent). Seventeen percent worked in industry.<sup>57</sup>

Most countries, but not the U.S., have ratified the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) which establishes nondiscrimination as a human right. Nonetheless, the ILO report, *Time for Equality at Work*, found that gender stereotypes continue to shape women's work even in the developed world.<sup>58</sup> For example, in England the majority of women workers are "... concentrated in 'the five Cs': caring, cashiering, catering, cleaning and clerical."<sup>59</sup> In most of the world's economies, women earn less than their male co-workers earn, even in high-skilled occupations such as computer programming and even in female-dominated occupations such as nursing. The ILO distinguishes between those variables in either an individual's or an industry's characteristics that may create pay differences that are not due to discrimination and those pay differences that are discriminatory: (a) when different pay is given for the same work, and (b) when different pay is given for jobs that are

different but of equal value—as when traditionally female jobs are valued less than traditionally male jobs due to stereotypes about the value of women’s work. It concludes that the elimination of sex-based pay discrimination “requires an in-depth review of job evaluation practices and pay policies of enterprises in order to definitively eradicate sexist prejudices and stereotypes.”<sup>60</sup>

Research by the Project on Global Working Families found work-family conflict and punitive treatment of caregivers in countries around the globe.<sup>61</sup> A significant percentage of families with children under six years of age have all adult members (over 18) in the paid labor force: 50 percent of Russian households with young children, 41 percent of such households in Brazil, 68 percent in Vietnam.<sup>62</sup> For many low-income families the tragic choice is between earning enough money to feed their families (income) and being physically present to care for their children. Having caregiving responsibilities makes paid work difficult to find. Staying home to care for a sick child means losing pay, or having to work twice as many hours to make up for the lost time, or losing the job.<sup>63</sup> As in the U.S., low-income and poor families experience fewer supports for handling caregiving conflicts (less leave, paid or unpaid, less time flexibility, rigid working conditions, inadequate wages, and so forth). The health, safety, and educational needs of children suffer.<sup>64</sup> Parents cannot be in two places at once. In Botswana, Numuko Ndebele described what happened while she was at work:

They were cooking while I was at work, using the gas stove. I think they switched one button on but didn’t light the stove. I can’t say what happened, but whatever they did, the whole house was in flames. Everything was burned out.<sup>65</sup>

Thus, despite their increased participation in employment, the working conditions of the women of the world continue to create greater economic vulnerability for women, and, consequently, for their children. In some developing nations the focus on low-priced export products, such as clothing, electronics, and shoes, provides low-wage industrial work for women. However, these jobs provide no opportunity for advancement beyond their subsistence wages. Global competition for lowest waged workers makes such industrial work unstable as companies move from country to country. Competition between countries to attract low-cost export industries reduces the power of workers and governments to demand decent conditions that sustain families. In some places companies treat women workers as subcontractors producing for export from their homes.<sup>66</sup> The ILO estimates “... that women make up at least 60 percent of the world’s working poor.”<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately, these poor conditions for employed women may justify to families and governments a lack of investment in education and training for girls, resulting in no or slow generational progress toward economic justice for women. It is important to note that both religion and culture play a role in maintaining and justifying the stereotypes that disadvantage women.

## V. Pay Equity in Religious Organizations

### A. *Other Christian Groups*

Although the Resolution Team on Pay Equity was mandated to study the issue of pay equity in both church and society, the team did not have the resources to do an exhaustive analysis of Christian groups. Our limited research showed that many church bodies formally affirm the equality of women and men. Some have taken actions to achieve that within their structures. The examples that follow suggest principles for those serious about addressing pay equity issues:

- It is essential to use valid research tools to uncover unintended gender, racial, and ethnic differences that negatively and unjustly impact women employees. We will not know if we do not look.
- The affirmation of our belief in gender equity is insufficient without the commitment that results in effective employment policies, their routine application, and their consistent oversight by those charged with their implementation. Achieving gender equity must be an intentional and on-going process.
- Justice will only result when its vision is pursued by effective actions.

#### 1. *World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)*

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches, of which the PC(USA) is a member, states that “...the Church of Jesus Christ belongs equally to women and men.” The WARC laments, however, that “... this is still a dream to be realized as the church manifests injustices against women and deep divisions embedded in the persistent patriarchal ideology...”<sup>68</sup> Through its Programme to Affirm, Challenge and Transform and its Department of Partnership of Women and Men, WARC has worked with member churches around the world regarding issues related to women, including ordination, violence, and economic justice. It has not yet addressed specifically the strategy of pay equity.

#### 2. *World Council of Churches (WCC)*

Since 1948, the WCC has addressed the goal of “women’s full and creative participation in church and society” in every “Assembly and other international ecumenical meetings.”<sup>69</sup> This goal, and the guidelines developed for the WCC office in

Geneva, are derived from the belief "... that men and women are made equally in the image of God, and, in the community of the baptized, are equal participants in the Body of Christ." The guidelines warn that the decision to address gender inequality involves dealing with gender imbalance both in the church and in the larger society and its culture and institutions. Therefore,

In order to build and to sustain a healthy and thriving community of women and men, members of staff need to be able to see the image of God in each other. In order to serve the justice and dignity that this image implies, they need to be engaged in a constant process of learning and unlearning beliefs, attitudes and forms of behavior.

Specifically, the guidelines for the Geneva Office include the following:

- "The appointment procedure will include an assessment of each applicant's gender awareness in accordance with this policy, both through letters of reference and the interview process."
- "Gender awareness training of new and continuing staff will further reflection on gender roles and relations."
- "All jobs and job descriptions will include a clause calling for gender sensitivity."
- "Jobs and job descriptions will focus on the role of each staff person within the framework of the needs of the Team."
- "The Leadership Team will carefully monitor all staff appointments and set in place a strategy so as to reach a balance of gender in all appointments and grades."
- "The monitoring process will form an integral part of the proposed ongoing evaluation of all work. . . ."

These statements suggest an approach that the PC(USA) could adopt for its own work toward the goal of employment justice.

### 3. *United Methodist Church (UMC)*

In 2000, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, based on its affirmation of the "inherent value and equal worth in God's sight of every person," directed the General Council on Finance and Administration "... to evaluate internal wage structures and practices of general agencies of The United Methodist Church in light of the principle of pay equity and to include this assessment in its regular monitoring of equal employment opportunity compliance under *The Book of Discipline*. . . ." The resolution further directed this agency to develop a job-evaluation and classification system that would be uniform across all agencies of the church with the goal of developing a database of information and reducing the "opportunity for bias based on gender or ethnic status. . . ." The General Council on Finance and Administration is to "provide the 2008 General Conference with an evaluative report on pay equity in the general agencies, based on the monitoring of pay equity that has been conducted since implementation of the new systems and processes. . . ." <sup>70</sup>

This action has enabled the UMC's General Commission on the Status and Role of Women to gather a great deal of data about gender and racial disparities in representation, appointments, and wages. One conclusion reached is that a gap of 9 percent exists between the wages of clergywomen and clergymen with the same years of experience and same type of appointment. <sup>71</sup> A 2004 study of the status of racial/ethnic clergywomen found that they "... experience no substantive support from the denomination, struggle with lack of opportunities for appointments and visible leadership roles, and receive salaries that are lower than those of their male and female European-American peers and their male racial-ethnic peers." <sup>72</sup>

### B. *The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* <sup>73</sup>

In faithfulness to our biblical and theological foundations, the PC(USA) must look inward to its own practices. Are we truly open to hiring women equally with men? Do we practice "equal pay for equal work"? Do we challenge and undo gender and racial stereotypes that limit human freedom, creativity, and personhood? Do we establish equal pay for work of comparable worth in order to undermine these stereotypes? The Resolution Team analyzed the data available to it from several PC(USA) sources to explore the relative status of women, racial/ethnic persons, and men in the PC(USA). While the issue of pay equity includes non-clergy employees of the church, no data about non-clergy employees were available to the team. In this section, we describe these sources and our findings. In addition, Appendix 1 provides a report from the Presbytery of Baltimore describing its work to achieve pay equity. More information about the methodologies used in the following section is provided in Appendix 3.

#### 1. *Compensation Data from Individual Congregations*

Compensation data for clergy from five presbyteries in four synods were analyzed to explore differences by gender and by race/ethnicity. <sup>74</sup> The presbyteries represented are Western Reserve of the Synod of the Covenant, Mid-Kentucky and St. Andrew of the Synod of Living Waters, Heartland of the Synod of Mid-America, and Riverside of the Southern California and Hawaii Synod. To the extent possible, compensation or "terms of call" were defined consistently across all the congregations. The analysis looked at information regarding 286 clergy: 199 men and seventy women (seventeen cases do not have

information on gender). Information is available to identify race/ethnicity for 194 clergy (165 Caucasian employees, 18 African Americans, 5 Asian Americans, 5 Hispanic Americans, and 1 Native American).

This dataset is not based on a random sample of Presbyterian clergy, and thus our findings may not reflect precisely the experiences of the entire PC(USA) clergy. It was, however, the only data available to the Resolution Team on Pay Equity. While data were made available for only a few presbyteries, and compensation may not be defined in exactly the same way among these presbyteries, this analysis sheds light on current practice in the PC(USA). The resolution team believes it is very likely that the issues documented by these data, in terms of differences in positions and earnings of women as compared with men, and whites as compared with racial/ethnic clergy, are very similar throughout the PC(USA). They also mirror findings from the broader U.S. workforce.

Analysis of complete, comprehensive data about all PC(USA) clergy compensation would be extremely valuable for understanding the impact of gender, race, and ethnicity on opportunities and compensation in the PC(USA).

Detailed findings from this analysis are presented in Table 1, below, and in the Appendix. Key findings are:

- Men earn substantially more than women (27 percent more) and whites earn substantially more than racial/ethnic clergy (26 percent more).
- Women clergy are less likely to be in the top position of their congregations than men are.
- Women and racial/ethnic clergy have fewer years of service than do men and whites.
- Men and whites serve in larger congregations than women and racial/ethnic clergy do.
- Women and racial/ethnic clergy work part-time more often than men and whites do.

These differences in clergy positions, and other factors that are not directly measurable in this dataset, lead to very different earnings for the groups analyzed here. Women earn an average of \$42,698, while men earn \$54,117; men's earnings are 27 percent higher than women's. The earnings gap is virtually the same across the racial/ethnic divide: whites earn an average of \$51,941, or 26 percent more than racial/ethnic clergy, whose average earnings are \$41,117.

Characteristics	Gender			Race/Ethnicity	
	Women	Men	ALL	Non-Hispanic White	Minority
<b>Position</b> Pastor	54%	64%	61%	61%	69%
Non-congregation based Pastor	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%
Associate Pastor	17%	10%	12%	11%	16%
Commissioned Lay Pastor	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Interim Associate Pastor	3%	0%	1%	0%	3%
Interim Pastor	4%	7%	6%	6%	3%
Stated Supply	4%	7%	6%	6%	6%
Temporary Supply	10%	5%	6%	7%	0%
Temp. Supply Assoc. Pastor	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Total	98%	100%	98%	99%	100%
<b>Years of Service</b> 1-10 years	28%	24%	25%	21%	50%
11-20	50%	26%	33%	36%	17%
20+	22%	50%	42%	43%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Church size</b> small (1-100)	46%	43%	42%	43%	36%
medium (101-500)	43%	41%	44%	42%	56%
large (501-5,000)	11%	16%	14%	15%	8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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<b>Work schedule</b> full-time	76%	89%	85%	86%	79%
part-time	24%	11%	15%	14%	21%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Presbytery</b> Heartland	29%	28%	27%	31%	9%
Western Reserve	30%	20%	21%	20%	44%
Mid-Kentucky	17%	14%	14%	15%	9%
Riverside	13%	16%	14%	14%	22%
St. Andrews	11%	23%	24%	21%	16%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Distribution across columns</b>	26%	74%	100%	88%	12%
<b>Median Terms of Call</b>	\$42,698	\$54,117	\$50,840	\$51,941	\$41,117
<b>Number of cases in dataset</b>	70	199	286	239	32
Notes: Columns may not sum to totals due to rounding or missing data. Terms of Call is the total of salary, other income, and housing (effective salary).					
Source: Institute for Women’s Policy Research analysis of data collected by PC(USA) Resolution Team on Pay Equity					

In order to study the impact of being female or of a racial/ethnic group, we employed a statistical technique to isolate those factors from others that also affect the terms of call offered to clergy, such as position and years since ordination. (See Appendix 1 for more information on the statistical analysis.) We examined the effect of the following factors in determining individual clergy earnings:

Gender

Race/ethnicity: In two groups: whites, and all others.<sup>75</sup>

Position: We grouped congregational positions into three categories: Pastors and Associate Pastors, Commissioned Lay Pastors and Stated Supply, and all other positions.

Years since ordination: Three categories: one to ten, eleven to twenty, and twenty or more.

Size of congregation: Small (one to 100 members), medium (101 to 500 members), and large (more than 500).

Work hours: Full-time or part-time, where full-time is defined as thirty-five hours per week or more.

The regression analysis confirms some very basic relationships between worker and job characteristics and clergy earnings. As one would expect:

- Full-time clergy earn more than those employed part-time.
- Pastors have higher earnings than other clergy.
- Earnings are much higher in larger congregations (26 percent higher in medium-sized than in small-sized congregations, and 60 percent higher in the largest congregations than in the smallest ones).

Terms of call vary widely among congregations: Earnings are 50 percent lower in both Mid-Kentucky and Western Reserve than in Heartland; Riverside trails Heartland by 25 percent; and St. Andrew’s clergy earn 34 percent more than those in Heartland (when comparing clergy in the same position, work schedule, size of congregation, gender, racial/ethnic identity, and years since ordination).

Women and racial/ethnic clergy earn less than men and whites, even when they have the same position (by 4 percent and 13 percent, respectively). However, these relationships are not statistically significant. That is, the data suggest that being female or a racial/ethnic clergy lowers earnings, if all other factors are held constant, but the analysis cannot confidently rule out the possibility that the observed relationship in this data set is simply due to chance.

However, the lack of statistical significance does not mean that women and racial/ethnic clergy are not in fact paid less just because of being female and of a racial/ethnic group. The PC(USA) dataset is small, with only 70 women and 32 racial/ethnic clergy. For some observations, certain pieces of data were missing (e.g., work schedule); these were dropped from the regression analysis, making the sample size even smaller. (221 observations were available for the regression study.) In addition, women are more likely to serve in smaller congregations, have fewer years since ordination, and be in positions

other than pastor (Table 1). It may be that systemic barriers in the PC(USA) prevent women from serving in larger congregations, or from being ordained in a timely manner. If this is the case, then some of the discrimination that women face will show up as differences by size of congregation or years since ordination, rather than as a gender effect.

Other research suggests that many women in the clergy face the same kinds of discriminatory treatment that are reported by women throughout the workforce. A study by the PC(USA)'s Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns quotes comments from women who experienced sexual harassment, biased expectations about doing "women's work," and discrimination in rising to leadership positions in the church.<sup>76</sup> Similar reports have been written of women clergy in other denominations.<sup>77</sup>

## 2. Analysis from the Board of Pensions

The PC(USA) Board of Pensions provided information on average salaries of clergy to the Resolution Team on Pay Equity, with data by size of congregation and, within each size category, by gender and years of service (ten or fewer, and eleven or more).<sup>78</sup> Effective salary and number of clergy are indicated for full-time pastors and, for congregations of 201 or more, for full-time associate pastors.

Key findings from the team's evaluation of this report (Table 2) are:

- Women have a lower average effective salary as compared to men as both pastors and associate pastors in nearly all congregational size categories.<sup>79</sup>
- There is a substantial wage differential between male and female pastors with ten years or less of service in congregations with 501 to 1,000 members—nearly \$21,000.
- There is only one female pastor in the 13 congregations with 1,501 or more members, so women's and men's earnings cannot be compared for that group.

	<b>50 or less</b>	<b>51 to 100</b>	<b>101 to 200</b>	<b>201 to 500</b>	<b>501 to 1,000</b>	<b>1,001 to 1,500</b>	<b>1,501 or more</b>
<b>FULL-TIME PASTORS</b>							
<i>10 or less years of service</i>							
<b>Percent who are women</b>	19.69%	37.97%	31.75%	21.67%	13.46%	0.00%	7.69%
<b>Percent who are men</b>	80.31%	62.03%	68.25%	78.33%	88.71%	100.00%	92.31%
<b>Average effective salary:</b>							
<b>Women</b>	\$36,627.39	\$38,530.64	\$42,076.85	\$51,038.16	\$50,357.00	n/a	n/a
<b>Men</b>	\$36,027.95	\$40,263.15	\$45,472.66	\$55,665.41	\$71,128.33	\$75,561.64	n/a
<i>11 or more years of service</i>							
<b>Percent who are women</b>	22.47%	17.44%	16.03%	9.89%	6.26%	7.25%	0.96%
<b>Percent who are men</b>	77.52%	82.56%	83.97%	90.11%	93.74%	92.75%	99.04%
<b>Average effective salary:</b>							
<b>Women</b>	\$36,866.86	\$41,322.39	\$47,552.81	\$52,850.99	\$71,201.15	\$88,446.33	n/a
<b>Men</b>	\$38,594.93	\$42,218.57	\$48,260.43	\$60,089.36	\$78,346.57	\$102,192.72	n/a
<b>FULL-TIME ASSOCIATE PASTORS</b>							
<i>10 or less years of service</i>							
<b>Percent who are women</b>				40.11%	45.79%	45.97%	40.00%
<b>Percent who are men</b>				59.89%	54.21%	54.03%	60.00%
<b>Average effective salary:</b>							
<b>Women</b>				\$44,953.54	\$48,465.85	\$51,098.97	\$59,931.79
<b>Men</b>				\$46,601.96	\$51,108.25	\$55,036.55	\$65,741.09

<i>11 or more years of service</i>							
<b>Percent who are women</b>				53.06%	33.33%	25.00%	26.76%
<b>Percent who are men</b>				46.94%	66.67%	75.00%	73.24%
<b>Average effective salary:</b>							
<b>Women</b>				\$47,910.56	\$53,680.12	\$60,877.78	\$77,908.74
<b>Men</b>				\$53,532.52	\$61,176.12	\$64,152.32	\$79,648.17
Source: Church Leadership Connection, <i>Applicants and Positions Report</i> (4/25/2007);							
Compiled by the Institute for Women's Policy Research for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Resolution Team on Pay Equity.							
Notes: Includes pastors working at least 35 hours per week. Associate pastor positions are only in congregations larger than 200 members. "n/a" indicates salary information was suppressed to protect confidentiality due to the small number of employees in a reported category.							

### 3. *Information Provided by the Church Leadership Connection*

The resolution team was also provided with information from the Church Leadership Connection. These data include some relevant comparisons of women and men in the PC(USA). However, the data does not distinguish racial/ethnic identities in general nor racial/ethnic identities by gender.

#### a. *Women Are Under-represented as Ministers Compared with Their Presence as Candidates*

Table 3 shows the percent of active ministers who are women, and the percent of clergy candidates who are women, from 1997 to 2005. Over this entire period, women constituted half or more of all candidates for clergy positions, while only one-fourth to one-third of all active ministers were women. Women are half of all clergy candidates, but only one-third of ministers.

Year	Women as a percent of:	
	Active Ministers <sup>1</sup>	Candidates <sup>2</sup>
1997	24%	50%
1998	25%	52%
1999	26%	50%
2000	28%	53%
2001	29%	53%
2002	30%	52%
2003	31%	53%
2004	32%	53%
2005	33%	54%

Source: Church Leadership Connection, *Applicants and Positions Report* (4/25/2007); compiled by the Institute for Women's Policy Research for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Resolution Team on Pay Equity.

<sup>1</sup>Includes retired ministers.

<sup>2</sup>Data are for "candidates under care" only, and do not include "inquirers."

<sup>3</sup>Data supplied by the Office of Resourcing Committees on Preparation for Ministry. All other data supplied by the Office of the General Assembly.

#### b. *Women's Presence in Church Leadership Is Not Growing*

From 2000 to 2005, the share of pastors and co-pastors and of associate pastors who were women remained nearly constant: Just over one-fourth of pastors/co-pastors are women, while a smaller share—about one-sixth—of associate pastors are women (Table 4). (These numbers are different from those presented in Table 3 because retired persons are not represented in Table 4.) Women's leadership role in the church is not growing.

Table 4. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Active Ministers by Percent Female

	<b>Pastors/Co-Pastors</b>	<b>Associate Pastors</b>
<b>2000</b>	28%	17%
<b>2001</b>	28%	17%
<b>2002</b>	29%	16%
<b>2003</b>	30%	15%
<b>2004</b>	29%	15%
<b>2005</b>	29%	14%

Source: Church Leadership Connection, Applicants and Positions Report 4/25/2007, compiled by the Institute for Women's Policy Research for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Pay Equity Taskforce.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Less than 0.5 percent rounds to zero.

<sup>2</sup>Only active ministers are included in this table; retired ministers have been excluded.

c. *Women Are Underrepresented in All Synods*

There is some variation among synods in the integration of women into pastoral positions, but only within a small range (Table 5). The Synod of the Northeast has the highest percent of female ministers, at 26 percent, and the Southern California and Hawaii Synod has the lowest, at 17 percent. The problem of women's exclusion from church leadership is widespread.

Table 5. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Percent Female Minister by Synod

<b>Synod</b>	<b>Percent Female</b>
Alaska-Northwest	21%
Boriquen en Puerto Rico	20%
Covenant	23%
Lakes and Prairies	26%
Lincoln Trails	23%
Living Waters	18%
Mid-America	21%
Mid-Atlantic	21%
Northeast	26%
Pacific	22%
Rocky Mountains	23%
South Atlantic	18%
Southern California and Hawaii	17%
Southwest	18%
Sun	21%
Trinity	20%

Source: Church Leadership Connection, *Applicants and Positions Report (4/25/2007)*; compiled by the Institute for Women's Policy Research for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Resolution Team on Pay Equity.

4. *Conclusions*

Although little data were available to the Resolution Team on Pay Equity, what we were able to analyze suggests that women and racial/ethnic clergy are limited to a supporting role in the PC(USA). They are paid less, have positions in smaller congregations, and are more likely to work part-time.

The fact that women and racial/ethnic clergy continue to average fewer years since ordination is particularly troublesome given that the PC(USA) approved the ordination of women in 1956. It may be that institutional factors—the way curricula are designed, or the support students have while studying for the ministry—somehow discourage women and racial/ethnic persons from completing their studies, or makes it more difficult for them to complete in a timely fashion. If so, it will be difficult for these groups to catch up to higher-paid and more prominent male and white clergy. In fact, women's strong presence among minister candidates is not paying off; men candidates are more likely to become ministers than are women candidates.

This data analysis is preliminary. Without a comprehensive dataset, it is impossible to draw conclusive findings about the experiences of women and racial/ethnic clergy in today's PC(USA). If the recommendations recommended by the team are approved and fully implemented, a more definite analysis could be completed. This review of the team certainly suggests



that there are factors in the way terms of call are settled on, and in congregations' decisions about what positions to offer to which candidates, that are hostile to women and racial/ethnic clergy.

### Appendix 1 Clergy Compensation Equity in the Presbytery of Baltimore

The Pay Equity Resolution Team thanks the Presbytery of Baltimore, its committee on ministry, and George Fisher for providing us with the following description of their work:

In 2007, the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Baltimore formed a task group to examine clergy compensation in the presbytery to determine the extent to which race or gender may be influencing clergy compensation. Because the Presbytery of Baltimore has for many years ranked clergy positions according to a numerical factoring system,<sup>1</sup> the task group has been able to examine questions of pay equity more quantitatively than would otherwise be possible.

The COM provided the task group with information on clergy compensation (as of December 21, 2007), along with information on the status and factoring of each position, and the racial grouping and date of ordination for each pastor. We divided the information into groups on the basis of gender and race, and prepared two plots of total compensation against position factor, one comparing compensation for male and female pastors (Figure 1), the other for white and non-white male pastors (Figure 2).

In an attempt to capture the trend of the data on compensation for male and female pastors, we calculated least-square regression lines for Figure 1. Given the relatively small number of points in Figure 2, we chose not to calculate regression curves for those data. And because the presbytery includes only one non-white woman pastor, we chose not to produce a plot of racial differences for women pastors.

The plots of gender differences and racial differences are broadly similar. Both show that in positions factored at the minimum value, race and gender have little effect on compensation. Both show that no women or non-white men occupy positions factored above about 800. And both show that in positions factored between about 600 and 800, increasing factors are associated with smaller increases in the compensation of women and non-white men than in the compensation of white male clergy. A similar disparity emerges from comparison of the distribution of salary levels in positions factored at the same level: median salaries for women clergy are 13 percent above the minimum levels, while median salaries for men are 26 percent above the minimum.

Women and non-white male clergy in the Presbytery of Baltimore are thus in positions associated with lower factors than are their white male colleagues, and are compensated at lower levels than their white male counterparts in positions with similar factors. Part of these differences in compensation may reflect differences in experience: the median time since ordination is six years less for women clergy (17 years) than for male clergy (23 years), and nine years less for non-white male clergy (15 years) than for white male clergy (24 years). We will continue our study of these data to explore other factors that may influence differences in compensation.

<sup>1</sup> The system of factoring used by the Baltimore Presbytery represents an attempt to rank clergy positions according to their complexity and the level of professional expertise expected. Factors for positions requiring ordained clergy range from a minimum of 520 to a maximum of 1070. Each year, the presbytery establishes median, minimum (80 percent of the median), and maximum salaries (120 percent of the median) for each factor. A more complete explanation of the factoring system used by the Presbytery of Baltimore is available online at <http://www.baltimorepresbytery.org/documents/Factoring-FAQ2006.pdf>.

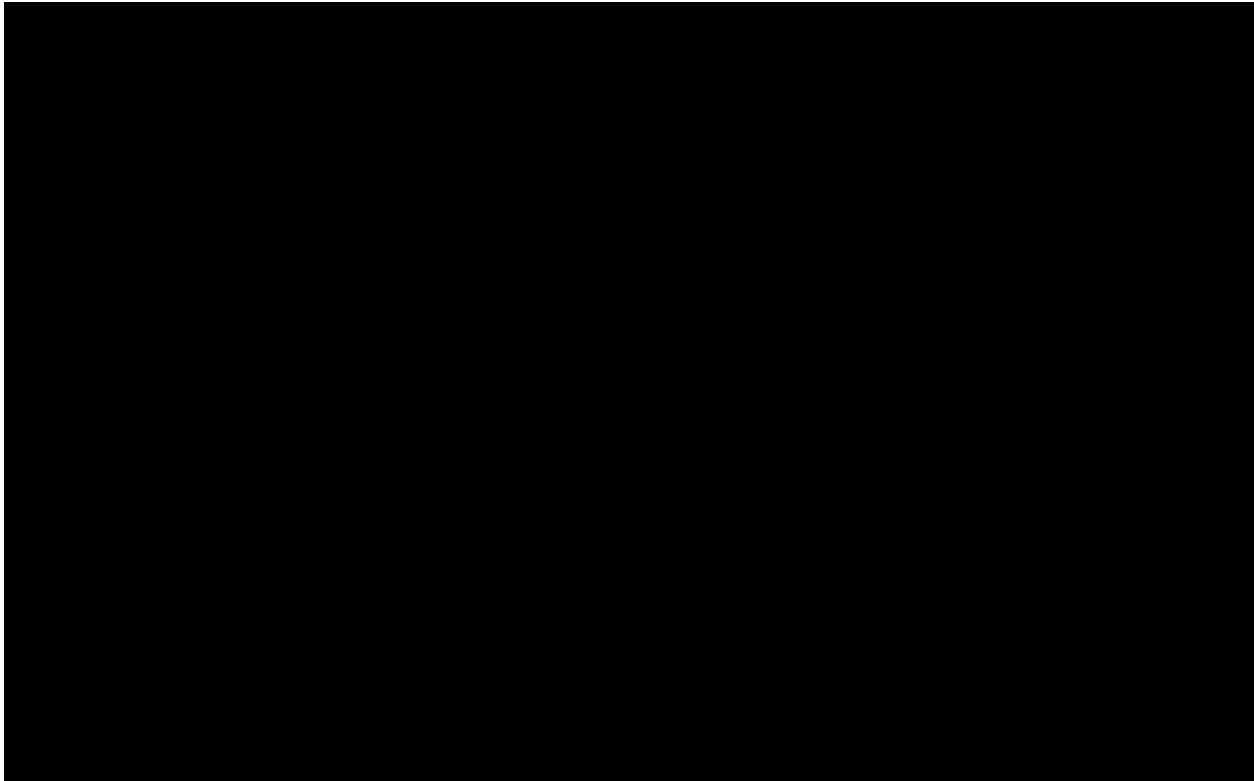


Figure 1

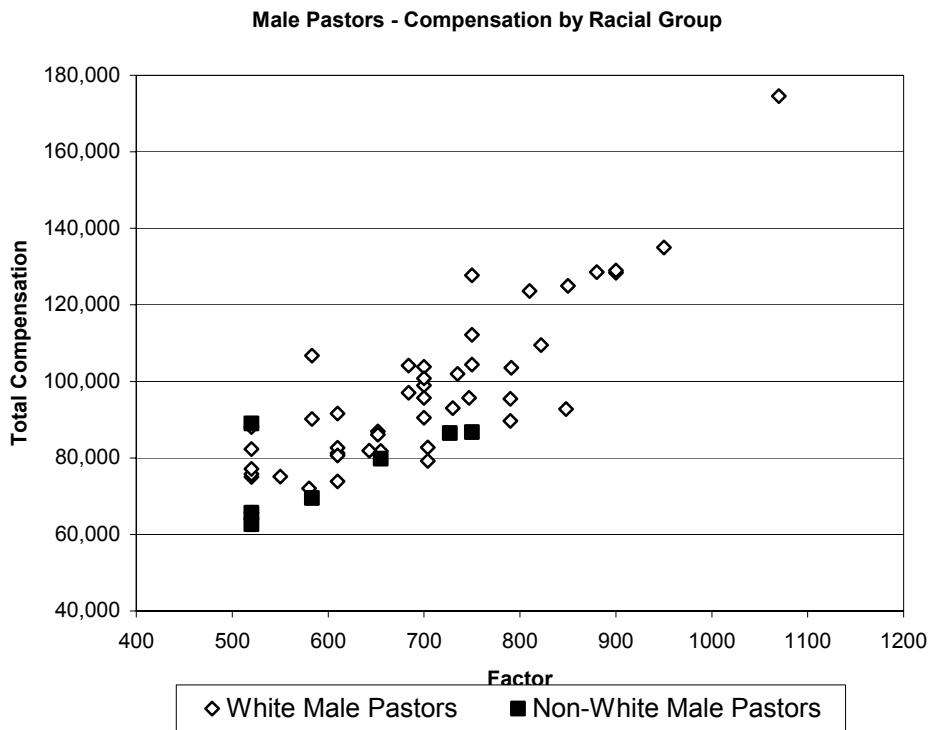


Figure 2

Appendix 2

Calvert Investment Principles: Women's Employment Equity

The Calvert Group, Ltd. has established seven principles as “a code of corporate conduct to empower, advance, and invest in women worldwide” ( See [www.calvert.com/pdf/womensprinciples.pdf](http://www.calvert.com/pdf/womensprinciples.pdf) for the entire policy). Below is a list of the principles with some of the criteria Calvert uses to define those principles that are particularly relevant to this study of pay equity.

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1. Disclosure, Implementation, and Monitoring: Corporations will promote and strive to attain gender equality in their operations and in their business and stakeholder relationships by adopting and implementing proactive policies that are publicly disclosed, monitored, and enforced.

In this regard, companies agree to take all reasonable steps to:

A. Publicize their commitment to these Principles through a CEO statement or comparably prominent means, and prominently display them in the workplace and/or make them available to all employees in a readily accessible and understandable form.

B. Be transparent in the implementation of these Principles, and promote their endorsement and implementation by affiliates, vendors, suppliers, customers, and others with whom they do business.

C. Engage in constructive dialogue with stakeholder groups, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), business associations, investors, and the media on their progress in implementing the Principles.

D. Establish benchmarks to measure and monitor progress toward gender equality, and report results publicly.

E. Develop and implement company policies, procedures, training, and internal reporting processes to ensure observance and implementation of these Principles throughout the organization.

F. Establish an unbiased, non-retaliatory grievance policy allowing employees to make comments, recommendations, reports, or complaints concerning the treatment of women in the workplace.

G. Conduct periodic audits, self-evaluation, public disclosure, and reporting on status and progress made in the implementation of these Principles.

H. Ensure that these Principles are observed not only with respect to their own employees, but also in their relations with independent contractors, sub-contractors, home-based workers, vendors, and other non-employees with whom they do business.

2. Employment and Income: Corporations will promote and strive to attain gender equality by adopting and implementing wage, income, hiring, promotion and other employment policies that eliminate gender discrimination in all its forms.

In this regard, companies agree to take all reasonable steps to:

A. Pay the legal wage to all women.

B. Establish pay equity policies that pay comparable wages and benefits, including retirement security benefits, to men and women for comparable work.

C. Eliminate all forms of discrimination based on gender or cultural stereotypes, including wages, hours, benefits, job access and qualifications, working conditions, or other work-related privileges or activities.

D. Develop verifiable programs to hold managers accountable for attaining measurable progress in the hiring, training, retention, and promotion of women.

E. Prohibit discrimination based on a woman's marital, parental status, or reproductive status in making decisions regarding employment or promotion.

F. Implement reasonable and equitable policies regarding layoffs, contract work, and temporary work that do not disproportionately affect women.

G. Undertake concrete, verifiable actions to provide pregnant and post-natal women with employment security that allows for interruptions in their work for maternity, parental leave, and family-related responsibilities.

H. Facilitate or otherwise provide information regarding the availability of childcare or family care facilities or assistance to employees.

I. Strive to pay a living wage to all women.

3. Health, Safety, and Violence: Corporations will promote and strive to attain gender equality by adopting and implementing policies to secure the health, safety, and well-being of women workers.

4. Civic and Community Engagement: Corporations will promote and strive to attain gender equality by adopting and implementing policies to help secure and protect the right of women to fully participate in civic life and to be free from all forms of discrimination and exploitation.

5. Management and Governance: Corporations will promote and strive to attain gender equality by adopting and implementing policies to ensure women's participation in corporate management and governance.

6. Education, Training, and Professional Development: Corporations will promote and strive to attain gender equality by adopting and implementing education, training, and professional development policies benefiting women.

7. Business, Supply Chain, and Marketing Practices: Corporations will promote and strive to attain gender equality by adopting and implementing proactive, non-discriminatory business, marketing, and supply chain policies and practices.

### Appendix 3

#### Details of Analysis of Compensation Data for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

##### A. General Findings

Table 1 summarizes relevant information about the observations in this PC(USA) dataset. Most of the individuals in the dataset are Pastors (162 out of 264 reported cases); others are Associate Pastors (31), Temporary Supply (18), Stated Supply (16), Commissioned Lay Pastors (11), Interim Pastors (16), Interim Associate Pastors (2), VAL (4), and four are other employees in various positions. Women are less likely to be pastors than are men, and more likely to be interim pastors or temporary supply clergy. Whites and racial/ethnic group members are roughly equally likely to be pastors, but whites are less likely to be associate pastors and more likely to be commissioned lay pastors or temporary supply.

About one-quarter of women and men have one to ten years since date of ordination. Half of women clergy have eleven to twenty years since ordination, with the other quarter having twenty or more years. Men have much more seniority: one-quarter are in the middle range, and half have more than twenty years since ordination. Racial/ethnic clergy are more concentrated among those with only one to ten years since ordination, while whites are mostly in the eleven-to-twenty and twenty-or-more categories. Individual clergy take many paths to seminary and may have different experiences between seminary graduation and acceptance of a clergy position. Demographic groups with fewer average years since ordination are likely to be offered lower terms of call on the basis of their having less experience. If there are barriers to women and racial/ethnic groups becoming ordained, those structural impediments will have important impacts on women's and men's, and whites and racial/ethnic clergies' earnings.

Male clergy are more likely to be in large churches (more than 500 members) than are women, and whites are much more likely than racial/ethnic clergy to have access to those positions. Here again, structural barriers that restrict women and racial/ethnic clergy to smaller churches will have an impact in lowering earnings for these groups, as larger churches tend to have the resources to offer higher compensation.

Full-time clergy positions are filled more often by men than by women (89 percent of men, and 76 percent of women, work full-time), and more often by whites than by racial/ethnic clergy (86 percent and 79 percent, respectively). These differences in work-hours reduce women's and racial/ethnic clergy's earnings relative to men's and whites'.

##### B. Results of regression modeling

The dependent variable in our regression analysis is compensation, which is defined as salary plus housing.<sup>80</sup> The analysis indicates that being female or a racial/ethnic person reduces compensation, when controlling for other factors (Appendix Table 1).<sup>81</sup> That is, when comparing two individual clergy who have the same work schedule (full-time or part-time), work in the same size of congregation and in the same position, and in the same Synod, if one is a woman and the other a man, the woman earns less than the man; if one is a racial/ethnic person and the other a white person, the racial/ethnic individual earns less than the white person. As expected, working full-time, having more years since ordination, working for a larger congregation, and being a Pastor or Associate Pastor also increase compensation. Overall levels of compensation in some of the Synods in our dataset are lower than others, with Heartland and St. Andrew having the highest compensation in general.

Taken together, the factors included in the regression model explain more than half (58 percent) of the variation in terms among clergy in the PC(USA) dataset. The remainder is affected by factors that are not measured in the data available to the Resolution Team.

Appendix Table 1. Results of regression analysis of PC(USA) compensation

<b>Factor affecting compensation</b>	<b>Regression coefficient</b>	
Female	-0.04	
Works full-time	0.49	***
Works in medium-sized congregation	0.27	***
Works in large congregation	0.61	***
11 to 20 years since ordination	-0.03	
20 or more years since ordination	0.07	
Commissioned Lay Pastor or Stated Supply	-0.63	***
All other clergy positions	-0.30	***
Racial/ethnic	-0.13	
Mid-Kentucky Presbytery (Synod of Living Waters)	-0.50	***
Western Reserve Presbytery (Synod of Mid-America)	-0.49	***
Riverside Presbytery (Synod of Southern California and Hawaii)	-0.25	**
St. Andrew Presbytery (Synod of Living Waters)	0.34	***
Constant	10.58	***
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.58		
n = 221		

\*\*\* p < 0.001      \*\* p < 0.05

Omitted values: Male, part-time, small congregation, ten or fewer years since ordination, Pastor or Associate Pastor, white, Heartland Presbytery.

#### Endnotes

1. See *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community and Building Community Among Strangers*, 211th General Assembly (1999).
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16. Institute for Women's Policy Research, "Fact Sheet: The Gender Wage Ratio: Women's and Men's Earnings," (August 2006)
17. Business and Professional Women's Foundation, "101 Facts on the Status of Workingwomen," available at [www.bpwfoundation.org](http://www.bpwfoundation.org).
18. Ibid. and Rosemary Hays-Thomas, "Pay Equity," p. 4.
19. Mishel, et. al, *The State of Working America 2006/2007*, 128. A poverty-level wage is defined as the hourly wage that a full-time, year-round worker must earn to sustain a family of four at the poverty threshold: \$9.60 in 2005 (125).
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80. We used the log transformation values.
81. Each regression coefficient indicates the impact of the associated factor on a clergy’s compensation, as compared with the omitted value of the factor. For instance, being “female” reduces compensation (as shown by the regression coefficient being negative), as compared with being male (the omitted value; see list of omitted values below the table); working full-time increases compensation as compared with working part-time (positive regression coefficient). Coefficients that are statistically significant—where the regression model can confidently confirm that the reported relationship is not an artifact of chance—are indicated with \*\* or \*\*\*, depending on the strength of the factor’s statistical significance.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 09-08. Pay Equity and Just Compensation.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 09-08 be approved.

## Item 09-09

[The assembly approved Item 09-09 with amendment. See pp. 54, 55.]

*A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century and Recognition of the Centennial of the “Social Creed of the Churches” of 1908—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008):

1. Approve the text below of “A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century” and its two-page background statement and rationale;

2. Honor the centennial of the original 1908 Social Creed by receiving and encouraging use of the video documentary, *The Social Creed: Toward a New Social Awakening, 1908–2008* and the book of prayers entitled, *Prayers for the New Social Awakening: Inspired by the New Social Creed* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2008);

3. Direct the General Assembly Council (GAC), through the Presbyterian Washington Office, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and other appropriate offices, to publicize and interpret this “Social Creed” as a [~~concise consensus statement~~] [synopsis] of existing policy and to affirm its holistic vision of necessary changes for our society to meet the challenges of sustainability and globalization;

4. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to include a copy of the “Social Creed” and its background statement in summary reports of the General Assembly action, to share word of its approval with member communions of the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC), of the National Association of Evangelicals, and with the Roman Catholic Church, inviting them to join in this trans-confessional Christian affirmation, and to send a copy to each member of Congress;

5. Direct the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries of the General Assembly Council to integrate “A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century” into its on-going educational and advocacy programs, and the Ecumenical Office of the Office of the General Assembly to include the Social Creed and its vision of Christian moral and soul convergence among the initiatives it lifts up in cooperative work with ecumenical partners and state and local councils of churches;

6. Encourage congregations, presbyteries, synods, seminaries, and colleges related to the church to study and discuss the “Social Creed,” and to do so jointly when possible with ecumenical partners, noting its support by the National Council of Churches of Christ and the concerns it shares with the “sung” Social Creed of the United Methodist Church, the “Covenant for a New America” of Sojourners/Call to Renewal, and with the “Covenant for Black America” developed at annual African American study forums by public affairs commentator, Tavis Smiley.

### A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century

We churches of the United States have a message of hope for a fearful time. Just as the churches responded to the harshness of early twentieth century industrialization with a prophetic “Social Creed” in 1908, so in our era of globalization we offer a vision of a society that shares more and consumes less, seeks compassion over suspicion and equality over domination, and finds security in joined hands rather than massed arms. Inspired by Isaiah’s vision of a “peaceable kingdom,” we honor the dignity of every person and the intrinsic value of every creature, and pray and work for the day when none “labor in vain, or bear children for calamity” (Isa. 65:23). We do so as disciples of the One who came “that [all] may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10), and stand in solidarity with Christians and with all who strive for justice around the globe.

In faith, responding to our Creator, we celebrate the full humanity of each woman, man, and child, all created in the divine image as individuals of infinite worth, by working for:

- Full civil, political, and economic rights for women and men of all races.
- Abolition of forced labor, human trafficking, and the exploitation of children.
- Employment for all, at a family-sustaining living wage, with equal pay for comparable work.
- The rights of workers to organize, and to share in workplace decisions and productivity growth.



- Protection from dangerous working conditions, with time and benefits to enable full family life.
- A system of criminal rehabilitation, based on restorative justice and an end to the death penalty.

In the love incarnate in Jesus, despite the world’s sufferings and evils, we honor the deep connections within our human family and seek to awaken a new spirit of community, by working for:

- Abatement of hunger and poverty, and enactment of policies benefiting the most vulnerable.
- High quality public education for all and universal, affordable, and accessible healthcare.
- An effective program of social security during sickness, disability, and old age.
- Tax and budget policies that reduce disparities between rich and poor, strengthen democracy, and provide greater opportunity for everyone within the common good.
- Just immigration policies that protect family unity, safeguard workers’ rights, require employer accountability, and foster international cooperation.
- Sustainable communities marked by affordable housing, access to good jobs, and public safety.
- Public service as a high vocation, with real limits on the power of private interests in politics.

In hope sustained by the Holy Spirit, we pledge to be peacemakers in the world and stewards of God’s good creation, by working for:

- Adoption of simpler lifestyles for those who have enough; grace over greed in economic life.
- Access for all to clean air and water and healthy food, through wise care of land and technology.
- Sustainable use of earth’s resources, promoting alternative energy sources and public transportation with binding covenants to reduce global warming and protect populations most affected.
- Equitable global trade and aid that protects local economies, cultures, and livelihoods.
- Peacemaking through multilateral diplomacy rather than unilateral force, the abolition of torture, and a strengthening of the United Nations and the rule of international law.
- Nuclear disarmament and redirection of military spending to more peaceful and productive uses.
- Cooperation and dialogue for peace and environmental justice among the world’s religions.

We—individual Christians and churches—commit ourselves to a culture of peace and freedom that embraces non-violence, nurtures character, treasures the environment, and builds community, rooted in a spirituality of inner growth with outward action. We make this commitment together—as members of Christ’s body, led by the one Spirit—trusting in the God who makes all things new.

#### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2004 Referral: Item 08-18. 2004 Referral: Item 08-18. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Celebrating the “Social Creed” of the Churches and Considering a 21st Century Social Creed (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 18, 627–29).*

This rationale begins with the background statement to be printed on two pages with the Social Creed.

#### Toward a New Social Awakening: The Role for a Twenty-First Century “Social Creed of the Churches”

“The Social Creed of the Churches,” endorsed in 1908 by the Federal Council of Churches, was their pledge to work together for a better, fairer, and more faithful United States. One hundred years ago, the explosion of industry and its impact on U.S. society called for a new focus in the churches’ ministry. Those in the churches sensitive to the human costs of industrialization saw in those costs a challenge to the fullness of the gospel, which is both personal and communal in dimension. The Social Gospel movement, evangelical at its heart, inspired by Jesus’ preaching of “the kingdom of God,” was acutely aware of the brutalities of new working conditions, the social tensions of assimilating millions of immigrants, and the loss of communal values in fast-growing cities.

More than one hundred years ago, workers caught in the machinery of early industrialization were ground down by twelve-hour shifts and seven-day workweeks. Families were broken by absent or exhausted parents. Workers with disabilities were summarily dismissed and devalued. Retired workers were left without pensions. Children worked when they should have been at school or at play. At the same time, enormous wealth was generated. That wealth, however, was distributed to a relative few, primarily the owners of industry.

Responding to this changing situation, the churches saw the need to work across denominational lines in pursuit of social change. At the formation of the Federal Council of Churches in 1908, the denominational representatives put in place social principles that were to guide the council's work in the succeeding years. The "social creed" was introduced by Methodist Frank Mason North, who had earlier written the great Social Gospel hymn, "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life." From North's report on "The Church and Modern Industry" was lifted up a section of fourteen principles and policies that were unanimously put into a short statement, the Social Creed, that was repeatedly affirmed, expanded, and adopted by various denominations in future years. It was to be a concise and practical summary of what a "Christ-like God" willed for those seeking "to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor."

Through the Social Creed, the churches declared that they would stand together and work toward addressing the needs of all workers. As a result of their commitment, they were able to influence our country in profoundly good ways. The churches' pledge of support for "the toilers of America" helped to abolish child labor and bring about worker safety, retirement security, health care, unemployment compensation, and more. In that prophetic witness, the churches' leaders anticipated Social Security, the social protections of the New Deal, and more recent health and environmental protections. For these reasons, they deserve our thanks for their brave witness and our celebration of it by making a new commitment in the twenty-first century. It is also highly appropriate that the National Council of Churches of Christ, successor to the Federal Council, claim this heritage.

Similar economic problems persist today: injustice in the workplace, growing social inequities, and the intolerably high percentage of people living in poverty in the United States and in other nations. The majority of people around the world do not have access to adequate health care. Workers worldwide continue to earn low wages, fear occupational hazards and the loss of employment or other penalties when they need or use time to care for family members. These and many other problems call to the Christian conscience and to the moral imperative in every human heart.

However, in the twenty-first century we are also confronting complex new issues that reach beyond economics and call for unprecedented global cooperation and new governance structures. Some challenges seem greater, as the costs and consequences of war and the persistence of racism meet massive environmental degradation. Global warming threatens our very existence. We recognize more clearly divisions of wealth etched along lines of race and gender, and an undeniably "racialized" U.S. criminal justice system. Too many people seem resigned to accept the present shape of our global market system and fail to see that any alternatives may exist. The responsibilities of both governments and citizens for the common good are often ignored or denied. Divisions between the rich and the poor grow wider by the day. In too many places, corruption in politics rises steadily and government competence declines. Based on enduring Christian principles, we seek to address these and other challenges in a coherent and hope-filled way.

We celebrate earlier efforts best by extending the ecumenical witness for justice in the workplace, promoting greater social equality, and reducing poverty. In hope that we too can affect change, we call upon concerned Christians to pledge their commitment to a new venture of cooperation through "A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century." This Social Creed remains concerned with economic issues but also addresses issues that fell outside the earlier reformers' line of vision. This is not a doctrinal creed; it is a shared affirmation that points to the heritage of redemptive energy and theological ethics in every faith tradition. Many elements recall the 1908 Social Creed; "the living wage," the "abolition" of child labor, "the abatement of poverty," the concern for public goods and laws, and the one-page framework that makes for maximum usability.

"A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century" is strongly grounded in God's promises of life in abundance for us and the whole creation and focused on the themes of globalization and sustainability. It is more explicitly theological than the 1908 statement, and reflects the churches' learnings from Christian Realism and Liberation Theologies, and from the strong resource of ecumenical social thought. It joins a public conversation with international ecumenical declarations, several U.S. "covenants," and the Millennium Goals and Earth Charter associated with the United Nations. It is also written in the face of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the danger of additional war in the Middle East and elsewhere. It is written to build consensus in the United States, and does not address every current issue.

Language chosen for the creed may be seen as optimistic by some, but is intended to express the gospel conviction that real freedom and power in life consist in sharing, rather than in an abundance of things. The gospel stories witness to Jesus' prophetic challenge to the established social and economic order. Jesus of Nazareth came not to be served, but to give his life for others: his life and example still challenge us to confront injustice and preach the Good News. By supporting "A Social

Creed for the Twenty-First Century,” the endorsing church bodies and individual Christians affirm that the moral vision and tradition of action identified with the Social Creed of 1908 can help guide our ministries in the decades ahead.

#### Assignment from the 2004 General Assembly, Reaffirmed in 2006

The 216th General Assembly (2004) considered and unanimously approved by voice vote, with amendment, a commissioners’ resolution on celebrating the centennial of the “Social Creed of the Churches” adopted in 1908 at the founding of the Federal Council of Churches, and considering the preparation of a new Social Creed for the twenty-first century (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 18, 627–28). A final report was envisioned for the 218th General Assembly (2008), incorporating a proposal for broader participation and educational and liturgical resources from the 217th General Assembly (2006). This is in answer to that request.

The action of the 216th General Assembly (2004) was in three parts, consistent with the ecumenical, ethical, and educational nature of the original Social Creed (re-printed following this brief narrative).

1. The Office of the General Assembly was directed to consult with ecumenical partners and the National Council of Churches and other appropriate bodies to find ways to honor the role of the churches in advocating an end to child labor, a six-day week, occupational safety, retirement security, a living wage, and other concerns that “a Christ-like God” was believed to want for all Americans.

2. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy was directed to initiate a survey of key Christian principles to guide twenty-first-century Presbyterians and others in addressing major concerns such as the lack of health insurance, the outsourcing of jobs to countries without human rights or environmental safeguards, and the impact of growing economic inequality on our democracy. It was urged, in doing this, to utilize the Presbyterian Panel, literature surveys, volunteer experts, and past General Assembly statements.

3. Both bodies were directed, in cooperation with the Office of Theology and Worship, to develop ways to celebrate the centennial and to consider the possible goals, basic commitments, and value of an updated social creed for the twenty-first century.

#### The Social Creed Resolution Study Team

The ACSWP appointed a Social Creed Resolution Study Team that included the following persons: Gary Dorrien, Nile Harper, Carrie L. Harris, Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, Ann Rhee Menzie, Richard Poethig, Ronald Stone, Lidia Serrata-Ledesma (chair), with Eugene TeSelle as a consultant historian. Patricia Chapman was added to the study team in 2006. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy thanks them for their service and also thanks the many congregations and individuals who discussed the text and provided comments.

The members of the study team represented a broad base of experience and insight, with several experts on church life and witness at the turn of that earlier century and others unfamiliar with what was once a very influential stance of the church (updated four times!). The team reviewed a collection of the previous social creeds and several commentaries on these materials, hearing from several historians and ethicists. The relation of the “social creed” as a form of theologically grounded social witness was contrasted with the short foundational ecumenical creeds of the early church, including the Nicene and Apostles’ Creed in *The Book of Confessions*.

The Reformation Era and twentieth century confessions in *The Book of Confessions* themselves contain much ethical instruction on work and commerce drawn from Scripture: any twenty-first century update of the Social Creed needed to be consistent with that base and more recent General Assembly policy studies. The Office of Theology and Worship confirmed that any “social creed” would not be considered a doctrinal creed, and found the current text to reflect the basic theology of the church.

The resolution team also approved a Presbyterian Panel questionnaire circulated in November of 2005, asking for the views of that balanced sample of ministers and elders on the kinds of topics considered in 1908 and in subsequent work of the church, including the 1983 study of the church’s relations with transnational corporations (by which many more Presbyterians are employed than were a century ago). The results of the Presbyterian Panel (posted on the ACSWP website: <http://www.pcusa.org/acswp/socialcreed.htm>) show strong support for virtually all the positions later embodied in the Social Creed. The study group was convinced that it would be worthwhile to prepare a new Social Creed for the twenty-first century in conjunction with the celebration of its predecessor, thereby illuminating consistent social values and concerns of the church.

While this conviction was developing among Presbyterians, the United Methodist Church also determined that the centennial of the 1908 creed was worth commemorating and, through its Board of Church and Society, appointed a task force

chaired by Bishop Susan Morrison to coordinate that work. Similarly, within the Justice and Compassion Unit of the National Council of Churches, a task force was put together, chaired by Dean Michael Kinnamon of Eden Theological Seminary (a Disciples of Christ minister), including members from the Coptic Orthodox, Methodist, Reformed, United Church of Christ, and Roman Catholic Churches, staffed by a National Baptist. Professor Kinnamon was subsequently elected general secretary of the NCCC.

Acknowledging the different ways these and other communions may lay claim to the Social Creed tradition and formulate its relevance for today, the Presbyterian team invited the others to schedule their meetings with some overlap at a common location in March of 2006. Copies of the 1908 and 1972 Methodist Social Creeds flank the main inside door to their Washington Office building. Both texts are regularly re-printed with their updated Social Principles. Partly because of this regular tradition, and partly to attract a younger audience, they determined to celebrate the Social Creed centennial with a more poetic version that could be put to music. This was seen as a complement to the Presbyterian and ecumenical consensus document that Methodists strongly supported in the NCCC process.

#### The Presbyterian Heritage, Christian Cooperation, and Growing Convergence

While Presbyterians, Methodists, and the other denominations can take pride in having spoken clearly on matters of great social importance years before our constructive proposals were enacted into law, the centennial is not simply to celebrate our being “right” or “ahead of our time.” The 1908 Social Creed was part of a Social Gospel creativity that continued in Christian Realist form after World War I, providing Christian vision of a fairer, more stable economy even during the “Great Depression.”

The Presbyterian church was the first denomination to set up a national-level ministry to workers and immigrants in 1903, which was praised and imitated by other denominations. That office was directed by Charles Stelzle who also developed the Labor Temple for ministry and outreach to workers. General Assemblies of the PCUSA approved adaptations of the Social Creed in 1910, 1914, 1920, and 1932. Then, after World War II, the church both grew and spoke prophetically on justice issues, including racial equality. Marshal Scott, following a mandate from the 1944 General Assembly, established the Presbyterian Institute of Industrial Relations (PIIR) at McCormick Theological Seminary in 1945, directed by Scott and later by Richard Poethig; it trained a diverse body of ministers and some laypersons committed to research and action for social justice, particularly in industrial and urban areas. Scott and Henry Jones also extended this work internationally through the urban-industrial mission of the Council on Ecumenical Mission and Relations (COEMAR). The PIIR and the international dimension were then united in the Institute on the Church in Urban Industrial Society (ICUIS), linked to the World Council of Churches and also based at McCormick Seminary. This is not to minimize the sincere spiritual struggle of Christians on all sides of the social changes of the twentieth century, but to affirm an impressive institutional and educational commitment to relate Christianity to business and labor.

It is worth including in the celebration of the Social Creed a fiftieth anniversary, that of the First Asian Conference on Industrial Evangelism held in Manila, Philippines, in June 1958. That event brought folks from fifteen Asian countries who were engaged with industrial workers and their unions in their countries and led to deeper understanding of the working poor overseas. The movement spread and became a major focus for the Christian Council of Asia and became a global network with work in Africa and Latin America. The World Council of Churches (WCC) picked it up in the early 1960s and organized an urban-industrial desk that tied all of the networks together. The current head of the WCC, Sam Kobia of Kenya, came out of this network.

General Assemblies of all three predecessor churches now reunited made many strong statements during the last century, brought together in the current Presbyterian Social Witness Policy Compilation (see Advisory Committee website: <http://www.pcusa.org/acswp>). Few statements have had the impact of the original Social Creed, influencing the presidential election context in 1912, for example, and pre-figuring much important legislation protecting workers, persons with disabilities, and retired persons. In 1933, at the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of the Federal Council of Churches, President Franklin Roosevelt commended the churches for their social teaching. Subsequent church witness, however, has not only influenced legislation but included the development of creative programs, such as Hunger, Peacemaking, and Self-Development of People. Newer church efforts encourage investments in ecologically safe development enterprises and purchases of “sweat-free” and “fair-trade” products.

General Assemblies (and many congregations and members) have also endorsed campaigns for economic and social justice that have been both controversial and effective: the Taco Bell boycott, protest against Talisman Oil in Sudan, corporate responsibility efforts including selective divestment from South Africa to help end apartheid, and support for Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in South Africa and several countries in Central America. The Social Creed concept is not a specific campaign like these, but an expression of core Christian values and goals for how we treat each other in economic and social life. The advocacy and social service efforts by this denomination and others suggest that our members appreciate both strategic and “hands-on” ways to promote justice; the updated Social Creed can help affirm these concerns in a concise set of clear Christian commitments.

Many self-described evangelicals in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and others are equally concerned with issues of economic justice. Jim Wallis of the Sojourners Community is filling churches or auditoriums wherever he speaks. The Sojourners/Call to Renewal “Covenant for a New America,” while considerably longer than the one page Social Creed, focuses on solutions to the scandal of poverty in the United States. The National Association of Evangelicals adopted on October 7, 2004, a statement entitled, “For the Health of the Nation: An Evangelical call to Civic Responsibility,” and sponsored a book edited by Ronald J. Sider and Diane Knippers, entitled *Toward an Evangelical Public Policy* (BakerBooks, 2006). Similarly, a strong collection of essays on the new Social Creed, *To Do Justice: Engaging Progressive Christians in Soul Action*, edited by Presbyterian scholars Rebecca Todd Peters and Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty (Westminster/John Knox, 2008), both revisits and expands upon themes of the Social Gospel for this new century.

Finally, in the twenty-first century we are increasingly aware of what is being said by Roman Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and secular movements. The new Social Creed is intentionally more inclusive than was the 1908 Social Creed itself, putting an essential commitment to racial and gender equality in the first of its points. We note the “Covenant with Black America,” developed out of annual forums on “The State of Black America” organized by radio and television personality Tavis Smiley. A multi-faith effort, *A Spiritual Covenant for America*, has been developed by Rabbi Michael Lerner. All uses of “covenant” language indicate the desire for something stronger than a social contract, and recall the comprehensive work of Robert N. Bellah and others in *The Broken Covenant* (1975), *Habits of the Heart* (1985), and *The Good Society* (1991). Yet, in this pluralistic and globalizing environment, the advisory committee and its study team believe it is all the more important for any new social creed to be an expression of Christian conviction, reflective of Christ’s Good News to all people—thus the decision to join with Protestant and Orthodox Christians in the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC) to show a unity of Christian conviction and to strengthen the impact of new Social Creed.

#### A Positive Statement of What the Churches Stand For

The Social Creed of 1908 was not perfect, and reflected the limits of our church leadership of the time. While it dealt sympathetically with the problems faced by labor, including women and children and immigrants, its perspective was white, Protestant, and middle class. Our predecessors not only wanted to help lift up those less fortunate, but to give them Sabbath time for worship and family life, free from desperation and degradation. This spirituality was part of its effectiveness, despite its not mentioning other major issues such as lynchings in the South, the Prohibition cause, or support for women’s suffrage. The work of Presbyterian historian, Ronald C. White, *Liberty and Justice for All* (Westminster/John Knox, 2002), has illuminated the support for racial justice among Social Gospel leaders and the role of Black Social Gospelers, arguably including the early W.E.B. Dubois. We would be wise to remember A Brief Statement of Faith’s word that we “hear the voices of those long silenced” as we seek to address effectively the mainstream of our culture.

Allowing for—and seeking to minister to—a very changed context, the new Social Creed follows the example of the 1908 Social Creed in its positive phrasing of what the churches stand “for.” In its ongoing study of globalization, the advisory committee is aware of the statements of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), meeting at Accra, Ghana, in 2004, and the World Council of Churches’ “AGAPE” document received at its February 2006 assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil. These are passionate statements of Christian solidarity in the face of economic globalization pressures and enormous suffering among the poor in many countries. Those affirmations illuminate our understanding of discipleship in world perspective, but they are not the relatively short statement of Christian goals and principles that is a social creed. The ACSWP continues to prepare a study guide for the 2006 General Assembly resolution, “Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability,” and, as a member of the WARC, participates in the Covenanting for Justice program examining the implications of the Accra Confession (which was received by the 217th General Assembly (2006)).

As the new Social Creed and its background statement note, globalization provides a context similar to what industrialization provided for the original Social Creed. Much of the U.S. economy is now “post-industrial,” based on information and seeking maximum flexibility in trading relationships. Back then, transportation advances added to the productivity of new inventions; today technological advance is still crucial, but the cyber-mobility of capital has vastly overshadowed the influence of labor. State socialism, in Marxist and non-Marxian forms, is now largely gone, but most developed nations have many more social protections and social equality than the United States, with approximately a seventh of our population in poverty and almost one sixth without health insurance. Then the task of reformers was to deal with national problems and gain laws and regulations at the national level; now it is also to deal with transnational problems and seek transnational solutions.

The place of the “mainline” Protestant church has also changed, though the resolution team does not disparage either the potential impact or the concern for integrity that “our” voice still carries. We know many are discouraged about the future, torn between self-doubt and ideological denial of the suffering of others. It is certainly not possible in any one statement by one or more churches to recapture the courageous optimism of the Social Gospel movement, some of whose leaders had as much utopian hope as egalitarian outrage. United States citizens today, in comparison to citizens of most other countries, feel greater insecurity about terrorism and the economic impact of trade and budget deficits. Corruption and cronyism also seem

pervasive at the top levels of corporations and government, which leads to a moral cynicism at unshared sacrifices, especially by those involved in the Iraq war. Illegal immigrants, totaling as many as twelve million, though resented by some, also bear large burdens in the low wage sector of the economy. All of these topics are complex: the challenge in a social creed is to focus on the moral issues and affirm constructive directions that reflect the hope of the Gospel.

One successful example of the input of church witness around an old social creed concept is the “Let Justice Roll” movement to increase the minimum wage to what the Social Creed calls a “living wage.” In the 2006 election, all six states that had a “living wage” referendum on their ballots passed them, yielding literally millions of dollars for the working poor and helping to get Congress to increase the national minimum wage.

The Social Creed of 1908 came relatively late in what is called The Progressive Era so that it built consensus on some matters that had been struggled over since the 1880s. It did not give full expression to the sense of outrage and moral demands that had given rise to the era; neither did it say all that could have been said about Jesus’ teachings and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. We also cannot speak to every social concern of our time, but present a holistic vision and one explicitly grounded in Christian faith. Focused as it was, however, the original Social Creed influenced the way Christians and others saw the world of work. Most of the churches’ stands seemed reasonable and decent and were enacted into law—in some cases after being struck down at first by a very conservative Supreme Court. Other elements in that 1908 statement still await fulfillment. Times do change, and expectations of government and corporations and individuals and churches and climates change.

A centennial offers an opportunity to reflect on the process of change, perhaps to count the blessings of some progress, and perhaps also to count the cost of new efforts. The invitation of the commissioners of this 218th General Assembly (2008), should the recommendations above be approved, is that we remember an insightful and encouraging act of witness, and that we try to offer a similar statement of conviction and hope to our time, and to our God.

#### Appendix A

##### The Social Creed of 1908 Federal Council of Churches [Now, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.]

We deem it the duty of all Christian people to concern themselves directly with certain practical industrial problems. To us it seems that the Churches must stand—

For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life.

For the right of all men to the opportunity for self-maintenance, a right ever to be wisely and strongly safe-guarded against encroachments of every kind.

For the right of workers to some protection against the hardships often resulting from the swift crisis of industrial change.

For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions.

For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational disease, injuries and mortality.

For the abolition of child labor.

For such regulation of the conditions of toil for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

For the suppression of the “sweating system.”

For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practical point, and for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.

For a release from employment one day in seven.

For a living wage as a minimum in every industry, and for the highest wage that each industry can afford.

For the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised.

For suitable provision for the old age of the workers and for those incapacitated by injury.

For the abatement of poverty.

To the toilers of America and to those who by organized effort are seeking to lift the crushing burdens of the poor, and to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor, this council sends the greeting of human brotherhood and the pledge of sympathy and of help in a cause which belongs to all who follow Christ.

## Appendix B

### Policy Bases for the Affirmation of the 2008 Social Creed

The following synopsis of General Assembly policies approved by either by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and/or its predecessors provide the policy bases for the affirmations contained in the 2008 Social Creed.

- A. Full civil, political, and economic rights for women and men of all races.
- From the *Resolution on Racial Injustice in Times of Economics* (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1982, Part I, pp. 109, 425).
  - From *God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience* (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, pp. 85, 572).
  - From *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development* (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 107, 109–10, 529–30).
- B. Abolition of forced labor, human trafficking, and the exploitation of children.
- From the *Report of the Research Team on the Review of the Situation of Prostitution Around Military Bases* (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 39, 585).
  - From the *Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability* (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 828).
  - From *On Condemning International Trafficking in and Sexual Exploitation of Children—From the Synod of the Northeast* (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 994–97).
- C. Employment for all, at a family-sustaining living wage, with equal pay for comparable work.
- From the *Resolution on Welfare and Poverty* (*Minutes*, 1997, Part I, pp. 42–43, 554).
  - From *A Report on Economic Security for Older Adults* (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 814).
  - From the *Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability* (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 827).
- D. The rights of workers to organize, and to share in workplace decisions and productivity growth.
- From *God's Work in Our Hands: Employment, Community, and Christian Vocation* (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 55, 59, 426).
- E. Protection from dangerous working conditions, with time and benefits to enable full family life.
- From *Transforming Families* (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 757).
  - From the *Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability* (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 828).
- F. A system of criminal rehabilitation, based on restorative justice and an end to the death penalty.
- From *Commissioners' Resolution 91-8. On Promoting Humane and Effective Law Enforcement* (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, pp. 100, 106, 1031).
  - From the *Resolution on Police Accountability* (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, pp. 51, 235).
  - From *Overture 00-90. On Seeking an Immediate Moratorium on All Executions in All Jurisdictions That Impose Capital Punishment—From the Presbytery of Western Reserve* (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, pp. 51, 476).
  - From the *Resolution on Restorative Justice* (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, pp. 73, 576–77).
  - From the *Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Private Prisons* (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 56, 439).
- G. Abatement of hunger and poverty, and enactment of policies benefiting the most vulnerable.
- From the *Resolution on World Food Day* (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp. 115, 545).
  - From the *Resolution: Eradicating Poverty and Improving the Human Habitat* (*Minutes*, 1996, 100, 104, 494–95).

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- From *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (Minutes, 1996, Part I, pp. 107–109, 528–30)*.
- H. High quality education for all and universal, affordable, and accessible health care.
  - From *A Call to Church Involvement in the Renewal of Public Education (Minutes, 1987, Part I, pp. 66–67, 479–82, 485–86)*.
  - From an *Alternate Resolution on Public Education (Minutes, 1995, Part I, p. 60)*.
  - From the *Resolution on Christian Responsibility and a National Medical Plan (Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 100–101, 811)*.
  - From the *Resolution on Managed Care (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 42, 341)*.
- I. An effective program of social security during sickness, disability, and old age.
  - From *A Report on Economic Security for Older Adults (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 813–15)*.
- J. Tax and budget policies that reduce disparities between the rich and poor, strengthen democracy, and provide greater opportunity for everyone within the common good.
  - From the report of *The Special Committee on Federal Tax Reform (Minutes, UPCUSA, 1977, Part I, pp. 73, 114–15, 243–44)*.
  - From *Commissioners' Resolution 23-86. Regarding the 1986 Tax Reform Bill (Minutes, 1986, Part I, p. 875)*.
- K. Just immigration policies that protect family unity, safeguard worker's rights, require employer accountability, and foster international cooperation.
  - From the *Minutes of the 202nd General Assembly (1990) (Minutes, 1990, Part I, pp. 101, 103, 520–21)*.
  - From the *Resolution on Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounter with New Neighbors (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 30, 32, 353–55)*.
  - From the *Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 737–38)*.
- L. Sustainable communities marked by affordable housing, access to good jobs, and public safety.
  - From *Commissioners' Resolution 95-26. On Community Reinvestment (Minutes, 1995, Part I, pp. 71, 75, 732–33)*.
  - From *God's Work in Our Hands: Employment, Community, and Christian Vocation (Minutes, 1995, Part I, pp. 55, 59, 426)*.
  - From the *Resolution on Police Accountability (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 51, 235)*.
- M. Public service as a high vocation, with real limits on the power of private interests in politics.
  - From *God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience (Minutes, 1988, Part I, pp. 85, 572)*.
- N. Adoption of simpler lifestyles for those who have enough; grace over greed in economic life.
  - From *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (Minutes, 1996, Part I, pp. 107–108, 527)*.
- O. Access for all to clean air and water and healthy food, through wise care of land and technology.
  - From the *Resolution on Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice (Minutes, 1990, Part I, pp. 65, 85, 117, 121, 646–47, 664–65)*.
  - From the *Resolution on World Food Day (Minutes, 1990, Part I, pp. 115, 545)*.
  - From *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (Minutes, 1996, Part I, pp. 107–109, 528–30)*.
  - From the *Resolution: Eradicating Poverty and Improving the Human Habitat (Minutes, 1996, 100, 104, 494–95)*.
- P. Sustainable use of earth's resources, promoting alternative energy sources and public transportation with binding covenants to reduce global warming and protect populations most affected.



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- From the *Resolution on Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice (Minutes, 1990, Part I, pp. 65, 85, 117, 121, 646–47, 664–65)*.
- Q. Equitable global trade and aid that protects local economies, cultures, and livelihoods.
- From *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (Minutes, 1996, Part I, pp. 107, 114, 541–43)*.
  - From the *Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 827)*.
- R. Peacemaking through multilateral diplomacy rather than unilateral force, the abolition of torture, and a strengthening of the United Nations and the rule of international law.
- From the *Resolution on Just Peacemaking and the Call for International Intervention for Humanitarian Rescue (Minutes, 1998, Part I, pp. 74–75, 456–59)*.
  - From the *Resolution on the International Criminal Court (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 51, 435, 439)*.
  - From the *Resolution on Human Rights in a Time of Terrorism and Torture (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 867)*.
- S. Nuclear disarmament and redirection to military spending to more peaceful and productive uses.
- From the *Resolution on Disarmament Developments and Challenges (Minutes, 1997, Part I, pp. 42, 45, 584–85)*.
  - From the *Resolution on Small Arms—An Unaddressed Arms Control Issue from Cultures of Violence to Cultures of Peace? (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 55, 274–75)*.
- T. Cooperation and dialogue for peace and environmental justice among the world’s religions.
- From *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (Minutes, 1996, Part I, pp. 107, 109–10, 529–30)*.
  - From the *Resolution on the International Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 55, 278–79)*.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-09

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 09-09 A Social Creed for the Twenty First Century and Recognition of the Centennial of the Social Creed of the Churches’ of 1908.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 09-09 be approved.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-09

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 09-09 is the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s recommendation on the “Social Creed for the 21st Century.”

The Advocacy Committee on Women’s Concerns (ACWC) supports the recommendation to approve “A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century.” While we would like more emphasis on women’s justice issues, we affirm its inclusiveness and support its acceptance. Ecumenical documents require compromise and negotiation. The Social Creed makes bold stances relevant in this new century. We concur in this celebration of our unity and commitment to justice. This document will support the whole body of Christ in mutual study and support our work for a more just world.

## Item 09-10

[The assembly approved Item 09-10 with amendment. See pp. 54, 55.]

*The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008):

1. Approve the study and recommendations, entitled, “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming,” to revise existing energy policy, “The Power to Speak Truth to Power” (hereinafter, referred to as the “1981 Energy Policy”). [The 1981 Energy Policy was jointly adopted by the 121st General Assembly (1981) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1981, Part I, pp. 122, 413–25), and the 193rd General Assembly (1981) of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (*Minutes*, The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1981, Part I, pp. 42, 86, 293–306).]

2. Urge individuals and families in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

a. Pray, asking for God’s forgiveness and for the power and guidance to enjoy and care for creation in new ways.

b. Study energy sources, their advantages and disadvantages, and the impacts they have on human communities, all species, and the ecological systems that support life on Earth.

c. Practice energy conservation as a form of thanksgiving and sharing by adjusting thermostats, walking, biking, carpooling, using mass transit, turning off lights and appliances, recycling, minimizing the use of plastic water bottles and other wasteful packaging, etc.

d. Purchase energy-efficient appliances and fuel-efficient vehicles for use at home and at work.

e. Purchase sustainably grown food and other products from local producers in order to reduce the energy associated with producing, and shipping goods.

f. Reduce consumption of meat because the production of grain fed to most livestock is fossil fuel-intensive and their waste emits methane, which is a potent greenhouse gas.

g. Purchase Green-e certified energy and/or carbon offsets in the pursuit of a carbon-neutral lifestyle. Green-e certification ensures these payments result in additional installations of renewable energy generation capacity as well as verifiable and permanent environmental benefits.

h. Invest personal funds in the renewable energy industry and also in companies that demonstrate concern for the well-being of their workers, their communities, and the environment.

i. Advocate for change and leadership within the church and in all forms of government regarding energy policy and global climate change.

3. With regard to the councils[, governing bodies,] and agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the 218th General Assembly (2008):

a. Urges synods and presbyteries to become models of energy-efficient institutions and proponents of renewable energy by

(1) stocking resource centers with information about energy issues;

(2) working with the New Church Development Committee to ensure that all new and remodeled churches meet high-efficiency standards;

(3) strengthening support for Stewardship of Creation Enablers, inviting them to provide workshops on energy and related concerns, and consulting with them to provide carbon-neutral meeting sites and transportation plans whenever possible;

(4) advocating before local, state, and federal governments for public policies that encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; and

(5) adopting environmental education and energy conservation as high priorities at all Presbyterian camps and conference centers.

b. Urges the “Restoring Creation” program to establish a Presbyterian Green Energy Fund, which would help congregations and other organizations in our church reduce their carbon footprint through investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy production, and Green-e certified carbon offsets.

c. Urges the Office of the General Assembly to make future meetings as carbon neutral as possible (considering climate, travel requirements, amenities, and energy conservation efforts by hotels, conference centers, and academic institutions).

d. Urges the General Assembly Council, the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Board of Pensions to continue to improve the energy efficiency of the Louisville, Jeffersonville, Philadelphia, and other national agency offices.

e. Urges the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to expand efforts to engage businesses on energy efficiency and conservation in manufacturing, transport, and product design; to work with companies on appropriate technology applications, including co-generation, wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, and low-head hydroelectric; to support solutions to the problem of nuclear waste; and to advocate that utilities establish incentives to reduce electricity, oil, and gas usage while also eliminating barriers for small power producers to interconnect with the power grid.

f. Urges the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., to continue to encourage energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies, and new and mixed uses such as adding generating capacity or housing to underused city facilities.

g. Urges presidents of Presbyterian-related colleges and universities to consider becoming a signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, which obligates these schools to become carbon neutral in the future and to integrate sustainability into the curriculum.

h. Urges Presbyterian-related seminaries and conference centers to make environmental education on global climate change and energy a part of their curricula; to take measures to reduce energy consumption; and to encourage holistic thinking about the relationships between technology and nature.

i. Urges the Stated Clerk and other people representing the PC(USA) in ecumenical programs and initiatives to explore and develop whenever possible joint statements and studies on energy policy with other communions or councils of communions, and the General Assembly agencies to join in appropriate coalitions with non-church bodies to reinforce these measures of practical discipleship.

4. Concerning the church’s social responsibility regarding U.S. energy policy, the 218th General Assembly (2008):

a. Endorses and approves the following principles and stances that will guide our church’s advocacy work regarding policy discussions and legislative proposals to revise energy policy in the context of global climate change:

With our Lord, we will stand with “the least of these” (Matt. 25:40) and advocate for the poor and oppressed in present and future generations who are often the victims of environmental injustice and who are least able to mitigate the impact of global warming that will fall disproportionately upon them.

As citizens of the United States, which has historically produced more greenhouse gases than any other country, and which is currently responsible for over a fifth of the world’s annual emissions, we implore our nation to accept its moral responsibility to address global warming.

In agreement with four prior General Assemblies (202nd, 210th, 211th, and 215th) that have called on the U.S. government to ratify the Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, we ask the U.S. government to do nothing less than repent of its efforts to block consensus and to work with the international community as it develops a binding agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol when it expires in 2012.

As advocates for justice, we reject the claim that all nations should shoulder an equal measure of the burden associated with mitigating climate change. Industrialized nations like the United States that have produced

most of the emissions over the last three centuries deserve to shoulder the majority of the burden. Rapidly industrializing nations like China and India with very low per capita rates of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions should not be expected to bear an equal share of the burden. Our church challenges all nations to embrace their common but different responsibilities with regard to dealing with climate change.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) supports comprehensive, mandatory, and aggressive emission reductions that aim to limit the increase in Earth's temperature to 2 degrees Celsius or less from pre-industrial levels. Legislation should focus on the short-term goal of reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions 20 percent from 1990 levels by 2020, and 80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050.

In order to achieve these targets, we support legislative and policy proposals that:

(1) Internalize the social and environmental costs related to greenhouse gas emissions in the prices of fossil fuels. A preferred way to capture these costs would be through an initial auction and continued trade of a fixed number of emissions allowances in a "cap and trade" approach applied to all sectors of the economy. Affirming "the polluter pays" principle, emissions allowances should be sold because giving them away simply rewards the largest polluters. While the initial price may need to be low at the outset to avoid adverse economic repercussions, price caps defeat the purpose of harnessing the market to achieve this social and ecological good. A separate tax based on the carbon content of fossil fuels could compliment a cap and trade approach, but it should not replace it because a carbon tax lacks a guaranteed cap on total emissions. Revenues generated from either or both approaches should be utilized nationally to redress the regressive impact of higher energy prices on people who are poor, to increase funds for public transportation, to increase research and development as well as investment in renewable energy, and to encourage the purchase of energy efficient appliances and vehicles. Internationally, the United States needs to contribute funds to help poorer nations adapt to the social dislocation and ecological devastation caused by global climate change.

(2) Shift subsidies and financial incentives toward industries specializing in renewable energy and energy efficiency and away from the fossil fuel and nuclear power industries. One vital step would be to extend for ten years the federal tax credit for production of electricity from wind, solar, geothermal, closed-loop and open-loop biomass, landfill gas, and small irrigation power facilities. Similar incentives at the state and county level should be reauthorized and expanded. Subsidies can also influence personal consumption decisions. For example, "feebates" require purchasers of fuel-inefficient vehicles to pay a fee; these funds are then utilized to offer purchasers of fuel-efficient vehicles a rebate on the purchase price. Federal research and development grants are another important financial incentive. These funds need to be increased, and a much larger percentage must be dedicated to renewable energy, alternative fuels, and energy efficiency. Funding for these measures can be made revenue-neutral by reducing subsidies to the oil, gas, and nuclear power industries.

(3) Adopt significantly increased efficiency standards for all energy consuming appliances, buildings, and vehicles. Recently modest improvements have been made to federal laws regarding the energy efficiency of buildings and appliances as well as the nation's Corporate Automotive Fuel Economy Standards (CAFE). These increases are overdue and much needed, but states like California and New York should not be blocked from raising these standards if they wish to do so. Increased efficiency and fuel economy standards should be based on the best science available and in dialogue with the relevant industries, but ultimately legislated standards are more productive than voluntary goals negotiated with industries. In addition, public scrutiny must be brought to bear on regulatory agencies to ensure that they are insulated from undue industry influence.

(4) Mandate that an increasing percentage of the nation's energy supply be produced renewably and sustainably. More than half the nation's states have adopted renewable portfolio standards that impose differing mandates on energy providers. Not surprisingly, most of the investment in renewable energy production is taking place in these states. Adoption of a 20 percent national Renewable Energy Standard (RES) by 2020 would build on the success in the states. Environmental problems associated with ethanol production related to the federal Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS), however, indicate there can be dangers associated with ratcheting standards up too quickly. Any mandate must ensure that the energy is produced renewably and sustainably.

(5) Remove market barriers for producers of renewable energy. These barriers include expensive and overly complicated requirements for connecting to the electricity grid, insufficient transmission line capacity, and extremely low power purchase rates based on avoided costs from fossil fuel power plants that are not yet accountable for their impact on global warming. Both Germany and Japan have stimulated the renewable energy industry in their nations through requiring net billing and also mandating higher "feed-in" rates. Such measures would stimulate investment in residential solar and wind power in the United States and help

restore the nation as a leader in technological innovation. Other initiatives to expedite transmission capacity are also critical to the expansion of renewable energy in the nation.

(6) **Encourage decentralized and distributed power generation.** Decentralized, residential renewable energy systems, and distributed generation from community wind farms can relieve pressure on the power grid, create new jobs, and empower local communities. State and federal tax credits are one way to encourage investment in decentralized and distributed renewable energy production. Flexible financing schemes are also valuable. The state of Minnesota has pioneered a unique approach to community-based economic development (C-BED), which has resulted in the largest number of community-owned wind farms in the nation.

(7) **Place a moratorium on all new coal-fired and nuclear power plants until related environmental concerns are addressed.** Given the predominant role carbon dioxide plays in global warming and climate change, and given that coal-fired power plants are responsible for 40 percent of the nation's carbon dioxide emissions, it would be irresponsible to build new coal-fired power plants or coal-to-oil technologies until it can be demonstrated that the carbon can be captured economically and sequestered permanently. Similarly, given the extremely toxic danger that spent nuclear fuel poses to future generations for thousands of years, it is irresponsible to build new nuclear power plants until a permanent means of disposing of this waste is placed into service.

(8) **Limit exploration and exploitation of new fossil fuel supplies to parts of the nation where this can be done without adverse damage to people and the environment.** As the climate in the Arctic warms, it is doubtful that the economic benefits of drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge can outweigh the environmental damage that this will do to one of the nation's most beautiful and wild places. Another example of such a limit would be the ecological devastation associated with mountaintop mining in Appalachia.

(9) **Support a systemic shift to rail-based public transportation and urban planning that emphasizes mass transit.** These measures would discourage urban sprawl and the depletion of water and energy resources, especially in the Southwest. Farmland in and around cities should be preserved to maintain and increase the capacity for local food production. Support for public transportation will also require substantial funding to repair the nation's highways, bridges, and dams. Efforts should be focused on increasing the quality of the nation's transportation and energy infrastructure, not on increasing the size of it.

(10) **Revise U.S. national security policies.** Decrease attempts to control oil resources owned by other nations and the profligate use of energy supplies to enforce inevitably temporary as well as massively tragic military interventions. Increase the authority of science-based international standards for addressing the issue of global climate change. Strive to decouple nuclear power from nuclear weapons production so as not to encourage a new round of nuclear proliferation.

b. **Expresses gratitude to climate scientists in government, industry, academia and the United Nations, and to environmental public-interest groups and far-sighted political leaders, for their steadfast commitment to the common good and future welfare of all species.**

c. **Directs the Stated Clerk, the Presbyterian Washington Office, the Presbyterian United Nations Office, the Environmental Justice Office, and other General Assembly representatives to advocate for this approach to national energy policy before Congress, the Executive branch, state legislatures, and regulatory agencies, including those specifically involved in the areas of climate change and international cooperation, with the goal of restoring the United States of America to a leadership position in taking responsibility for reducing the scale and speed of global climate change.**

### *Rationale*

These recommendations and the supporting study document are in response to the following referral approved by the 214th General Assembly (2002): *Overture 02-57. On Revising the Denominational Policy on the Issue of Energy* (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 72 and 596).

### Study Document<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

To imagine the fullness of God is to talk about energy. From beginning to end, the Bible is replete with images of energy and divine activity. In the first verses of Genesis "a wind from God swept over the face of the waters" inaugurating God's creation of the world (Gen. 1:2).<sup>2</sup> In the last chapter of Revelation "the river of the water of life" flows from the throne of

God to water the trees of life which grow along its banks, and whose twelve kinds of fruit are for the healing of the nations (Revelations 22).

Energy is central to God's work as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. In the first creation account God works for six days to create the world, which God proclaims "very good" (Gen. 1:31). The second creation account emphasizes that the first human being (Adam) is created from energy-intensive and life-sustaining humus (adamah) (Genesis 2). God's redeeming and liberating work is also described in dramatic and energetic ways. After parting the Red Sea, God leads the freed Hebrew slaves in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21). The prophet Amos compares God's quest for justice to the powerful force of a waterfall and the might of a raging river that clears everything from its path (Amos 5:24). Finally, God's gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is preceded by "a sound like the rush of a violent wind" after which "tongues, as of fire" rested on each of the disciples (Acts 2:1-3).

God provides energy in abundance for all whom God has made (Ps. 145:15). Both the birds of the air and the fish of the sea first receive the same blessing God bestows on human beings—to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:22). As the people of God wander in the wilderness after the Exodus, God sends "enough" manna each day to sustain the community (Exodus 16). The jubilee legislation in Exodus and Leviticus stressed the needs of the poor and wild animals to eat from fields left fallow every seven years because all creatures are entitled to the energy they need to live. In the Gospel of John, Jesus proclaims that he has come so that all "may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus demonstrates this in the feeding of the five thousand, where all are fed and there are twelve baskets of food left over (Mark 6:39-44). Paul summarizes: "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).

There can be no greater measure of God's abundant provision than the energy provided by Earth's sun. Each hour of every day the sun delivers more energy to Earth than human beings consume in an entire year. Renewable energy sources can provide almost six times more power than human communities currently consume from all energy sources.<sup>3</sup> Unlike virtually all other species, however, human beings in the modern era have not learned how to live in harmony with current solar energy. Instead, human communities have grown and some have prospered over the past three centuries by tapping into banked solar energy that has been buried for millions of years beneath Earth's surface.

Today, heavy reliance on these fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas) has produced grave threats to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. The American Lung Association estimates more than 150 million people in the United States live in areas where poor air quality due to the combustion of fossil fuels puts their health at risk.<sup>4</sup> Those who bear the brunt of this pollution are asthmatics, the elderly, the very young, and those who live nearest polluting industrial facilities or busy highways, generally the poor and often racial minorities. Economically, the rising cost of petroleum fuels has impacted all Americans. The average price of gasoline has more than doubled since 2002, rising to over \$3 a gallon.<sup>5</sup> Persons in low-income households often must choose between paying their energy bills or buying food and medicine. This is unjust.

Politically, various studies estimate that the U.S. spends between \$55 billion and nearly \$100 billion each year on the military to secure oil supplies around the world.<sup>6</sup> These estimates do not include more than \$100 billion spent each year since 2003 for the war in Iraq, which has the world's third largest proven reserves of oil.<sup>7</sup> Recently the National Petroleum Council warned that international energy development and trade are more likely to be influenced by geopolitical considerations and less by market factors.<sup>8</sup> President Bush acknowledged this reality in his 2006 State of the Union address when he remarked: "America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world."<sup>9</sup> Our dependence on fossil fuels is a threat to peace.

There are also serious environmental problems associated with our heavy reliance on fossil fuels. Oil spills around the world despoil waters and harm wildlife. Mountaintop coal mining in Appalachia erodes hillsides, ruins scenic lands, and degrades surface streams and groundwater supplies. Nitrous oxide emissions and particulate matter from fossil fuel combustion play havoc with respiratory systems. Volatile organic compounds in petroleum fuels produce cancers and other diseases. Sulfur dioxide emissions from the burning of coal produce acid rain that destroys forests and significantly reduces agricultural production around the world.

While these are all serious problems, they pale in comparison to the perils posed by global warming and climate change. The related challenges posed by global climate change are unprecedented in human history. If the world takes a business-as-usual approach and continues a fossil fuel-intensive energy path during the 21st century, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects current concentrations of greenhouse gases could more than quadruple by the year 2100. Under this scenario, the IPCC projects the global-average surface temperature will increase 4.0° Celsius (7.2° Fahrenheit) by the end of the 21st century. Put into perspective, the global-average surface temperature only increased 0.6°C (1.1°F) during the 20th century.<sup>10</sup>

This rapid rate of global warming will raise sea levels, endangering millions living in low-lying areas, despoil freshwater resources, widen the range of infectious diseases like malaria, reduce agricultural production, and increase the risk of extinc-

tion for 25–30 percent of all surveyed species.<sup>11</sup> A subsequent report released by the U.S. Climate Change Science Program claims “[w]e are very likely to experience a faster rate of climate change in the next 100 years than has been seen over the past 10,000 years.”<sup>12</sup>

These findings have prompted scientists all over the world to plead for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. James Hansen, the leading climate scientist in the U.S., argues that following a business-as-usual approach for ten more years “guarantees that we will have dramatic climate changes that produce what I would call a different planet.”<sup>13</sup> Nathan Rive of the Center for International Climate and Environmental Research in Oslo writes: “If we are to have a 50 percent chance of meeting a 2° Celsius [3.6° F.] target we would have to cut global emissions by 80 percent by 2050.”<sup>14</sup>

Together with people all around the world, Christians at the outset of the 21st century must respond to this climate crisis by developing a new way of living in harmony with Earth’s energy resources and in solidarity with all of God’s creatures. This moral obligation involves our commitment to the poor and marginalized among the present generation, but it especially includes our responsibilities to future generations. Actions taken or not taken today will impact the welfare of the planet for centuries to come.

Those of us living in the United States have a unique moral responsibility to change our energy consumption practices in the face of global climate change. According to the World Resources Institute, our nation is responsible for nearly 30 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions produced by the combustion of fossil fuels from 1850–2002, and we still lead the world accounting for approximately 23 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions today.<sup>15</sup> The U.S. is also the sixth largest per capita polluter. Only Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Australia, and Bahrain emit more greenhouse gases per person.<sup>16</sup> Each person in the United States produces 24.5 tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year, compared to only 3.9 tons per person in China.<sup>17</sup> There is no question that as a nation, and as individuals, the United States must accept its moral responsibility to deal with the negative consequences associated with fossil fuel consumption and global warming.

Presbyterians in the United States first addressed issues related to energy policy in a comprehensive policy statement adopted in 1981: *The Power to Speak Truth to Power*.<sup>18</sup> This important social policy document elaborated an ethic of ecological justice that attempted to unite in one broad scope of moral concern the ethical obligations Christians have both to present and future generations, as well as to all human and natural communities. Four norms rooted in Scripture and Christian theology were central to this ethic: Justice, sustainability, sufficiency, and participation. Twelve guidelines rooted in these norms were also identified to aid in ethical assessment of energy options: Equity, efficiency, adequacy, renewability, appropriateness, risk, peace, cost, employment, flexibility, timely decision-making, and aesthetics.

The ethic of ecological justice and its related norms were developed further a decade later in 1990 when the PC(USA) approved a major teaching on environmental policy, *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice*.<sup>19</sup> This study recast the norm of justice in terms of solidarity and honed the application of the other norms to environmental issues.

As new scientific studies further confirmed the phenomenon of global warming, and as the prospects grew for a second war in oil-rich Iraq, delegates at the 214th General Assembly (2002) approved a proposal to revise the 1981 policy.<sup>20</sup> The recommendations and accompanying study document, *The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming*, were developed in response to that plea. They utilize the ecojustice norms and energy guidelines to engage in a revised ethical assessment of U.S. energy policy within the context of challenges posed by global warming and climate change.

There are three important truths revealed in the accompanying study document. First, the potential supply of renewable and alternative energy sources far exceeds the current and projected demand from all energy sources. God has truly furnished creation with energy in abundance. Nevertheless, the second truth is that our nation still relies heavily on fossil fuels and nuclear power to provide 93 percent of the energy we currently consume. We are not living sustainably in relationship with God’s creation. This leads to the third, sad truth: Our reliance on these traditional energy sources poses grave dangers to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. In fact, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment in history with regard to global climate change. Scientists warn that global greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced 80 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2050 in order to avert catastrophic consequences associated with global warming.

After this brief introduction, the second part of this study explores in greater detail various problems associated with the heavy use of fossil fuels and the extraordinary challenges posed by global climate change. The third part identifies theological and ethical resources to grapple with these problems, and the fourth part uses these resources to conduct an ethical assessment of U.S. energy options.<sup>21</sup>

The challenges we face are daunting, and to many they appear insurmountable. Certainly our Presbyterian tradition supports a hard-eyed realism with regard to the nexus of issues related to energy policy and global climate change. We do not inventory here the political failures and missed opportunities of the past twenty-five years that have led to greater dependency on fossil fuel and the undermining of science-based regulation in favor of short-term market incentives and market manipulation by companies like Enron. It can be argued that massive subsidies to the coal, oil, gas, and nuclear power industries have

corresponded with a deliberate disinvestment in public transportation and infrastructure, while also retarding the acquisition of technological expertise in the U.S. alternative energy sector. Empowered, however, by a just, good, and gracious God, we must resist the temptation of despair. Among the wealthy and powerful such despondency can be self-serving because it leads to moral paralysis. This “cheap despair” changes nothing and preserves the status quo from which the wealthy and powerful currently benefit. Empowered by God’s costly grace, we must work tirelessly with others as individuals, as a church, and as global citizens to live in harmony with the energy resources God has so abundantly provided.

Only God can give us the power to change. Our Reformed tradition reminds us that it is God who created the earth and saw that it was good, God who sustains the earth and seeks to hold its processes together, God who judges sin and greed, and God who reveals in Jesus Christ that love and justice are the essence of God’s power. God is the inexhaustible source of energy for personal, social, and ecological transformation. Although we are complicit in the evils we face, we can repent of our own sinful misuse and abuse of the Earth as we confess our sins. As recipients of God’s endless mercy, this redemptive energy frees and empowers us to be good stewards of God’s creation.

Energy choices, more than ever, are moral choices. As our planet grows warmer, our Christian witness must become bolder. As individuals, families, congregations, and church administrative bodies, we must become the change we want to see in our nation. We must put our own houses in order even as we call on our nation to accept its moral responsibility with regard to energy policy and climate change. Together we must radically reduce our carbon footprint.<sup>22</sup>

Two years ago, the 217th General Assembly (2006) voted to “strongly urge all Presbyterians immediately to make a bold witness by aspiring to live carbon neutral lives.”<sup>23</sup> Carbon neutrality requires us to reduce energy consumption that releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and to purchase carbon offsets to compensate for those carbon emissions that cannot yet be eliminated. For example, offset funds can be used to plant trees that absorb carbon dioxide; to invest in alternative energy sources; to facilitate energy-efficient design, building and operation of buildings; or to purchase energy-efficient appliances for those individuals or churches that cannot otherwise afford them.<sup>24</sup> The recommendations above emphasize the importance of carbon neutrality for all expressions of our church.

Faced with the nexus of issues related to energy policy and climate change, and guided by the ecojustice norms and energy guidelines, Christian stewardship is expressed in three major areas of responsibility. Our witness begins at the personal level, it must be reflected in the practices and priorities of all organizations in our church, and it culminates in our advocacy for changes in public policy at all levels of government. The above recommendations address each of these dimensions of social responsibility.

### I. Problems Related to Fossil Fuel Energy Sources

Energy is a key factor in advancing well-being and realizing human potential. Advances in the creative and efficient use of modern, fossil fuel energy sources have been at the heart of progress in affluent industrial nations, enabling advances in living standards to levels never experienced before in history. Energy is vital for growing and providing food for the world, for facilitating advances in health technologies, for powering transportation and industry, and for powering the growth of the information and communication revolution. As technologies have advanced, energy costs as a share of economic output have tended to decline. This has created the foundation for sizable growth in living standards, reducing the burden of human toil and turning what were once conveniences into virtual necessities for those in the industrial and industrializing worlds.

Nevertheless, roughly one-third of the world’s population (more than two billion people) still lacks access to adequate supplies of energy, particularly electricity. This lack of access impairs human health and welfare, wastes environmental resources, and limits development in countless ways. For cooking, reliance on inefficient wood stoves leads to emission of large amounts of carbon monoxide and particulate matter, creating high levels of indoor air pollution that induce respiratory illness and shorten lives. Deforestation brings its own tragedies. Without electricity, there is no refrigeration to cool vaccines, no power for lights and computers needed to expand education, and limited connection to the wider world.

While one-third of the world’s population experiences serious problems associated with too little access to modern supplies of energy, all nations are grappling with various problems associated with too much use of fossil fuel energy sources by the rest of the world.

*Social Problems.* Even in the United States, where environmental regulations have slowed the rate of emissions related to the increasing use of fossil fuels, the American Lung Association estimates more than 150 million people live in areas where the air quality puts their health at risk.<sup>25</sup> Health impacts are spread across the United States, but have a particularly harsh effect on vulnerable populations such as asthmatics, the elderly, the very young, and those who live nearest polluting industrial facilities or busy highways, generally the poor and often racial minorities. Each year diesel exhaust alone is responsible for more than 125,000 cancer cases in the United States, and nearly 100,000 Americans die each year from causes attributable to smog.<sup>26</sup> Around the world, the global toll from air pollution is much worse, likely exceeding a million deaths



annually. This is particularly the case if indoor air pollution is included, which has a very significant impact on women and children who spend more time indoors.

Health issues associated with coal mining and the burning of coal to generate electricity are especially sobering. Next to petroleum, coal is the second largest source of energy in the world.<sup>27</sup> Each year more than six thousand coal miners are killed in China's coal mines.<sup>28</sup> Since 1900, more than 100,000 people have been killed in coal-mine accidents in the United States, and black lung disease is estimated to have killed twice as many miners over the same period of time.<sup>29</sup> Accounting for nearly half of all electricity generation, coal-fired power plants in the U.S. produce two-thirds of all sulfur dioxide (the leading cause of acid rain), 22 percent of all nitrogen oxide (a major contributor to smog), approximately 40 percent of carbon dioxide (the principal greenhouse gas), and a third of all mercury emissions (a potent neurotoxin that accumulates in body tissues).<sup>30</sup> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one in twelve women in the U.S. has an unsafe level of mercury in their blood, and that as many as 630,000 babies could be at risk for health problems. The Environmental Protection Agency has issued advisories in forty-four of the fifty states regarding high mercury levels in various kinds of fish.<sup>31</sup>

*Economic Problems.* For various reasons, energy prices have risen sharply in the United States over the past decade. Persons in low-income households (especially elderly residents, the disabled, and children) are most vulnerable to rising costs and often must choose between paying their energy bills or buying food and medicine. Congress created the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in 1981 precisely to address this need. Families receiving LIHEAP assistance must have income below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. Two-thirds of LIHEAP families earn less than \$8,000 per year. Sadly, funding levels for the program have not kept pace with the growing number of households eligible for assistance. In recent years Congress has only authorized sufficient funding to provide LIHEAP assistance for 16 percent of the eligible population.<sup>32</sup>

The rising cost of petroleum fuels has impacted all Americans. The average price of gasoline has more than doubled since 2002, rising to over \$3 a gallon.<sup>33</sup> Since U.S. oil production peaked in the 1970s, imports have been rising steadily to meet demand. Today, the United States imports more than 60 percent of the oil it consumes. Imports of energy-related petroleum products in 2006 cost more than \$290 billion and represented more than 30 percent of the nation's international trade deficit.<sup>34</sup> Spurred by rapidly increasing demand in China, record prices for oil are pushing the U.S. cost of imported oil even higher.

There are other significant costs related to U.S. oil supplies. Various studies estimate that the United States spends between \$55 billion and nearly \$100 billion each year on the military to secure its oil supplies around the world.<sup>35</sup> These estimates do not include more than \$100 billion spent each year since 2003 for the war in Iraq, which has the world's third largest proven reserves of oil.<sup>36</sup> With the number of civilian and military deaths in Iraq approaching 100,000 people, those who mourn the loss of their loved ones remind us that the human toll far exceeds the economic costs of this war.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, when these costs are added to the cost of federal and state subsidies to the oil industry, and combined with estimates of health-care costs related to fossil fuel pollution, some analysts argue that the true cost of a gallon of gasoline at the pump ranges from \$8 to \$11 per gallon.<sup>38</sup>

*Political Problems.* Recently the National Petroleum Council warned that international energy development and trade are more likely to be influenced by geopolitical considerations and less by market factors.<sup>39</sup> President Bush acknowledged this reality in his 2006 State of the Union address when he remarked: "America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world."<sup>40</sup> In recent years, more than half of U.S. oil imports have come from four leading suppliers: Canada (19 percent), Saudi Arabia (12 percent), Mexico (11 percent), and Venezuela (10 percent). Nigeria, Algeria, Angola, Iraq, Russia, and Ecuador round out the other top ten suppliers.<sup>41</sup> While the U.S. enjoys primarily positive foreign relations with its neighbors, Canada and Mexico, it has strained relationships with Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and Russia. In addition, the relationship between blood and oil is all too clear in Iraq's civil war, and it is becoming more apparent as the level of violence and civil unrest grows in nations like Nigeria and Angola where oil wealth is not being spread broadly to all residents of these oil-exporting nations.

Once oil has been extracted from beneath the ground, transporting the oil can lead to another set of political problems. More than half the world's oil passes through a few potential "choke points," including the Suez Canal, the Bosphorus, and the Straits of Hormuz and Malacca.<sup>42</sup> A significant disruption of oil shipments through any of these points could wreak havoc on the world's economy. Nine out of the last ten recessions in the United States were preceded by oil price shocks related to supply disruptions.<sup>43</sup> Many analysts fear that Iran may lay siege to tankers in the Strait of Hormuz if the United States or Israel attack the facilities it has built to enrich uranium.

With demand for natural gas rising around the world, Russia's control of natural gas supplies raises concerns for many nations in Europe and Central Asia. Recently Russia signed a deal to build a pipeline from Turkmenistan through Kazakhstan, which will feed Russia's network of pipelines to Europe. The deal seeks to thwart efforts by the U.S. and other European nations to build oil and gas pipelines that would avoid Russia by connecting to Europe through Azerbaijan and Turkey.

Having recently reduced the flow of natural gas to Georgia and other countries, many European nations fear Russia will use its virtual monopoly over natural gas resources for political purposes.<sup>44</sup>

This brief overview reveals a host of social, economic, and political problems associated with our heavy reliance on fossil fuels. There are also serious environmental problems. Oil spills around the world despoil waters and harm wildlife. Mountaintop coal mining in Appalachia erodes hillsides, ruins scenic lands, and degrades surface streams and groundwater supplies. Nitrous oxide emissions and particulate matter from fossil fuel combustion play havoc with respiratory systems. Volatile organic compounds in petroleum fuels produce cancers and other diseases. Sulfur dioxide emissions from the burning of coal produce acid rain that destroys forests and significantly reduces agricultural production around the world.

## II. Global Warming and Climate Change

While these are all serious problems, they pale in comparison to the unprecedented perils posed by global warming and climate change. After nearly two decades of intensive study, scientists around the world have reached a much greater consensus about these phenomena, their causes, and likely impacts. The United Nations established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988 to review and assess the most recent scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant to climate change. The IPCC has issued reports every five years and issued its Fourth Assessment Report in four installments during 2007. More than 1,200 authors contributed to the report and their work was reviewed by more than 2,500 scientific experts.<sup>45</sup> Since each report for policy makers is approved line-by-line in plenary sessions, the IPCC's findings are arguably the least controversial and most accepted assessments of climate change in the scientific community.

The IPCC Fourth Assessment Report in 2007 finally persuaded many that global warming is real, that it is caused by human activity, and that it will very likely produce climate change in the 21st century that will be unprecedented in human history. The following are some of the key findings reprinted directly from the IPCC reports.

### Human and Natural Drivers of Climate Change<sup>46</sup>

- Global atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have increased markedly as a result of human activities since 1750 and now far exceed pre-industrial values determined from ice cores spanning many thousands of years.
- Carbon dioxide is the most important anthropogenic greenhouse gas. The global atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide has increased from a pre-industrial value of about 280 ppm to 379 ppm in 2005. The atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide in 2005 exceeds by far the natural range over the last 650,000 years (180 to 300 ppm) as determined from ice cores.
- The primary source of the increased atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide since the pre-industrial period results from fossil fuel use, with land use change providing another significant but smaller contribution.
- The understanding of anthropogenic warming and cooling influences on climate has improved since the Third Assessment Report (TAR), leading to *very high confidence* [greater than 90 percent probability] that the globally averaged net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming.

### Direct Observations of Recent Climate Change<sup>47</sup>

- Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global mean sea level.
- Eleven of the last twelve years (1995–2006) rank among the 12 warmest years in the instrumental record of global surface temperature.
- At continental, regional, and ocean basin scales, numerous long-term changes in climate have been observed. These include changes in Arctic temperatures and ice, widespread changes in precipitation amounts, ocean salinity, wind patterns and aspects of extreme weather including droughts, heavy precipitation, heat waves and the intensity of tropical cyclones.
- Average Arctic temperatures increased at almost twice the global average rate in the past 100 years.

Projections of Future Changes in Climate<sup>48</sup>

- Continued greenhouse gas emissions at or above current rates would cause further warming and induce many changes in the global climate system during the 21st century that would *very likely* be larger than those observed during the 20th century.
- Best estimates and likely ranges for globally average surface air warming for six emissions scenarios are given in this assessment. For example, the best estimate for the low scenario is 1.8°C [3.2°F], and the best estimate for the high scenario is 4.0°C [7.2°F].
- Both past and future anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions will continue to contribute to warming and sea level rise for more than a millennium, due to the timescales required for removal of this gas from the atmosphere.

Current Knowledge of Future Impacts<sup>49</sup>

- Drought-affected areas will likely increase in extent. Heavy precipitation events, which are very likely to increase in frequency, will augment flood risk.
- In the course of the century, water supplies stored in glaciers and snow cover are projected to decline, reducing water availability in regions supplied by meltwater from major mountain ranges, where more than one-sixth of the world population currently lives.
- The resilience of many ecosystems is likely to be exceeded this century by an unprecedented combination of climate change, associated disturbances (e.g., flooding, drought, wildfire, insects, ocean acidification), and other global change drivers (e.g., land use change, pollution, over-exploitation of resources).
- Approximately 20–30% of plant and animal species assessed so far are likely to be at increased risk of extinction if increases in global average temperature exceed 1.5–2.5°C.
- Globally, the potential for food production is projected to increase with increases in local average temperature over a range of 1–3°C, but above this it is projected to decrease.
- Many millions more people are projected to be flooded every year due to sea-level rise by the 2080s. The numbers affected will be largest in the mega-deltas of Asia and Africa while small islands are especially vulnerable.
- Poor communities can be especially vulnerable, in particular those concentrated in high-risk areas. They tend to have more limited adaptive capacities, and are more dependent on climate-sensitive resources such as local water and food supplies.

Clearly global warming and related climate change brought on by the combustion of fossil fuels pose grave threats to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. The information provided by the IPCC raises at least two fundamental ethical issues. The first is an intergenerational question: What are our obligations to future generations with regard to reducing or mitigating the challenges posed by climate change? The second is an intragenerational question: How do we equitably distribute responsibility among present generations for meeting our obligations to future generations?

## III. Theological and Ethical Resources

These are not new questions; Presbyterians identified and addressed them more than twenty-five years ago when they adopted *The Power to Speak Truth to Power* in 1981. This important social policy document elaborated an ethic of ecological justice that attempted to unite in one broad scope of moral concern the ethical obligations Christians have both to present and future generations, as well as to all human and natural communities. Four norms rooted in Scripture and Christian theology were central to this ethic: justice, sustainability, sufficiency, and participation. Twelve guidelines rooted in these norms were also identified to aid in ethical assessment of energy options: Equity, efficiency, adequacy, renewability, appropriateness, risk, peace, cost, employment, flexibility, timely decision-making, and aesthetics.

The ethic of ecological justice and its related norms were developed further a decade later in 1990 when the PC(USA) approved a major teaching on environmental policy entitled *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice*.<sup>50</sup> This study recast the norm of justice in terms of solidarity and honed the application of the other norms to environmental issues.

Today we need to apply these norms and guidelines to engage in a revised ethical assessment of U.S. energy policy within the context of challenges posed by global warming and climate change. What follows is a brief summary of the four norms drawn from *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice* as well as a revised description of the twelve guidelines identified in *The Power to Speak Truth to Power*.

#### *Eco-Justice Norms*

*Sustainability* “means ... the capacity of natural systems to go on functioning properly, so the living creatures that belong to these systems may thrive. As a norm for human behavior, sustainability expresses the meaning of God’s call to earth-keeping: Relate to the world so that its stability, integrity and beauty may be maintained .... Sustainability is the capacity of the natural order and the socioeconomic order to thrive together.”<sup>51</sup>

*Participation* “means being included in the social process of obtaining and enjoying the good things of God’s creation. Because the Creator’s intention is that nature’s gifts of sustenance be available to all members of the human family, all have a right and a responsibility to participate. ... If any are excluded, something is unacceptably wrong.”<sup>52</sup>

*Sufficiency* “... insists that all participants be able to obtain a sufficient sustenance ... enough for a reasonably secure and fulfilling life.”<sup>53</sup>

*Solidarity* “means ... vibrant community based on commitment and fidelity. ... [I]t embraces ecological, ethical themes of each individual’s worth and dignity together with the fundamental interdependence and unity with the Creator’s creatures. ... [H]uman beings are all members of one human family ... while belonging also to nature as integral components of one creation.”<sup>54</sup>

These four norms sketch the broad outline of an ethic of ecojustice. The following twelve guidelines help to apply these norms to specific issues related to energy policy and global climate change.

#### *Energy Policy Guidelines*<sup>55</sup>

*Equity* concerns the impact of policy decisions on various sectors of society with special concern for the poor and vulnerable. Burdens and benefits should be assessed and distributed so that no group gains or loses disproportionately.

*Efficiency* is the capability of an energy policy or alternative to provide power with the input of fewer resources. It also means frugality in consumption and a decrease in pollution. New technologies are essential to satisfying this guideline.

*Adequacy* addresses the complex problem of supply. Policies and energy alternatives should be sufficient to meet basic energy needs. The meeting of basic needs takes priority until they are satisfied, then gives way to other guidelines, especially frugality and conservation.

*Renewability* refers to the capacity of an energy option to replenish its source. Reliance on renewable sources should take priority.

*Appropriateness* refers to the tailoring of energy systems to (a) the satisfaction of basic needs, (b) human capacities, (c) end uses, (d) local demand, and (e) employment levels. Energy decisions should lead to a variety of scales and level of technical complexity.

*Risk* concerns the measurable potential of an energy policy or alternative to harm human health, social institutions, and ecological systems. Low risk options are preferable.

*Peace* points to the potential of an energy policy to decrease the prospects of armed conflict. While international cooperation is essential to a sustainable energy future, energy dependence should be avoided to prevent disruption of supplies.

*Cost* refers to monetary costs as well as other social and environmental costs. All costs should be included in the prices consumers pay for energy.

*Employment* concerns the impact of a policy or alternative on employment levels, skills, and the meaningfulness of work. Policies and systems should stimulate the creation of jobs and new skills.

*Flexibility* points to the capacity of policies and options to be changed or reversed. High flexibility is preferable, and systems subject to sudden disruption should be avoided.

*Participation and timely decision-making* refer to the processes used to set energy policies and choose alternatives. Processes should allow for those affected to have a voice without leading to endless procrastination.

*Aesthetics* points to beauty as one aspect of a flourishing life. Policies and alternatives that scar the landscape should be avoided.

#### IV. Assessing Major Energy Options

The four ecojustice norms and twelve energy guidelines provide a means by which to conduct an ethical assessment of the traditional and alternative energy options available to policy-makers.

##### *Traditional, Non-Renewable Energy Sources*

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports that more than 93 percent of the nation's energy is currently provided by coal, oil, natural gas, and nuclear power.<sup>56</sup> Under the EIA's long-term reference case scenario, which assumes present trends will continue, these four sources will grow in volume and continue to supply a similar percentage of energy along with increased greenhouse gas emissions in 2030.<sup>57</sup>

*Coal* remains the chief source of energy to generate electrical power in the United States. Almost 50 percent of the electricity we use comes from coal-fired power plants.<sup>58</sup> Coal is also the most abundant fossil fuel in the world, and the United States has more reserves than any other nation. At current rates of consumption, the nation's coal supply would last more than 250 years.<sup>59</sup> Given this large domestic resource, utilities around the United States have proposed building 151 new coal-fired power plants in order to meet rising demand. The Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration projects that the nation will need 290 new plants to meet projected demand by 2030.<sup>60</sup>

Viewed through the lens of the ecojustice norms and energy guidelines, coal provides the U.S. with a large domestic energy resource that reduces dependency on foreign supplies, provides jobs in the mining, rail, and utility industries, and generates electricity at low economic costs. As the nation's dependency on foreign oil grows, many are also eager to tap the flexibility of this resource by converting coal into a liquid transportation fuel or into synthetic natural gas. These advantages are overwhelmed, however, by the fact that coal is a carbon-intensive fossil fuel whose combustion is producing enormous greenhouse gas emissions. Coal-fired power plants alone produce 40 percent of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions.<sup>61</sup> While these emissions will have a significant and inequitable impact on future generations through global climate change, they also have a deleterious impact on present generations through mercury pollution, acid rain, and the aesthetic destruction of mountain-tops and valleys. Continued dependence on coal-fired electricity generation violates the norms of sustainability and solidarity.

Cognizant of these flaws, the coal and utility industries are promoting a new generation of "clean coal" technologies. In fact, 77 of 151 proposed new power plants intend to utilize one of four different technologies that either improve combustion or gasify coal, thus modestly increasing the efficiency of coal-fired power plants from 38–40 percent to over 50 percent.<sup>62</sup>

The most important technology on the horizon, however, is carbon capture and sequestration (CCS). At some locations around the world, carbon dioxide is already being captured and pumped underground to force more oil out of the ground. The gas is not being sequestered, however. Eventually the gas is free to find its way back to the surface and up into the atmosphere. Given its contribution to global warming and climate change, the only way to responsibly expand coal-based generation in the future will be if the related carbon emissions can be permanently sequestered below ground. Research is under way to accomplish that goal, but even proponents of this technology acknowledge that it is at best fifteen years away from widespread commercial application.<sup>63</sup> Close scrutiny must be brought to bear on this research because concentrations of carbon dioxide pose real dangers to human and ecological health, both for present and future generations. Deep ocean storage risks acidifying water and damaging aquatic ecosystems. Storage underground as a gas poses risks to human populations because carbon dioxide is heavier than air and can cause suffocation at concentrations of 7–8 percent by volume. While it is not known whether it will be possible to sequester carbon dioxide permanently, studies project that CCS will lead to at least a doubling of the cost of coal-fired electricity.

Given the fact that carbon dioxide is the principal greenhouse gas, and that the combustion of coal produces enormous emissions, the ecojustice norms of sustainability and solidarity justify a moratorium on all new coal-fired power plants until it can be demonstrated that carbon capture and sequestration can be done in a verifiable and permanent way. In the mean time, the nation should use the next two decades to reduce demand for electricity by investing in energy efficiency and practicing energy conservation.

*Oil products* like gasoline and diesel fuel the nation's transportation sector and also serve as a primary feedstock in the plastics and chemical industries. Unlike coal, however, the world's proven reserves of oil may not be able to fuel growing consumption demands much longer. United States oil production peaked in the 1970s and many predict that global oil pro-

duction will peak within the next two or three decades, if it has not done so already. Once conventional oil production peaks, it is expected to decline by as much as 3 percent per year.<sup>64</sup> Thus, fifteen years after the peak there could be 45 percent less oil available on the market. This relatively rapid change has the potential to spur inflation, plunge economies into recession, and ignite conflict around the world. While it is possible to extract oil from oil shale and tar sands, and even to convert coal to synthetic petroleum, all of these options are expensive both economically and environmentally. Clearly the world needs to find alternative fuels to power the transportation sector.

A continued reliance on oil violates almost all of the ecojustice norms and energy guidelines. Oil is the largest source of U.S. greenhouse gases, producing 44 percent of the nation's total emissions.<sup>65</sup> Approximately 67 percent of these emissions are attributable to the vehicle transportation sector of the U.S. economy.<sup>66</sup>

While we enjoy the convenience of our cars and drive ever more miles every year, we pass the ecological consequences of our driving on to future generations who have no control over our actions. This clearly violates the norms of sustainability and solidarity. Given the imminent scarcity of oil worldwide, a more efficient use of this vital resource is clearly warranted.

As we have seen, there is a significant link between oil and geopolitics that poses a direct threat to peace, democracy, and equity. United States dependence on oil from the Middle East in particular is ironic, self-defeating, and counterproductive. It is ironic because the U.S. military is the nation's largest consumer of oil. In 2006, the defense establishment spent \$13.6 billion to consume 340,000 barrels of oil per day, representing 1.5 percent of total U.S. energy consumption.<sup>67</sup> The average U.S. soldier in Iraq and Afghanistan daily consumes sixteen gallons of oil either directly or indirectly through the use of Humvees, tanks, trucks, helicopters, and air strikes.<sup>68</sup> It is a bitter irony that some wars in the future may be fought in part to secure the oil to fight them.

United States dependence on Persian Gulf oil is self-defeating because some of the money the U.S. expends to import oil from this region has wound up in the pockets of those committed to sponsoring terrorism around the world. Fifteen of the nineteen terrorists who hijacked planes and crashed them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were citizens of Saudi Arabia. Osama bin Laden is a Saudi and oil money has helped finance Al-Qaeda. In 2005, the U.S. spent nearly \$40 billion to import oil from the Persian Gulf while at the same time it financed a war on terror.<sup>69</sup> To some extent, every gallon of gas we purchase helps fund terrorists.<sup>70</sup>

United States dependence on foreign oil is counterproductive because it often requires the U.S. to do business with nations that do not support democracy. In a recent book, U.S. Congressman Jay Inslee cites Tom Friedman's First Law of Petropolitics: "The price of oil and the pace of freedom always move in opposite directions."<sup>71</sup> Inslee claims "[i]t is not a coincidence that of the ten nations with the largest proven oil reserves ... only one (Canada) is a true democracy."<sup>72</sup> Among the top ten suppliers of oil to the United States are nations like Nigeria and Angola, which are experiencing civil unrest because their oil wealth has not been spread very broadly. In addition, the leaders of two other major U.S. suppliers, Vladimir Putin in Russia and Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, are taking steps to shore up their personal power in ways many believe will undermine democracy in these nations.

Viewed through the lens of the ecojustice norms and the energy policy guidelines, there is little question that reducing U.S. dependence on oil in general, and Persian Gulf oil in particular, need to become national priorities.

*Natural gas* is the most desirable fossil fuel because it is about half as carbon intensive per unit of energy as coal or oil, and it is a highly flexible resource that can be utilized in a variety of end uses and sized to scale. Prices for natural gas have risen sharply in recent years, in part due to market manipulation by companies like Enron, but mostly because of the increase in natural gas-fired electricity generation. Utilities have invested in gas-fired power plants for various reasons. They are ideal for responding to peak-load demands throughout the year because they can be brought on-line quickly. In addition, they are more economical to build than coal-fired or nuclear power plants and it is also easier for utilities to secure the necessary environmental permits. This increased demand for natural gas due to electrical generation has driven up the cost of heating homes and businesses as well as the cost of production in agriculture and other industries where natural gas serves as an important energy source or chemical feedstock.

Application of the energy guidelines produces a mixed assessment of natural gas. On the one hand, it is far less polluting than the other fossil fuels, it is a very flexible resource, and it plays an important role in the economy. On the other hand, domestic production lags behind consumption, the majority of global supplies are unevenly concentrated in the Middle East and Russia, and thus the potential for conflict will increase over access to this valuable energy resource. The United States now imports a growing percentage of natural gas from Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean—increasingly in the form of liquefied natural gas, which is dangerous to transport and vulnerable to terrorists. As with oil, experts predict global production will peak in the first half of this century and be followed by even higher prices.

The ecojustice norms of sustainability and sufficiency require us to use this valuable resource wisely as a bridge to a future in which fossil fuels play a diminishing role. Key to this effort will be to replace the role natural gas plays in electricity

generation with investments in renewable energy generation. While it is possible to gasify coal and to process methane hydrates sequestered on the ocean floor into natural gas, it would be more prudent to capture and utilize methane that is already being emitted into the atmosphere via livestock and landfills because methane is twenty-one times more potent a greenhouse gas than is carbon dioxide.<sup>73</sup>

*Nuclear power* is undoubtedly the most controversial of the traditional energy sources in the United States. Currently 104 commercial reactors produce 19 percent of the nation's electricity and serve approximately fifty million people.<sup>74</sup> Together with coal-fired power plants, these facilities are the backbone of the nation's base-load electricity supply. While no new reactors have come on-line since 1996, more than two dozen are now on the drawing boards due to a variety of tax, insurance, and production subsidies made available to the industry via the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005.<sup>75</sup>

Faced with the prospect of rapid climate change, the primary strength of nuclear power is that it produces virtually no greenhouse gas emissions once reactors are operational and construction is completed. While construction costs are very high, operational costs have been relatively low. In addition, while the region around Chernobyl in Russia had to be abandoned and cordoned off due to high radiation levels, the nuclear power industry in the United States has never suffered such a major catastrophe. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission proudly emphasizes that there has been no loss of life associated with the operation of the nation's commercial nuclear reactors in the history of the industry.

The primary weakness of nuclear power is that the United States has not figured out how to dispose of the highly radioactive toxic waste that is produced by the reactors. Spent fuel rod assemblies are piling up in cooling ponds and in above-ground storage casks at two-thirds of the reactors around the nation because the federal government has failed to open an underground geological repository to receive this waste. While Congress mandated that Yucca Mountain in Nevada become the site for this facility, its original opening in 1998 has been postponed several times and now is slated to open no sooner than 2017. If and when it does open, the facility will be too small to accommodate the amount of spent nuclear fuel produced to date.

The energy guidelines illuminate additional concerns related to nuclear power. Recent discoveries of steel embrittlement and leaks of tritium into groundwater supplies from aging reactor facilities raise concerns about the safety risks associated with operating these facilities beyond the length of their original operating licenses. While reactor facilities are heavily guarded, many fear what would happen if terrorists managed to damage a reactor or casks entombing spent fuel rods outside the reactor building. Others ask whether nuclear power is an appropriate way to produce the steam used to propel the generators that produce electricity. The complexity and danger of this energy source are so great that it is regulated by an independent body within the federal government, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Advocates within the industry point to new reactor designs that should make nuclear reactors much safer to operate in the future.<sup>76</sup> Some also encourage the United States to reprocess its spent nuclear fuel in order to reduce the waste burden and to recycle the energy that remains in spent fuel rod assemblies. President Jimmy Carter abandoned reprocessing in the 1970s over concerns about nuclear proliferation and because he believed it was too expensive. The federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 reversed this policy by authorizing \$580 million for research and development of nuclear reprocessing and transmutation processes.<sup>77</sup> Recently the Department of Energy announced that it would remove nine metric tons of plutonium from hundreds of the nation's nuclear warheads and refabricate the plutonium into a mixed uranium and plutonium oxide (MOX) fuel that can be burned in commercial nuclear reactors.<sup>78</sup>

France reprocesses more than one thousand metric tons of spent fuel every year from its fifty-nine reactors, but it never built breeder reactors that were supposed to burn up the plutonium and other high level nuclear waste left over after reprocessing. With breeder reactors out of the picture, France is burning a MOX fuel that consists of 8 percent plutonium and 92 percent depleted uranium in the nation's reactors. One of the problems, however, is that MOX fuel has almost five times as much plutonium as enriched uranium fuel, which increases the risk of unexpected chain reactions during operation and reprocessing. In addition, spent MOX fuel is three times as hot as spent uranium fuel and thus needs to be placed in cooling ponds for 150 years before it can be placed in an underground waste repository like Yucca Mountain. These used fuel assemblies are starting to pile up at France's reprocessing facility in La Hague and have as yet no permanent home in an underground geological repository.<sup>79</sup>

Given the extremely toxic nature of high-level nuclear waste, the ecojustice norm of solidarity and the energy guideline of equity require that the long-term waste issue be resolved. It is not fair to burden future generations with highly toxic waste. At the same time, the norm of sustainability and the adequacy guideline remind us that nuclear power provides a significant amount of our electricity supply today and does not produce greenhouse gas emissions that imperil generations in the future. Like natural gas, it may be best to view nuclear power as a resource that can bridge the gap to a more sustainable energy future. Unless and until the waste issue can be resolved, however, it would be best to bring intense scrutiny to bear on proposals to re-license existing reactors and to put a moratorium on the construction of new reactors. If the waste and related safety issues cannot be resolved with a very high degree of confidence and integrity, nuclear power should be phased out.

*Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources*

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports that only 7 percent of the nation's energy supply is currently provided by renewable energy sources. Of this total, biomass (48 percent) and hydroelectric power (42 percent) lead the way, followed by geothermal (5 percent), wind (4 percent), and solar (1 percent).<sup>80</sup> Under the EIA's long-term reference case scenario, which assumes present trends will continue, renewable energy sources will grow in volume but still represent only 8 percent of the nation's energy supply in 2030.<sup>81</sup> If changes are made in national energy policy, however, the EIA projects that 25 percent of the nation's electricity supply and transportation fuels could be produced renewably by 2025.<sup>82</sup> Globally, the European Renewable Energy Council and Greenpeace International claim "renewable energy, combined with the smart use of energy, can deliver half of the world's energy needs by 2050."<sup>83</sup>

Not surprisingly, energy efficiency and renewable energy sources fare better than fossil fuels and nuclear energy when assessed in light of the ecojustice norms and energy policy guidelines. For example, sustainability is emphasized when we take advantage of the renewable energy resources offered by the sun and the geothermal energy from the earth. The norm of sufficiency is well addressed through efforts to promote energy conservation and efficiency. Solidarity and equity are enhanced as the burden of greenhouse gas emissions are reduced for future generations. Investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency should also improve the prospects for peace by increasing domestic energy supplies and by diminishing reliance on nuclear energy and the risks it poses. Finally, the norm of participation is expressed through individual acts of energy conservation and the prospect renewable energy technologies offer for decentralized power generation. Proponents claim millions will benefit from the boom of new jobs in the renewable energy sector.

There are certainly areas of concern, however. Since renewable energy sources currently provide so little supply both nationally and globally, will they have the capacity to meet demand with an adequate and sufficient supply in the future? Access to affordable energy sources is vital to human well-being. There are also concerns about the environmental consequences of some approaches to renewable energy production. For example, corn-based ethanol currently requires large amounts of fossil fuel inputs, is water intensive, and increases the risk of soil erosion. Debates also whirl around whether the cost of new renewable energy technologies will have a regressive impact on the poor and possibly plunge national economies into recession. Finally, aesthetic concerns are rising as more and larger wind turbines occupy greater swaths of land.

With this general assessment in mind, we turn now to explore the potential of specific alternative and renewable energy sources in greater detail.

*Energy Conservation and Efficiency* offer the U.S. the most substantial and immediate ways to maximize supplies and decrease annual greenhouse gas emissions. Energy conservation taps the moral virtue of frugality and seeks to make wise use of God's precious energy resources through behavioral changes in lifestyle practices. Energy efficiency utilizes available technology to use less energy to produce goods and services. Taken together, energy conservation and energy efficiency are vital hallmarks of good stewardship and a sustainable energy future.

The disruptions in oil supply and resulting price shocks during the 1970s triggered a national commitment to energy conservation and efficiency in the United States. During this period some of the nation's smokestack industries also moved offshore. As a result, per capita energy use has stayed about the same over the past thirty years while per capita economic output has increased 74 percent.<sup>84</sup> Compared to 1973, the U.S. saves more energy today than it produces from any single energy source, including oil.<sup>85</sup>

The potential to save even more energy in the future is significant. United States energy use per dollar of gross national product is almost double that of other industrialized countries.<sup>86</sup> Energy use per capita in the U.S. is twice that of citizens of countries in the European Union. The U.S. Department of Energy conservatively estimates that increased efforts at energy efficiency could cut national energy use by 10 percent in 2010 and approximately 20 percent in 2020. The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy more optimistically estimates that adoption of new policies and laws could lower national energy demand by 18 percent in 2010 and by 33 percent in 2020.<sup>87</sup> When these investments in energy efficiency are coupled with increased renewable energy generation, other studies indicate that the U.S. could cut in half the carbon dioxide emissions related to electricity generation by 2020.<sup>88</sup>

Cost-effective technologies exist today to reduce substantially energy consumption in all of the nation's energy sectors (industrial, commercial, residential, and transportation). Past experience reveals, however, that legislative action is key to achieving these gains. The disruptions in oil supply and resulting price shocks during the 1970s triggered a national commitment to energy conservation and efficiency in the United States. Acting in a bi-partisan manner, Congress drafted the nation's first Corporate Automotive Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards that President Richard Nixon signed into law in 1975. These standards required automakers to double the average fuel economy of cars from 13.6 miles per gallon (mpg) in model year 1974 to 27.5 mpg in model year 1985. Similar fuel economy standards were adopted for light trucks. As a result, U.S. oil imports dropped from 46.5 percent in 1977 to 27 percent in 1985.<sup>89</sup>



Unfortunately this trend did not continue. The 27.5-mpg standard for cars remained the same after 1985, and the standard for light trucks only increased from 20 mpg in 1989 to 21.6 mpg in 2006.<sup>90</sup> As a result, U.S. fuel economy standards have lagged well behind virtually all other industrial countries. In Japan, new vehicles must achieve approximately 46 mpg, in the European Union the figure is 37 mpg, and even China's standard of 29 mpg exceeds the current U.S. average.<sup>91</sup>

Recently, however, President George W. Bush signed into law the Energy Independence and Security Act, which included the first major increase in the nation's CAFE standards in more than twenty years.<sup>92</sup> In contrast to the initial CAFE legislation that resulted in a 100 percent increase in fuel economy, the new legislation mandates only a 40 percent increase over thirteen years. Automakers will have to increase the combined average fuel economy of cars and light trucks from 24.5 mpg today to 35 mpg in 2020. Under this law, U.S. oil imports should be reduced by 1.2 million barrels per day and level off at approximately 10 million barrels per day in 2030, instead of continuing to grow beyond 12 million barrels per day.<sup>93</sup>

While legislative action can increase the number and variety of energy efficient products in the marketplace, consumers do not have to wait to invest in energy efficiency or to practice energy conservation. Trading in a sedan that gets 24 miles per gallon in combined city and highway driving for a hybrid sedan that gets 36 miles per gallon improves energy efficiency by 50 percent and cuts related greenhouse gas emissions in half. These gains can be further increased if citizens conserved fuel by choosing to drive fewer miles every year. Similar gains can be made by reducing energy consumption in the buildings in which we live and work. The American Institute of Architects reports that the energy consumed to heat and power buildings across the United States produces 48 percent of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>94</sup> Adjusting thermostats, sealing leaks, installing insulation, and investing in more efficient lights, appliances, furnaces, and air conditioners could substantially reduce energy consumption in our homes and business settings.

There is no question that energy conservation and efficiency represent the least expensive and largest "source" of energy in the United States. They also offer the fastest way to reduce the nation's carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions. While reduced consumption could reduce economic activity, this should be offset by the acquisition of more efficient goods. Energy conservation, in particular, is one area where we don't have to wait for the government to exercise greater responsibility. Each and every one of us can exercise greater personal responsibility by being better stewards of energy by practicing energy conservation and investing in energy efficiency. The ecojustice norms and energy guidelines compel us to make energy conservation and energy efficiency personal and national priorities.

*Solar energy* also offers enormous potential. Every day the sunlight that reaches Earth provides 2,850 times more energy than human communities currently consume.<sup>95</sup> This energy can be utilized in a variety of ways with different technologies. Residential solar thermal collectors capture and store the sun's energy in water. According to a study by the Department of Energy, these systems could provide half of the space heating and 65–75 percent of the hot water needs for U.S. homes.<sup>96</sup>

Concentrated solar thermal collectors are often located in desert regions and produce high-temperature heat for industrial processes or steam that can be used to generate electricity. A recent report indicates that seven states in the southwestern region of the U.S. could use concentrated solar power to produce ten times more electricity than is produced from all sources in the nation today. While it currently costs 9–12 cents per kilowatt hour to produce electricity in this manner, costs are expected to decline to 4–7 cents per kilowatt hour by 2020.<sup>97</sup>

Solar chillers use thermal energy to cool and dehumidify air like conventional air conditioners. This new technology has been successfully demonstrated and will likely make major inroads in the near future.<sup>98</sup>

Photovoltaic (PV) cells are the most visible solar energy technology, and their installation is growing rapidly around the world. These cells convert sunlight into electricity and can be utilized in a variety of scaleable applications. They are often the least expensive way to bring electricity to remote locations, but most PV installations today are connected to the electricity grid. Global production of PV cells has grown sixfold since the year 2000, rising largely in response to public policies in Japan and Germany, which seek to encourage their use. According to a study by the International Energy Agency, PV could meet 55 percent of U.S. electricity demand.<sup>99</sup> One of the drawbacks to PV production is that the cells are constructed with toxic chemicals and heavy metals. These materials are used widely in the semiconductor industry, however, where new techniques are emerging to reduce the environmental and safety risks.

*Wind energy* is being converted into electrical energy by wind turbines at a record pace in the United States and around the world. In recent years only natural gas-fired power plants have added more capacity to the U.S. power grid than have wind farms.<sup>100</sup> The U.S. has led the world in wind energy installations since 2005.<sup>101</sup> Even with turbine and component prices rising with global demand, installations with an excellent wind resource can often generate electricity at a lower cost (3–5 cents per kilowatt hour) than natural gas-fired power plants.<sup>102</sup>

The U.S. wind resource is distributed around the nation, but the most abundant winds are in the Great Plains region. Theoretically North Dakota, Kansas, and Texas together could furnish the U.S. with all of the electricity it consumes.<sup>103</sup> The

Department of Energy estimates that the U.S. off-shore wind resource could support as much generating capacity as currently exists in all of the nation's coal-fired, natural gas, and nuclear power plants.<sup>104</sup>

One of the main drawbacks to wind power, as with solar, is its intermittent nature. The wind industry is vigorously exploring storage options so that wind energy can be dispatched on an hourly basis rather than just when the wind blows. Another important drawback concerns the lack of transmission capacity. While there is plenty of wind resource in the nation, too often the wind farms that harvest this energy are long distances from major metropolitan centers and thus require the construction of new transmission lines. Public resistance to the construction of new transmission lines is hampering the construction of a smarter grid that can handle the flows of energy from new wind farms.

Some oppose new transmission lines because they fear the electromagnetic fields in these lines may have an adverse effect on human health, but there is no dispute that the combustion of fossil fuels is definitely having an adverse effect on human health today and that this will only get worse in the future.<sup>105</sup> Others oppose the construction of large wind farms for aesthetic reasons, but the impact of wind turbines on the landscape pales in comparison to the ravages of mountaintop coal mining or the dangers posed by global warming. Finally, while there has been increased avian mortality associated with early turbine designs and the unwise siting of a few wind farms in migratory bird flyways, studies indicate that the vast majority of avian mortality is caused by housecats, vehicles, cell phone towers, and birds flying into windows.<sup>106</sup>

*Biomass energy* accounts for nearly half of the renewable energy currently produced in the United States. Biomass energy takes two primary forms. Biopower is produced when agricultural and forestry residues are used to generate heat and power. Biofuels are produced when the energy in crops and other plants are fermented into transportation fuels. When the feedstocks for biopower and biofuels are grown and harvested sustainably, biomass energy is truly renewable and carbon neutral. This is because the carbon dioxide that is released had previously been absorbed from the atmosphere by the plants.

The forest products industry is the largest producer of biopower. It burns forest residues to produce heat and electricity. At other sites around the nation, crop residues and switchgrass are burned with coal to produce electricity, thus reducing the net emission of carbon dioxide. Studies indicate that up to 15 percent of all coal could be replaced with biomass if upgrades are made to coal-fired power plants. Still another use of biomass is to capture methane from the decomposition of organic matter found in landfills, sewage treatment plants, and livestock facilities. Using this methane to produce heat or power is much wiser and more lucrative than letting this potent greenhouse gas enter the atmosphere.

Corn-based ethanol is currently the largest source of biofuel in the nation. The industry has grown rapidly in response to government incentives and market forces. It has been a boon to many farmers because corn prices have risen almost 50 percent in recent years.<sup>107</sup> It has also benefited rural communities because just one ethanol facility that produces forty million gallons per year can inject \$140 million into the local economy.<sup>108</sup> Today, approximately 20 percent of the U.S. corn harvest is utilized for ethanol production, and that percentage is rising.<sup>109</sup> The Government Accountability Office projects that 30 percent of the nation's corn crop may be devoted to ethanol production by 2012.<sup>110</sup>

There are many problems with corn-based ethanol production, however. Almost all corn in the nation is planted, fertilized, cultivated, and harvested with machinery powered by fossil fuels. The fermentation and transportation of corn-based ethanol is also fossil-fuel intensive. As a result, burning corn-based ethanol in gasoline tanks only lowers greenhouse gas emissions by 13 percent.<sup>111</sup> There are also other environmental problems. The production of ethanol is water-intensive and thus puts significant stress on local groundwater resources; it can also produce significant air and water pollution. Finally, there is good reason to fear that soil erosion will increase as rising prices encourage farmers to plant corn in some of the thirty-five million acres currently set aside for soil and wildlife conservation.<sup>112</sup>

Economically, the increased use of corn for transportation fuel is driving up the cost of grain for livestock producers as well as the cost of food in grocery stores. Globally, grain prices have reached their highest levels in a decade. As a result, the United States is purchasing about half the grain it bought to distribute as food aid in 2000.<sup>113</sup> The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization warns that rising food prices and reduced food supplies are increasing the likelihood for social unrest in developing countries.<sup>114</sup> In 2006 the rapidly increasing price of tortilla flour led to riots in some parts of Mexico.<sup>115</sup> Recently, the United Nations special rapporteur on the Right to Food called for a five-year moratorium on the production of first-generation liquid biofuels made from food crops such as corn, wheat, palm oil, and rapeseed.<sup>116</sup>

Obviously there are serious problems associated with the way biofuels are currently being produced in the United States. Even if the entire corn crop were devoted to ethanol production, it would only produce 12 percent of the gasoline we consume. Devotion of the entire soy bean crop to biodiesel production would only replace 6 percent of the nation's diesel consumption.<sup>117</sup> Key to biofuel production in the future will be new feedstocks and conversion technologies. While important technological challenges still need to be overcome, the potential of cellulosic ethanol is large because it produces ethanol from portions of plants not used for food and also from fast-growing trees and perennials like switch grass. Studies indicate that one third of the nation's current petroleum demand could be satisfied if cellulosic ethanol becomes commercially viable.<sup>118</sup>

There is clearly a great need for alternative fuels but the norm of precaution needs to be exercised, especially when genetic engineering is employed to develop new crops for biofuel production. Just as government incentives to spur corn-based ethanol production have had unforeseen and deleterious consequences, so too could genetic engineering of biofuels feedstocks if this research is not conducted carefully and regulated closely.

*Hydropower* is the second largest source of renewable energy in the U.S., producing 7 percent of the nation's electricity supply. The vast majority of this power comes from several large dams along major rivers in the western and eastern regions of the country. One advantage these facilities have over other power plants is that the amount of electricity can be increased or decreased relatively easily by adjusting the amount of water released to the turbines. This flexibility is important when accommodating the intermittent production of other renewable energy sources like solar and wind.<sup>119</sup> A major disadvantage of large hydropower projects, however, has been their toll on fish habitats, especially in the Pacific Northwest.

Remarkably, only 3 percent of the 80,000 dams in the U.S. are used to generate electricity. The Department of Energy reports that hydropower capacity could be doubled in the U.S. by installing generators at some of the dams that do not have them, and by installing more generators at dams that already are producing electricity. A significant share of this electricity could be generated at smaller hydroelectric dams that were taken out of production decades ago when their productive capacity was eclipsed by large coal-fired and nuclear power plants.<sup>120</sup>

*Geothermal energy* taps into heat from the center of the Earth, which is nearly as hot as the surface of the sun. Geothermal power plants tap some of this heat to create steam that powers turbines. The U.S. leads the world in geothermal electric power capacity installed at plants in four western states, but the Geothermal Energy Association estimates that this capacity could grow tenfold by the year 2025.<sup>121</sup> Other reports estimate that up to 20 percent of the nation's electricity could be produced by geothermal power plants by 2030.<sup>122</sup> Some of the drawbacks to the industry have been the high costs and risks associated with drilling, but new techniques are beginning to reduce these factors. In addition, while small amounts of carbon dioxide and hydrogen sulfide are often released, these emissions pale in comparison to those emitted by coal-fired power plants.

While the best geothermal power sources are located in the West, all areas of the U.S. are suitable for geothermal heat pumps. These pumps utilize the constant temperature of earth or groundwater near the surface of the ground as a heat source in winter and a heat sink in summer to regulate indoor temperatures. Heat pump sales are growing at about 15 percent a year and could expand further if this technology were routinely incorporated in the construction of new homes and buildings.<sup>123</sup>

*Marine energy* makes use of the waves, tides, and currents of the oceans that cover 70 percent of the planet. Since seawater is eight hundred times as dense as air, even small movements of seawater contain significant amounts of energy. Globally, wave energy is estimated to be equivalent to present world energy demand. Nationally, the Electric Power Research Institute estimates that near-shore wave resources in the U.S. could generate eight times more electricity than all of the nation's hydroelectric dams. Unfortunately, few wave energy devices have been tested.

Historically the most common form of marine energy has been tidal power, which involves using dams to trap water in a bay or estuary and then releasing it through turbines at low tide. Tide mills were common in Western Europe during the Middle Ages but fell out of favor during the coal-fired Industrial Revolution. Today efforts are underway to recapture the energy contained in tides, waves, and currents. Tidal projects in New York City's East River and in the Puget Sound near Tacoma have the potential to power thousands of homes in these cities but they are still at the experimental stage. Marine energy is currently not cost-competitive with any of the nation's renewable or non-renewable energy sources.<sup>124</sup>

*Hydrogen* may be the ultimate alternative and renewable energy source because it is the most abundant chemical element in nature. One of the challenges, however, is that hydrogen does not exist in large quantities in its pure form; it has to be separated from water, ammonia, or even fossil fuels before it can be used as a fuel source. This is an energy-intensive process. The use of fossil energy to do this work results in greenhouse gas emissions. The only way to make hydrogen a truly clean energy source is to use renewable energy to reform the hydrogen, and this is expensive. Nevertheless, once reformed, the hydrogen can be used in a fuel cell to produce electricity with water as the only emission, or it can be burned in an internal combustion engine. Other challenges remain, however. The platinum used in current fuel cell designs is in limited supply and expensive. Another challenge revolves around the safety of hydrogen storage. As the smallest chemical element, hydrogen easily escapes from most containers and is highly flammable. These production, storage, safety, and cost issues will all have to be resolved before hydrogen can become the fuel of the future.

### *Conclusion*

This ethical assessment of the major energy options facing U.S. policy makers reveals three important truths. First, the potential supply of renewable and alternative energy sources far exceeds current and projected demand. God has truly furnished creation with energy in abundance. The second truth, however, is that the United States still relies heavily on fossil

fuels and nuclear power to provide 93 percent of the energy we currently consume. We are not living sustainably in relationship with God's creation. This leads to the third, sad truth: Our reliance on these traditional energy sources poses grave dangers to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. In fact, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment in history with regard to global climate change. Scientists warn us that global greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced 80 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2050 in order to avert catastrophic consequences associated with global warming.

The challenge we face is daunting. The temptation to despair is real. Only God can give us the power to change. Our Reformed tradition reminds us that it is God who created the earth and saw that it was good, God who sustains the earth and seeks to hold its processes together, God who judges sin and greed, and God who reveals in Jesus Christ that love and justice are the essence of God's power. God is the inexhaustible source of energy for personal, social, and ecological transformation. Although we are complicit in the evils we face, we can repent of our own sinful misuse and abuse of the Earth as we confess our sins. As recipients of God's endless mercy, this redemptive energy frees and empowers us to be good stewards of God's creation.

Energy choices, more than ever, are moral choices. As our planet grows warmer, our Christian witness must become bolder. As individuals, families, congregations, and church administrative bodies, we must become the change we want to see in our nation. We must put our own houses in order even as we call on our nation to accept its moral responsibility with regard to energy policy and climate change. Together we must radically reduce our carbon footprint.

Two years ago, the 217th General Assembly (2006) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) voted to "strongly urge all Presbyterians immediately to make a bold witness by aspiring to live carbon neutral lives."<sup>125</sup> Carbon neutrality requires us to reduce energy consumption that releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and to purchase carbon offsets to compensate for those carbon emissions that cannot yet be eliminated.<sup>126</sup> The appendix and recommendations that accompany this study emphasize the importance of carbon neutrality for all expressions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Faced with the nexus of issues related to energy policy and climate change, and guided by the ecojustice norms and energy guidelines, Christian stewardship is expressed in three major areas of responsibility. Our witness begins at the personal level, must be reflected in the practices and priorities of all organizations in our church, and culminates in our advocacy for changes in public policy at all levels of government. The accompanying document makes specific recommendations for the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding each of these areas of responsibility.

## Appendix I

### Carbon Neutrality and the PC(USA)

Presbyterians can set an important example of stewardship by not only minimizing our energy consumption, but also by pursuing a carbon neutral lifestyle. This can take many forms. For example, funding the installation of energy efficient products and photovoltaic cells in lower income countries or communities helps to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases while also improving the well-being of those in these regions; similarly, replanting trees in deforested areas removes carbon from the atmosphere and restores farmland and nature. When Nobel Prize-winner Wangari Maathai of Kenya, founder of the Greenbelt Movement, preached in 2004 to her long-time friends in the White Plains Presbyterian Church in suburban New York, she invited all Presbyterians to join in that practical and very participatory work of planting belts of green trees around encroaching deserts. Thus the voluntary adoption of a carbon-neutral lifestyle can be justified on fairly self-interested grounds, but contributions can also be understood to be participation in a movement of social restoration, even a form of communal redemption that goes against the materialistic grain.

There are many ways to calculate the carbon footprint of an individual or business, but one of the best calculators is available at the website of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: [http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind\\_calculator.html](http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator.html). Prudential choices in household energy management and personal transport can greatly reduce greenhouse emissions as well as other pollutants while also saving money. Perhaps the most vivid example is in the case of household lighting. The cost of compact fluorescents has dropped drastically due to technological advances and economies of scale. The replacement of twenty 100-watt incandescent bulbs with new compact fluorescent bulbs would reduce a typical family's carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 2.5 tons each year and save them around \$100. It is possible for a family to reduce another 1.2 tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year by increasing insulation, tuning up of a furnace, and installing energy efficient showerheads. Additional energy savings are realizable by purchasing Energy Star appliances and fuel-efficient or hybrid vehicles. Energy conservation can be practiced by using mass transit or ride-sharing more often, and also by walking or biking to places you would ordinarily drive.

As with One Great Hour of Sharing offerings in Lent, frugality with regard to our energy consumption can yield savings sufficient to buy carbon offsets for the emissions we still produce. Although the U.S. has not taken responsibility for its greenhouse gas emissions, a tool does exist in tax law for climate protection. United States tax-exempt charitable groups qualifying under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code can arrange carbon offset purchases from groups such as Climate Care or Native Energy, and gifts to them designated for such purposes should ordinarily be tax deductible for those itemizing deductions in federal tax returns and for many state and local income taxes as well. A Presbyterian Energy Fund would operate within these already tested guidelines, as our church and others already run designated-use funds of many kinds at relatively low administrative cost. A Presbyterian Energy Fund could help congregations and other organizations in our church reduce their carbon footprint through investments in energy efficiency and through the purchase of carbon offsets from reputable sources.

Additional resources related to living a carbon neutral lifestyle are available on the Restoring Creation program website, <http://www.pcusa.org/environment/restore.htm>, and the website of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy: <http://www.pcusa.org/acswp/wwd/energy.htm>. For a list of carbon offset providers by state, consult the website for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Green Power Program," <http://www.epa.gov/grnpower/>. Congregations, presbyteries, and synods interested in purchasing "green power" from renewable energy facilities developed on American Indian/Native American reservations should consult the Native Energy website, <http://www.nativeenergy.com/>.

#### Endnotes

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8. National Petroleum Council, *Facing the Hard Truths About Energy*, July 2007 pre-publication draft, Executive Summary, p. 25, accessed online July 20, 2007, at <http://www.npc.org/>.
9. George W. Bush, "State of the Union Address by the President," January 31, 2006, accessed online July 23, 2007, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/stateoftheunion/2006/>.
10. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Fourth Assessment Report: The Physical Science Basis (Geneva: IPCC Secretariat, February 2007), pp. 11–14, accessed online July 7, 2007, at <http://www.ipcc.ch/SPM2feb07.pdf>. This mean projection is for the fossil fuel-intensive A1F1 scenario, the worst of the six developed by the IPCC. Under this scenario greenhouse gas concentrations are projected to increase from approximately 430 ppm of carbon dioxide equivalent (C02e) in 2005 to 1,550 ppm C02e by 2100. Even under the IPCC's best case scenario (B1) greenhouse gas concentrations increase to 600 ppm C02e by 2100, which they estimate will lead to a warming of 3.2°F by the end of this century—almost three times the rate of warming over the past 100 years.
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16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 21–24. Per capita emissions of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2000. The world average was 5.6 tons; the average for developed nations was 14.1 tons; the average for developing nations was 3.3 tons.
18. This statement was jointly adopted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. See, *Minutes*, PCUS, 1981, Part I, pp. 122, 413–25; and *Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, pp. 42, 86, 293–306.

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20. *Overture 02-57. On Revising the Denominational Policy on the Issue of Energy (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 72 and 596)*.
21. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy has developed an accompanying set of recommendations regarding U.S. energy policy in the context of global warming and climate change for review and action at the 218th General Assembly (2008).
22. A resource paper produced by an ACSWP study group describes a number of these approaches in greater detail. The paper points to the need to shift all elements of the economy toward a model that minimizes “through-put” of all kinds rather than simply maximizing “output.” See <http://www.pcusa.org/acswp/www/energy.htm>.
23. *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 895–96.
24. See Appendix I in the accompanying study document for more information about the concept of carbon neutrality and carbon offsets.
25. Terry Tamminen, *Lives Per Gallon: The True Cost of Our Oil Addiction*, (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2006), p. 13. But the mother of all subsidies to the oil industry, and the automakers who depend on it, occurs in the realm of defending the supply of petroleum itself. According to a summary of studies compiled in 2001 by the New York Times, the United States had already been spending \$25 billion a year on the military defense of oil-exporting countries in the Middle East.<sup>i</sup> The Bush administration will spend \$98 million more to protect just one pipeline that delivers oil, bound for the United States, to a transportation terminal on the Columbian border with Venezuela, the Canon Limon oil pipeline, which is owned by Los Angeles-based Occidental Petroleum.<sup>ii</sup> Multiple estimates agree that the annual cost to U.S. taxpayers to defend our oil supply around the globe is between \$55 billion and nearly \$100 billion.<sup>iii</sup> This estimate does not include more than \$100 billion spent each year in Iraq for the war in that country, at least some of which is attributable to securing oil.  
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<sup>ii</sup>Ruth Morris, “U.S. Aims to Stem Pipeline’s Flow of Trouble,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 6, 2002.  
<sup>iii</sup>*The Hidden Cost of Oil* (Washington, DC: National Defense Council Foundation, October 2003); and Evan Harrje, *The Real Price of Gasoline* (Washington, DC: International Center for Technology Assessment, 2000); and Mark Mazzetti and Joel Havemann, “Bush’s Bill for War is Rising,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 3, 2006
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## Item 09-11

[The assembly approved Item 09-11 with amendment. See pp. 54, 55.]

*A Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the United States*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) [in consultation with the appropriate General Assembly Council (GAC) and Office of the General Assembly (OGA) ministries areas,] to

a. [~~study and monitor detention in relation to immigration in the United States, giving attention to the experiences of women and children detained and affected~~] [analyze the social witness policy of the PC(USA) regarding detention in relation to immigration in the United States, giving attention to the experiences of women and children detained and affected]; [and]

[~~b. explore the social witness policy of the PC(USA) regarding detention; and~~]

[~~e.~~] [b.] report its findings and recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

2. Urge the Office of General Assembly and General Assembly Council to

a. support the program work of the Office of Immigration Issues, and provide adequate financial support for the development of resources regarding detention and immigration; and

b. support regional study seminars across the church focusing on detention and immigration and promote these events with connectional structures as appropriate.

3. Direct the Washington Office and the Office of Immigration Issues to

a. partner with ecumenical and interfaith entities to build/join in coalitions against detention; and

b. advocate for alternatives to detention.

### *Rationale*

After spending two years studying immigration and its affect on women and children, ACWC recommends action. De-tention happens throughout the country and in many communities. The stories are troubling. One was reported in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, November 9, 2007. Officials took a twenty-seven-year old woman in Conneaut, Ohio, into custody after

she admitted to being in the country “without papers.” Agents had tapped on the door of a house in search of an undocumented brother-in-law wanted for a felony crime. At the time the woman was breastfeeding her nine-month old baby. The agents removed the parents, and for three days, the child cried incessantly as she went without breast milk. At the same time, her mother, sick with worry, suffered as her breasts became engorged. A representative of the La Leche League of Ohio tried to reach the woman in Bedford Heights jail with a breast pump, but was never successful in getting milk back to the baby. The mother was eventually fitted with an ankle bracelet and released, and was to be deported to Honduras. Her two younger children are US citizens, but a five-year-old was to be deported with her.

*I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. ... And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (Matt. 25:36, 40)*

A recent example of a problem arising from the detention of families appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*, December 11, 2007. “An 8-year old girl was separated from her pregnant mother by immigration authorities and left without her mother for four days in a detention center established to hold families together. The mother and daughter were sent to the T. Don Hutto Family Residential Facility, a former Central Texas prison where non-criminal immigrant families were held while their cases were processed. They were awaiting a decision on a bid for asylum, which they eventually lost.” The T. Don Hutto facility holds men, women (some pregnant), children, and infants, and is administered by the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the country’s largest for-profit corrections company.

Other situations when documented effects have been profound include death from lack of medical attention or withheld medications and sexual mistreatment in detention centers. Sixty-six immigrants have died in detention since 2004, according to 2007 reports by *The New York Times* and Human Rights Watch. In El Paso, a pregnant woman in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement died after complaining of leg pain and losing consciousness (reported in the *Austin Statesman* on August 08, 2007). Another example:

While detained at the CCA Central Arizona Detention Center from November 2005 to April 2006, a Liberian woman complained of nausea, severe abdominal pain, trouble sleeping, and pain during urination. The facility’s own records indicate medical staff believed she may have developed uterine fibroids, enlarged fibroids, and possibly needed a hysterectomy. She was frequently given 800 mg of Ibuprofen and told to exercise. In one instance, she fainted and consequently missed a court appearance. A few weeks before her release, she was taken to a public hospital where an ultrasound found a cyst which she reports doctors described as the size of a 5-month-old fetus. When the hospital determined she required immediate surgery, ICE released her from detention on medical parole in order to avoid having to pay for the procedure.<sup>1</sup>

The death of Young Sook Kim, in the Regional Correctional Center (Cornell Corrections) in Albuquerque, N.M. (September 2006) provides another shameful instance:

On or about August 22, 2006, Young Sook Kim was transported to Regional Correctional Center from Virginia. During the van ride in Virginia to the airport, Ms. Kim vomited. Throughout her detention, which lasted approximately two weeks, she suffered serious stomach problems. Her condition deteriorated steadily, eventually getting to the point where she could not eat. Other women detainees pled with guards and nurses to examine Ms. Kim and also completed numerous sick call requests, at least one of which was marked “urgent.” Ms. Kim never received proper care from a doctor. Only when her eyes finally turned yellow and she could no longer eat did the nurse agree to send her to the hospital. She was transported to the hospital on or about September 10, 2006 and died shortly thereafter.<sup>2</sup>

As immigration officials continue to detain family members, families are torn asunder; persons are detained without charge and may be moved frequently creating injustices. The church must bring its voice to this situation.

One example came from a social worker in southern California. An immigrant family had succeeded in purchasing a home and providing shelter for close family relatives. When the main provider was deported, the income lost resulted in the loss of the home.

I know, however, that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. (Ex. 3:19)

Immigration detention is an emerging field of injustice and more detention centers are being built and operated by for-profit companies. The PC(USA) has policy on for-profit prisons, “Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Private Prisons” (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 439ff), and immigration, “On Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 880ff), however, they do not adequately address this growing dimension of suffering in the family of God.

Immigrant detention statistics:<sup>3</sup>

- 283,000 were detained at a cost of \$1.2 billion to taxpayers, at an average of \$95 per day. Eighty-four percent do not have legal representation.
- Persons are detained in over 400 facilities including private corrections companies and over 312 county and city jails nationwide. Being undocumented is a civil violation, not a crime; however immigrants are retained in local jails are mixed in with the local prison population serving time for crimes.

- There are 30,000 detention beds and 3,600 have been added in 2007.
- Alternatives to detention include electronic monitoring, at a cost of \$12 per day.

While we study detention and immigration, we must also find ways to support Presbyterian communities, fellowships, and churches whose pastors and members are facing detention issues. The Office of Immigration Issues has the expertise to produce excellent resources for the church and the wider ecumenical community to use for education and advocacy. What the office does not have is the resources to support this work.

#### Endnotes

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 09-11, Recommendation 1, from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, requests the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to:

- a. study and monitor detention in relation to immigration in the United States, giving attention to the experiences of women and children detained and affected;
- b. explore the social witness policy of the PC(USA) regarding detention; and
- c. report its findings and recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Item 09-11 with the following amendment to Recommendation 1: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“1. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)[, in consultation with the appropriate General Assembly Council (GAC) and Office of the General Assembly (OGA) ministries areas.] to

“a. ~~[study and monitor detention in relation to immigration in the United States, giving attention to the experiences of women and children detained and affected]~~ [analyze the social witness policy of the PC(USA) regarding detention in relation to immigration in the United States, giving attention to the experiences of women and children detained and affected]; [and]

“~~[b. explore the social witness policy of the PC(USA) regarding detention; and]~~

“~~[e.]~~ [b.] report its findings and recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010).”

#### *Rationale*

The year 2009 will mark the tenth anniversary of the approval of the *Resolution Calling for the Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounters with New Neighbors* by the 211th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 28, 30, 32, 353–71). That assembly called on the members of this denomination to:

Oppose the routine use of detention as an enforcement tool in addressing common immigration violations, noting the particular hardship this puts on women and children, urging presbyteries and sessions to similar advocacy. (*Minutes* 1999, Part I, pp. 30, 355).

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a “Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States,” which included the initiation of a position within the Office of the General Assembly to provide legal guidance and some services to members and bodies within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The immigration debate in the United States has grown even more complex since the approval of this General Assembly action, especially in relation to U.S. border and detention practices that put increasing numbers of women and chil-

dren in custody. The ACSWP thinks it is both wise and timely for the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct this policy entity of the church to analyze the social witness policies of the PC(USA) in order to determine how the church may more effectively address the needs of women and children detained and affected by current U.S. immigration policies and practices.

The ACSWP has advised amending Recommendation 1 in Item 09-11 in order to minimize the financial resources required to perform this work. With this clarification as to scale, the ACSWP supports the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns' proposed recommendations in Item 09-11, as amended.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 09-11 directs the study of immigration detention in the United States, with attention to the experiences of women and children.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 09-11 be approved.

#### *Rationale*

The ACREC has been studying issues related to immigration along with ACWC. The growing number of women and children being detained in cities across the United States is a particularly disturbing new dimension to the immigrant experience that warrants study.

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## **Item 09-12**

[The assembly approved Item 09-12. See pp. 54, 55.]

### *Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA)*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Create a task force to design a mechanism for the study of the status of women at all levels in the church that will
  - a. assess the presence, participation, and effectiveness of women at all levels of the PC(USA), both elected and employed;
  - b. explore and analyze attitudes about women in leadership; and
  - c. describe the treatment of women in leadership positions, including how they are compensated as compared with men.

This task force of seven members shall include two current or past members of ACWC, one current or past member of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and four people chosen for their statistical and sociological expertise. A majority of the task force members shall be women. This task force will report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

2. Direct the General Assembly Council (GAC) to
  - a. provide sufficient funding and staff support for the task force;
  - b. explore additional funding for research, data collection, and analysis in consultation with the task force; and,
  - c. report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

**3. Equip all General Assembly Council (GAC) staff and members to be responsive to the needs of all women as part of their continuing commitment to valuing the gifts that all persons bring to the PC(USA). Continue to encourage General Assembly Council staff and members to reflect on and incorporate the values articulated in the “Report on Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 540ff.).**

**[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$19,345; (2010): \$16,000 (Per Capita-GAC)]**

### *Rationale*

On the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted the prophet Joel saying, “In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...” (Acts 2:17)

Almost two thousand years later, in “A Brief Statement of Faith,” we publicly affirm that “... God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community,”<sup>1</sup> and that the Spirit “calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.”<sup>2</sup> We declare that “the Spirit gives us courage to pray... to witness... to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of people long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.”<sup>3</sup>

In our Constitution, we affirm that

the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic group, different ages, both sexes ... shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church.<sup>4</sup>

How do we “provide means which will assure greater inclusiveness?” How do we know when we have achieved inclusiveness? First, we need a baseline measurement. This will allow us to accurately assess the various levels of privilege and discrimination that women experience.<sup>5</sup>

The assembly has acted before. The 211th General Assembly (1999) directed the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns to “initiate a churchwide study on the current status of women in the church and society, with particular attention to issues of aging women, pay equity, child care, family/medical leave, and relations between women and men in places of work, home and family; . . .” (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 591). Due to the funding being small and the workload of the advisory committee being considerable, this action was not reported on until this year. The action taken was to convene a resolution team on pay equity. The assembly declared in 1999 that “fullness of life in Christ and Christ’s prayer for unity require women’s full participation in church life, and that the image of God in women be fully recognized and valued” (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 591). This is still the case and we are no closer to being able to recognize the status of women in the church.

A comprehensive study on the status of women in the PC(USA) will incorporate an examination of the status of women of color and will help the church identify the ways in which women of color are impacted by both systemic racism and gender bias. This action will better equip the PC(USA) to respond to the challenge of the *Report from the Women of Color Consultation (2005)* and the *Report and Recommendations from the Women of Color Consultation Task Force* [presented to the 218th General Assembly (2008)] and move towards the vision of the PC(USA) to become a truly diverse and inclusive community of faith. The task force will also look at alternative statistical methods that can get at this kind of information—routine methods of collecting data don’t capture the different ways that women serve in the church. This effort will take time and expertise to design a process to move forward.

While Scripture and our constitution recognize and affirm the gifts of women and men, a recent Presbyterian Panel (November 2007) survey on attitudes toward women in leadership in the PC(USA) indicates that we, as a denomination, are not living up to God’s vision for the church. Preferences are still biased toward men for leadership. The write-in comments revealed deeper concerns. Two examples from different respondents:<sup>6</sup>

In general, men don’t seem to give women the same belief that they know what they are talking about unless they have degrees to back it up. And women will stop and listen to a deep voice and give his idea consideration even when I have said the same idea earlier.

Is anyone really surprised that the advent of ordaining women and the effort to establish gender and race balance has resulted in the departure of male leadership and support for our churches? I am not suggesting that these moves are wrong, but their effect cannot be denied.

The comments written in were either/or—rejecting the questions or relieved to be asked. The systemic nature of how bias shapes perceptions and expectations are at work in these responses. Without data, some will never be able to acknowledge the reality of the church for all women. If leadership matched membership representation, leadership would be more

than 60 percent female. At best, the PC(USA) is half of that, but most women continue to serve in “other” ministries and few rise to lead congregations with multiple clergy staff or memberships over 500.

There is a widely held perception that women, who have faithfully provided leadership for the church at every level of service, whether compensated or not, are often not honored, respected, or paid the same as men. These stories do not have data to support them. We simply don’t know.

The ecumenical community has begun to respond. The ACWC read studies and reports from the Episcopal Church, USA (*The State of the Clergy: 2006*) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).<sup>7</sup> The Episcopal Church, USA routinely reports disaggregated data to the church that helps identify where women are serving in more helpful ways.<sup>8</sup> These efforts provide their communions valuable input into the budgeting of women’s programs and continue to provide measurement of inclusiveness and change. These efforts strengthen their witness in ecumenical and international contexts. The United Methodist Church has a General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, which provides this function.

The ecumenical community demonstrates converging efforts to address gender bias within communions. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches launched (in 2007) a call for the Reformed family of churches to study gender leadership and power within the alliance as well as in their individual communions. There are recommendations from the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) and from the Women of Color Consultation Task Force.

Now is the opportune time for the PC(USA) to enter into a comprehensive study of the status of women in the church. This survey will provide areas for celebration. It is also expected to identify specific areas needing attention, identifying specific barriers that need to be addressed to bring about full acceptance and equitable treatment of women in the PC(USA).

A study of the status of women would aid in bringing wholeness to the church by providing a progress report to the church on how it is recognizing and welcoming the gifts God gives women. Our Scripture reminds us that the Light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it. Women have been faithful throughout the 300 years of Presbyterianism in the U.S.A. though they have been allowed into ordained leadership for only a small portion of that time. Women servants lead in all levels of the church. The task force will assess the data available and design a mechanism for studying the status of women throughout the PC(USA).

We celebrate the gifts of women each year in worship as a way of symbolizing the continuing struggle against gender bias in church and society. The PC(USA) celebrated three milestones for women’s ordination and in the shadow of these achievements we still hear stories of exclusion, oppression, and exploitation. From a liturgical resource:<sup>9</sup>

*The Spirit of the Lord was upon [Jesus] to let the oppressed go free.*

The Spirit cries: “Listen!” Women’s voices are often missing from the public arena, from pulpits, from textbooks and literature. Their images are degraded on billboards and magazine covers; their character in films and television shows.

How shall we measure bias that diminishes possibilities? How do we measure the missing? the silenced? This is something that needs study and resources. Discrimination and devaluing based on gender, race, and class undergirds scourges like poverty and other destructive forces in society. Real change can happen if we focus our efforts where action is needed. We need a map to show us the places where we need to send our time, talent, and treasure and the paths to true inclusion and equity. Doing so will help us be light and salt in society and help move toward the Reign of God being revealed.

#### Endnotes

1. *The Book of Confessions*, 10.3, lines 29–32.
2. *Ibid*, 10.4, line 64.
3. *Ibid*, 10.4, lines 66–71.
4. *Book of Order*, G-4.0403.
5. Women are females over the age of 18—all races and ethnicities, languages and abilities.
6. The Presbyterian Panel, November 2007 Questionnaire, *Women in the Church*, Comments, B-3 and B-5.
7. *25th Anniversary of Women’s Ordination Survey of Clergywomen and Clergymen*, ELCA for example; first call data here <http://www.elca.org/research/reports/cw/frstcall.pdf>.
8. *Episcopal Parish Clergy by Diocese, Gender and Position: 2004*. Episcopal Church, USA, available online at [http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/WM\\_WomenClergyDiocese04.pdf](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/WM_WomenClergyDiocese04.pdf).

9. *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women Education and Information Packet*, Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, UN office, <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/un/discrimination.htm>.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

Item 09-12. Resolution to Study the Status of Women in the PC(USA).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 09-12 be approved.

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## Item 09-13

[The assembly approved Item 09-13. See pp. 54, 55.]

*Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies* (Report of the Women of Color Consultation Task Force to the 218th General Assembly (2008))

Hearing and singing new songs to God, calling the church to new directions and new ways of being in ministry, and affirming the denomination's ongoing efforts "to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace" (A Brief Statement of Faith, *The Book of Confessions*, 10:4, lines 69-71), the Women of Color Consultation Task Force recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) take the following actions:

1. Declare 2009 to 2019 a "Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God" in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which will call for transformation of the church, focusing on the intersections of gender, race, and class, and will include the following emphases:

- a. developing an understanding of and ability to use a "gender lens," that is, to view issues, institutions, and actions through the lens of gender-specific needs and realities;
- b. recognizing the intersectionality of gender and race, along with other factors such as ethnicity and class, that contribute to unique or particular experiences of oppression and/or privilege;
- c. seeking inclusivity with equity: moving beyond tokenism in the participation of women of color of all ages to valuing and embracing the gifts they bring to the life of the whole church;
- d. adopting an understanding of shared power as a fundamental element of community; and
- e. implementing mechanisms of accountability that hold the systems of power in the church accountable to the whole church, particularly those parts of the church that have been historically silenced or invisible.

2. Request the Moderator, the Stated Clerk, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council to communicate with congregations, presbyteries and synods, seminaries, campus ministries, and conference centers asking them to recognize the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God and incorporate it in worship, conferences, training events, and other activities.

3. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) to create a permanent Joint Working Group on Women of Color in the Church, to be made up of two members of ACREC and two members of ACWC, appointed by the leadership of each committee.

a. In addition to the ACWC and ACREC members, the working group may appoint two to four members at-large, one of whom should be a young woman of color between the ages of 18–35, to provide representation and expertise, as needed.

b. The ACWC and ACREC shall meet jointly at least once a year, at which time an extra meeting day will be provided for the joint working group.



c. The joint working group shall monitor the church's response to issues and concerns raised in the initial Women of Color Consultation, advise ACREC and ACWC on new and emerging issues impacting women of color, and consult with the General Assembly Council in planning for future consultations.

4. Direct the General Assembly Council, in consultation with Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, to plan a Women of Color Consultation that focuses on the full participation and leadership/decision-making roles of women of color of all ages in synods and presbyteries. Plans for the next consultation shall be reported to the 219th General Assembly (2010), for an event to be held no later than 2011, and from which a report and recommendations shall be submitted to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

5. Urge the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council elected to utilize the tools of cultural proficiency in all of their activities to deepen and enhance their work together across differences.

6. Request the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, working in partnership to resource and equip presbyteries and synods, utilizing the tools of cultural proficiency, to work for equitable participation of women of color in all aspects of the life and ministry of presbyteries and synods.

7. Urge all entities in the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) to be mindful of the critical importance of utilizing culturally proficient communication tools and strategies and to be intentional in working to communicate with the whole church to convey the vision of being diverse and inclusive with equity. Request Communications and Funds Development, in partnership with the Cultural Proficiency office, to equip OGA and GAC staff with culturally proficient communication tools.

8. Direct the Office of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, the Board of Pensions, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to collect, organize, and report data for all research in the church (such as comparative statistics, Presbyterian Panel, data gathered by the Vocation's office on inquirers, candidates, and clergy, the Stated Clerk's annual statistical report, etc.) in a disaggregated form by race, ethnicity, gender, and age, so that data on women of color and young adult women of color may be identified separately for analysis, where possible and as permissible by law.

9. Direct the General Assembly Council to develop a resource for use by congregations, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly that will provide tools to conduct a gender equity audit that includes age, race, and ethnicity, that enables entities within the church to gather quantifiable data on women and persons of color's presence, participation, and influence in decision-making processes.

10. Direct the General Assembly Council, in consultation with Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, to expand on the basic antiracism training to include modules on the intersectionality of race, gender, and class, and provide focused training on internalized oppression and privilege, with a timeline as follows:

- a. the intersections of race, gender, and class by 2010;
- b. internalized oppression (race & gender) by 2012;
- c. white privilege and male privilege by 2014.

11. Reaffirm the General Assembly policy commitments to race and gender justice, including the church's commitments to ensure racial ethnic and women's representation in decision-making bodies. Urge all nominating committees, committees on representation, and policy-making bodies to be mindful of the intersections of race, gender, and class. At the General Assembly level,

a. remind and reaffirm the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee, and the committees on representation as they do their work, where they are guided by specific representation criteria to consider gender balance when they are fulfilling guidelines for racial ethnic representation and to include racial ethnic representation when fulfilling guidelines for women's representation;

b. remind and reaffirm the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to be mindful of the intersections of gender, race, and class in the appointment of its resolution teams, task forces, consultants, etc., and in the development of policy.

**12. Encourage member-based organizations, networks, associations, and caucuses within the church to dismantle racism, sexism, classism, and ageism at all levels of the church, including within their own organizations. These organizations are encouraged to utilize the antiracism, cultural proficiency, and other leadership training resources developed by the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to equip their members to be advocates of transformation within Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) structures (see Appendix B: Resources). They are encouraged to work in partnership with others in this endeavor.**

**13. Encourage the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as it participates with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in its development of a global study process on gender, leadership, and power, to include attention to the intersections of gender, race, and class in the U. S. context.**

**[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$3,060; (2010): \$3,060 (Per Capita-GAC)]**

### *Rationale*

“The caged bird sings  
With a fearful trill  
Of things unknown  
But longed for still...”  
—Maya Angelou

“If you want to know me, learn my song!”  
—African Proverb

#### 1. *Prelude*

Hearing and singing<sup>1</sup> new songs to God releases our harmony of spirit and vibrant voice as faithful people of God. The ancient psalms have been our model of both tune and tone. Their lyrics and melodies have often called us and given voice to our shared harmonies of praise and lament from every person and all of creation.

Sadly, throughout the history of the church, some voices have been disvalued, excluded, or silenced. For too long, we have caged the faithful songs that some would sing. We have neither heard nor learned their songs, and so we have not really known them. Women, people of color, and particularly those at the intersections of these two identities have seldom found their voices heard and their songs sung throughout the life of the whole church.

So we who are church must now confess that whenever and wherever voices of the faithful are shunned, silenced, or ignored, there is disharmony that impoverishes the life of the whole church and denies our beliefs and commitments:

All of you are God’s children because of your faith in Christ Jesus. And when you were baptized, it was as though you had put on Christ in the same way you put on new clothes. Faith in Christ Jesus is what makes each of you equal with each other, whether you are a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free person, a man or a woman. (Gal. 3:26–28, Contemporary English Version, Copyright © 1995 by American Bible Society.)

In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community... (*The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.3, lines 29–32)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. ... (*Book of Order*, G-4.0403)

Along with their sisters and brothers in the PC(USA), women of color fully affirm our churchwide commitments and vision to be a faith community of inclusive diversity and diverse inclusiveness of God’s people. Those commitments are biblical and theological—deeply rooted in our identity as Presbyterians and as Christians. Women of color also share their lament for the many ways that the church has not always kept faith with this vision. Those broken promises are some of the old discords to be shunned. Then, new harmonies can be sung:

God of the women long put to the test,  
Left out of stories, forgotten, oppressed,  
Quietly asking: “Who smiled at my birth?”  
In Jesus’ dying, you show us our worth—Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

As the church seeks in faithfulness to live into the vision of wholeness that God calls us to be, women of color within the church offer their gifts—the rich diversity of experience, culture, and world view; gifts of faithfulness, service, and leadership—inviting the whole church to sing in new harmonies, naming and claiming new ways of being the whole people of God.

We believe the time, both God’s and ours, is now—now for all members of the church to learn the songs of women of color in the PC(USA) that we might truly know them and justly include them. Only in hearing and singing new songs to God will we fully and freely know all our sisters who are women of color, and thereby more fully and freely know God.

## 2. Background

In January 2001, the Racial Ethnic Women's Dialog of Presbyterian Women (PW) made a historic decision to call for a gathering of racial ethnic women. A great number of GAC ministry offices, presbyteries, synods, and Presbyterian Women responded to this call. In October 2004, more than 180 women of color from across the church came together in Atlanta where they met with approximately forty staff and elected consulting partners for national consultation. The participants were mostly grassroots, Presbyterian women of color leaders from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds. Most women were nominated by presbyteries, synods, PW groups, and racial ethnic caucuses to participate in the consultation. Among those participating were Asian Americans, African Americans, Latinas, Middle Easterners, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, and new immigrant women from Ghana, Kenya, and other countries.

The 2004 consultation was the first opportunity for women of color to meet together since 1993 when the Committee of Women of Color (CWC) was phased out at the General Assembly Council level. The theme drawn from Rev. 22:1-2, "Come, Be Refreshed by the Waters of Life," expressed the spirit of hope and stirred creative imagination in women of many races, cultures, ages, and all aspects of the church's life. There were three plenary sessions that addressed key issues for women of color, and there were ten mini-consultations that allowed the participants to share their experiences, perspectives, and ideas. Together, the women developed their vision of how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) might become an inclusive, beloved community. These sessions also generated the consultation recommendations that addressed many facets of the church's mission and ministry. Documents related to this process were published in the March/April 2005 issue of *Church & Society* magazine, titled "Come! Be Refreshed!"

After having participated in the consultation, participants expressed that they had developed new relationships and new understandings of issues that affect women of color and had learned strategies for bringing about change in the church. In addition, these women expressed more awareness and acceptance of each other's differences, recognizing those differences as strengths. The consultation became a safe place where they could speak freely, be heard, and be themselves. Many participants expressed a desire for continuing consultations, which serve "as the church's and society's hope and conscience."

Following the consultation, a team that included members of the consultation planning team and staff consultants, gathered the recommendations from the consultation in a report. The consultation recommendations were addressed to several entities of the church, including the General Assembly Council, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Women, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), and the participants themselves.

Based on their review of the report, the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns submitted a joint resolution to the 217th General Assembly (2006). The resolution, approved by the assembly, stated the following:

1. Create a task force to respond to the recommendations in the Women of Color Consultation (WoCC) report. ... This task force should include representation from ACREC and ACWC, as well as members identified from Presbyterian Women and the National Cross Caucus. As part of the response to the recommendations, the task force will design a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the recommendations in the WoCC report. This task force will report to the 218th General Assembly (2008).
2. Direct the General Assembly Council (GAC) to provide sufficient funding and staff support for the ACREC/ACWC joint task force.
3. Direct the GAC to provide sufficient funding and staff support to ensure a regularly recurring Women of Color Consultation.
4. Equip all GAC staff to be responsive to the needs of women of color as part of their continuing commitment to valuing the gifts that all people bring to the PC(USA). GAC staff should continue to be encouraged to reflect on and incorporate the values articulated in the *Report on Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004).
5. Encourage all members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to read, study, and respond to the WoCC report and recommendations. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 678)

## 3. Analysis of the WoCC Report

The report and recommendations of the Women of Color Consultation (released December 2005) took a wide-scope view of the church's organizational structure at all levels, and included reflections on the culture of the church. Women at the consultation spoke about their experience in the church

- at congregational, presbytery, synod, and national levels;
- in organizations, networks, and caucuses where they participate;
- as members and as leaders; and

- as ordained clergy, elders, deacons, and as laypersons.

Throughout the report, one can hear the authentic voices of racial ethnic women expressing both their love of Jesus Christ and the Presbyterian church as well as their struggle with a church that often renders them outsiders. They express deep frustration with a church that is often resistant to change and, many times, is obstructive to the efforts of women of color to participate fully in the life of the church. As the task force met and began its assessment, these questions served as their guide: “Whose voices are not being heard?” “What messages have been silenced?”

a. *Themes*

The task force identified four overarching themes in the consultation report, and placed these at the core of its analysis of the response to the report. Consultation participants were asked to share experiences of racism and sexism in the church and in the society. They were also asked to think about how the church might do things differently, in order to become a more welcoming church—fully engaging and supporting women of color in the life of the church. The report captures their recommendations to the church and reveals several overarching themes of their vision for a more inclusive and diverse church that affirms and takes seriously the gifts of racial ethnic women. The message that resonates throughout the report is a call to the church for transformation. If the PC(USA) is to become a truly multiracial, multicultural church that welcomes and is strengthened by diversity, the report holds that the church must be willing to be transformed—to learn new ways of doing and being a faith community.

(1) *Gender Lens and Intersectionality*

The report calls the church to use a “gender lens”—that is, to learn to see “gender-specific needs and realities.” The report also points out emphatically that women of color are both racial ethnic and female, thus, neither identity can be denied for them to be whole. It calls the church to develop a better understanding of the intersectionality of race and gender in the experience of women of color. The report continually reiterates the importance of incorporating women’s organizations, networks, and communication vehicles in planning at all levels of the church so that women’s experiences are made an integral part of the process of giving shape to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Furthermore, it urges that this should be done in a framework where “intersectionality” is understood to mean the ways in which the factors of race, gender, class and other social identities interact and intersect in the lived experiences and personal identity of women of color. Intersectionality then, is the recognition that the lives of women of color are both racialized and gendered, and therefore their experience of oppression is shaped by discrimination directed towards both their race and gender. Intersectionality is a recognition that women of color experience racism differently than men of color; it is a recognition that women of color experience sexism differently than white women.

(2) *Church as a System of Privilege and Discrimination*

The second theme arising out of the report is a call to the church to recognize the ways that the church perpetuates systems of privilege within its own structures and ethos, and to renew its commitment to dismantle racism in all its forms, recognizing the complexities of race, ethnicity, and class as factors of marginalization and privilege. The church has already done some of this work. The 211th General Assembly (1999), in *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*, directed all presbyteries to engage in antiracism training by 2005. While many presbyteries have undertaken this work, there are still many who have yet to do so. Antiracism resources and training opportunities are available to Presbyterians, though there seems to be a lack of initiative and recognition of a need to do the work. There remains a need to expand on the resources the church can provide congregations, presbyteries, and synods, in the areas of race, gender, and class intersections, internalized oppression, white and male privilege.

(3) *Commitment to Inclusivity with Justice*

Another theme present in the consultation’s report is a desire for the church to express a renewed commitment to inclusivity with justice, through equity and mutuality, recognizing the need for shared power at all levels of the church and the need for cultural transformation within the church to make this possible. Equity and mutuality are elements of a whole and welcoming beloved community that lend themselves to an environment where shared power is possible. It is much more than ensuring that particular groups are represented in decision-making bodies. Presbyteries and synods must be equipped with the tools of cultural proficiency and dialogue in order to develop and foster vital community-building skills. The adoption and incorporation of the tools for cultural proficiency throughout the body of the church can help to create an environment where women of color’s voices, gifts, and leadership are fully valued and appreciated.

(4) *Making Visible the Leadership of Women of Color*

Finally, the consultation is calling the church to express its commitments to inclusivity and diversity by developing, nurturing, and supporting the leadership and gifts of women of color within the church—beyond token representation. It is im-

portant, therefore, to collect data that will give the church an accurate assessment of where and how women of color are serving throughout the body of the church. This data would aid the church in measuring its own commitments in nomination and recruitment processes that utilize broad searches for candidates, and result in a greater diversity of candidates. Too often, the church has called on the same few people to be the representative for their racial ethnic or age group. The 208th General Assembly (1996), in *Racial Ethnic Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy*, called upon the church to commit itself to the goal of increasing the membership of diverse racial, ethnic, and immigrant communities, and to the vision of creating an environment where their numbers and gifts are welcome and valued. The church is more fully able to embody the beloved community when responding to this call. However, the consultation report also reflects the reality that the whole church has not actively embraced this goal with intentional, committed actions. Until that happens, denominational goals for increasing racial ethnic and new immigrant membership have little meaning.

b. *Assessment of Recommendations*

Many recommendations in the report were broad in scope, but there were also many that narrowly addressed specific program ministries and entities that existed in 2004. Many of these entities were downsized or eliminated in the 2006 restructuring of the General Assembly Council program areas. The task force, which was asked to assess the structure's response to the recommendations in the report, became frustrated by the confusion present within the organization—an organization that was in significant transition. Essentially, the task force had received a document addressed to a nonexistent structure and struggled with how to move forward.

While trying to fulfill its responsibility in the midst of transition, it became increasingly apparent to the task force that the processes for change can have a significant impact on the outcome. In other words, inclusivity with equity means that the people impacted need to have a voice in the changes that effect their participation in the life of the church. The task force experienced significant frustration as it saw the GAC, in particular, busily working to reorganize itself to support stated goals to become a more diverse, multicultural church, yet not taking time to attend to the work of 200 women of color—grassroots women from across the church—who spoke from experience about the realities the church confronts. The following describes some of the difficulties that the task force has experienced in addressing the recommendations to an organization in transition—and some of the successes. Within the GAC staff, all senior leadership positions have yet to be filled as of the writing of this report. Three ministries divisions in the GAC became one Mission Ministry with seven ministry areas. Program staff were sometimes dispersed into differing ministry areas and had to adjust to changes in management and budget. Without an ability to accurately determine who in the surviving structure should be contacted, the task force wrote the General Assembly Council asking for an assessment of program responses. In order to assist in this process, the task force translated the report from the Mission Work Plan 2005–2006 (MWP 05–06) framework into the Mission Work Plan 2007–2008 framework. This was done in the hope that it would improve the response rate, but the response rate remained low. However, the task force is pleased to report it had the opportunity to engage in conversation with the GAC working group developing the Mission Work Plan 2009–2010 in the interest of bringing the voices of the consultation into the planning of this guiding document. The Mission Work Plan 2009–2010 team appreciated how the Women of Color Consultation organized its recommendations in line with the mission work plan and commended this as a model for others.

Given these circumstances, the task force's attempts to receive written feedback from most program areas were only minimally successful. However, many of the staff that the task force sought to consult with were able to meet with the task force. Many of these conversations were helpful. The task force met with staff from

- Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area,
- Office of Vocation,
- General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), and
- General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR).

In these meetings, the task force found colleagues who deeply appreciated the expressed concerns of women of color, and were eager to share their ongoing efforts to address these concerns. These conversations, a meeting with the Executive Committee of the GAC, and additional correspondence with the Executive Director have brought some measure of clarity on the work that GAC ministries are doing and the ways that their work is responsive to the concerns raised in the consultation.

c. *A Model for Change*

The initiative to sponsor a gathering of women of color in the church came from Presbyterian Women (PW) through its own Racial Ethnic Women's Dialog, which began in 1998. The dialog began as a response to racial ethnic women calling for a forum where their voices could be heard within PW. This group of women of diverse racial ethnic backgrounds and ages meets annually with the intention to break down barriers, promote mutual understanding, and to move in the direction of a

deeper collaborative work. The process of the dialog has helped to raise awareness within PW of the need for change within their organization.

Presbyterian Women has engaged the issue of racism in a variety of ways. After declaring its antiracist identity in 2000, it has worked consistently on its antiracism initiative. The PW has offered two rounds of antiracism training programs over the last six years through which more than sixty women have been trained and are providing leadership to bring about racial justice in their churches, presbyteries, and synods. The PW has offered antiracism and cultural proficiency training to its Churchwide Coordinating Team (CCT) of PW since 2000. The PW CCT is also addressing issues of shared power and internalized oppression utilizing the antiracism and cultural proficiency training tools of the PC(USA).

Unfortunately, PW's commitment does not seem to be shared by many other entities in the church. Women attending the consultation repeatedly asked for accountability to be built into the system to respond to their voices and needs. Critical failures for this structural accountability were noted with the major reductions of staff (1993 and 2004), some of whom had responsibilities to these constituencies, and the elimination of the Committee of Women of Color (CWC), a national committee with sole focus on women of color's concerns, in 1993. With a few exceptions, Committees of Women of Color<sup>2</sup> have now been phased out at all levels in the connectional structure. With these losses, women of color strain to recognize support for them throughout the church. Acknowledging financial and membership losses in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does not mean we must accept a church of scarcity for women of color.

#### d. *Tools for Change*

During the consultation, Roula Alkhouri and Laura Mariko Cheifetz asked in their sermon—"But what sort of life is this? If we are identified only by the stereotypes that others hold against us ... only by what wounds us ... only by what limits our possibilities ... [then] what is it that makes us whole and good? What is it that makes us free?"<sup>3</sup> They are inviting the whole church to listen to their cries and hopes and to explore these questions together and respond to the vision to which God calls all of us. In the recommendations<sup>4</sup>, the consultation urged the church to

"Demonstrate spirituality by growing into an inclusive community that embraces change with new ideas to make all racial ethnic/ immigrant persons feel welcome. ... Be more intentional about sharing power, creating accountability, and adopting new ways of doing ministry at all levels of the church..."<sup>5</sup>

This vision of the beloved community requires hard work from the whole church. To contribute to this vision, women of color recognize that they need to work on their own internalized oppression of racism and sexism. They call the family of God to this same self-examination, conviction, repentance, and transformation.

#### e. *Cultural Proficiency*

In order to build the beloved community, we need to learn to communicate effectively across our differences. We will learn that differences and distinctions do not have to separate us—instead they are gifts from an abundant loving God, which must be appreciated, celebrated, and engaged. Cultural proficiency is a process that can help us move in this direction, individually and organizationally. One of the tools of cultural proficiency is to recognize the barriers to change: the presumption of entitlement and lacking an awareness of the need to adapt to human diversity.

In the world of gender relations, power dynamics between men and women tend to disadvantage women. In the world of race relations in the U.S., power dynamics between whites and persons of color tend to disadvantage people of color. This broken system serves to advantage men and whites. Advantaged persons in this construct intentionally and unintentionally perpetuate systems of privilege. In this sense, women of color are doubly burdened—burdened by their race and burdened by their gender. This social construct does not take seriously the realities of women of color who live at the intersection of race and gender; the needs of women of color are often ignored.

The framework of cultural proficiency provides a spectrum (for individuals and organizations), which begins describing behaviors that are culturally destructive and builds toward cultural understanding, which honors differences as assets to the individual and the whole community. It is a tool to help individuals and organizations learn to assess where they are and where they need to change. These analytical skills are a critical component for organizations seeking to be intentional about change and transformation.

Cultural proficiency is

"...a way of being that allows individuals and organizations to interact effectively with people who differ from them. It is a developmental approach for addressing the issues that emerge in diverse environments."<sup>6</sup>

Culturally proficient organizations learn to recognize institutional and systemic barriers to inclusion with equity. Antiracism training and gender equity audits are two tools that can help organizations learn to identify structures and habits that work to marginalize people within their organizations.

Dialogue is a major tool for developing empathy and understanding. During the consultation, dialogue facilitated major change in the participants. Participants learned to appreciate each other's differences, learned from each other, and built strategies based on their collective wisdom.

In the work of the task force, tools of cultural proficiency were used to explore and understand how the intersections of race and gender are experienced in our own lives. In sharing with one another, we furthered our commitments to this process and to the understanding of how becoming culturally proficient changes us. These tools changed the task force. They can help to transform the church also.

#### f. *World Alliance of Reformed Churches*

It is important to note that women of color in the PC(USA) are not alone in calling the church to think critically at the intersections of categories, such as race and gender. There are many other women and men around the world that are making a similar call. For instance, a consultation on "Gender, Leadership and Power" (June 2007), organized by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), of which the PC(USA) is a member, examined the issues of leadership and power through a gender lens and in relation to race/ethnicity, culture, and many other forces that impact women's lives. What emerged from the WARC consultation is a proposal for a global study process that is intended for transformation of gender and power constructions in relation to racial and ethnic identity, cultural identity, use of the Bible and theology in the church, globalization, and leadership. The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) has recommended to the General Assembly Council "that it develop a strategy for such study process for the PC(USA) and leadership and our participation in the North America study process." Participation with WARC will strengthen and enhance the efforts within PC(USA).

#### g. *Summary*

What is true about the world is also true about the church. We have built systems of white and male privilege into the life and ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and these two gender-based and race-based systems seldom meet, making women of color fall between the cracks. Once recognized, we must transform this reality by removing the barriers and building, with one another, the beloved community. The church is called to be distinct, to be salt and light to the world—the gospel model for society. Anything less is a scandalous denial of God.

The reports received by the task force from responding entities indicate that PC(USA) structures continue to be naïve about their diversity claims. Yet these women do not end with a song of lament. Our faithful sisters in God's family remain steadfast in the church and continue to sing a song insisting on change, calling on the church to listen.

#### 4. *Conclusions*

True commitment to a new vision of the church requires committed action. If the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is to become a diverse and inclusive community of faith that fully engages all of its members in all aspects of the life and decision-making with equity and mutuality, we must take concrete steps to effect the kinds of change that make this vision a reality. Change in an organization is a process that happens at multiple points and from multiple directions. Some things can be mandated or legislated, but some kinds of change must come with a conversion of the heart. Any strategy for change must also acknowledge that there are always barriers to change. This is especially true when confronting the systemic nature of racism, sexism, and classism. The task force acknowledges that if the vision for change does not belong to the whole church, the transformation called for by the Women of Color Consultation will not become a reality. Therefore, the task force is recommending a strategy that seeks to engage the church at every level and in a variety of ways.

Presbyteries and synods were prominent in the consultation report, as the place where members are most likely to be involved beyond the local congregation. Consultation participants lifted up specific denominational responsibilities and commitments that had an impact on their participation in the church. These included

- responsibilities and functions of presbyteries relating to processes of candidacy, call and ordination;
- the work of committees on representation to promote the engagement of women of color in the leadership of their presbytery or synod;
- the activities of presbyteries and synods to help congregations to engage in ministries of social justice,
- providing training and resources for antiracism work, and

- modeling the use of inclusive and expansive language in meetings and worship.

The women who participated in the 2004 consultation expressed a strong sense of urgency in their call for recurring consultations. The task force urges the GAC to reflect the same sense of urgency in planning and conducting the next consultation and recommends a timeline that would provide for an event no later than 2011. With the loss of staffing and programs directly relating to women of color, a consultation process is seen as an important mechanism to give voice for women of color within the PC(USA) structure. The task force believes the focus of the next consultation should be on presbyteries and synods.

a. *Accountability to Each Other in the Community of Faith*

A central theme of the consultation was the need within a connectional church to hold each other accountable to the commitments we have made as a community of faith. The governing bodies of the church play a critical role in exercising accountability through its structures, as do the member-based organizations that speak for particular constituencies within the church. The elected GAC plays a crucial leadership role in monitoring and directing the work of GAC staff and setting the Mission Work Plan goals.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) were created by the General Assembly to monitor the work of the church and to advocate for women and for people of color, respectively. The spirit of the WoCC underscores the need for these two committees to work together to address the intersections of race and gender, rather than segmenting the work in separate categories of "women" and "racial ethnic." Historically, ACWC and ACREC have met jointly in conjunction with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP). The agenda for this joint meeting has focused on their common work in preparation for General Assembly. When assemblies met every year, this was an annual meeting, which facilitated the three committees' work in advising the assembly. However, it did not allow time for the creative work of developing new initiatives or educating committee members to work more effectively in the intersections of gender, race, and class that shape and inform the work that each committee is called to do.

Following the WoCC, ACREC and ACWC created a Joint Working Group with members of both committees to consider the recommendations of the consultation and ways in which the two committees could work together to address concerns raised by women of color. The Joint Working Group refers items of business back to the ACREC and ACWC committees for additional conversation and action. This gives responsibility to ACREC to examine issues of racial justice through a gender lens, and ACWC to examine issues of gender justice through a racial/cultural lens. The task force believes that the Joint Working Group is crucial to ensuring that ACWC and ACREC are equipped to be fully responsive to women of color in the church. The work of this group would be enhanced by the participation of non-voting members to provide greater representation and expertise. The current budgets for ACREC and ACWC do not provide for the costs associated with bringing additional participants to a joint meeting. Providing for that expanded participation and extended meeting time ensures that both committees can sustain the joint working group on a permanent basis and allows for greater representation of women from various parts of the church in the process.

b. *Equipping and Resourcing the Church for Transformation*

Intentional, committed strategies for change require equipping people with the tools for change. The 2004 consultation pointed to the failure throughout the church to use the resources available. Many of the women present were not aware of the denomination's commitment to do antiracism training at all governing levels, for example. The consultation also pointed to the need for additional resources to equip the church for change. When the consultation met in 2004, the concepts and tools of cultural proficiency were just being introduced to the church. As the task force did its assessment, cultural proficiency emerged as a way of speaking about the multiple facets of change that need to occur—encompassing a variety of strategies at different locations within the organizational structure of the church:

- Creating greater awareness of the realities of sexism, racism and classism; the intersections of gender, race and class; and the significant difference that age/generation makes in the experience of racism and sexism in our culture;
- Learning to recognize the barriers to change, which includes recognizing the ways that privilege and internalized oppression impact both personal relationships and formal structures within the church;
- Developing better skills for cross-cultural communication;
- Learning to share power and create relationships based on equity and mutuality, using different models for dialogue and decision-making;



- Recognizing the role of OGA & GAC to equip congregations, presbyteries, and synods by developing resources and facilitating networks where Presbyterians can share best practices and learn from each other’s experiences;
- Developing and utilizing tools to help the church learn to recognize the ways that it perpetuates systemic patterns of discrimination so that they can be dismantled:
  - Gender equity audits
  - Training in antiracism; the intersections of gender, race & class; internalized oppression and privilege
- Gathering, organizing and reporting data that gives an accurate picture of the status of women of color in the church; and
- Renewing commitments to seeking full participation of women and people of color through the work of committees on representation and nominating committees.

In addition to providing resources, support, and guidance to congregations, presbyteries, and synods, the work of the church at the national level is critical to transforming the church. The consultation, while affirming the work of the General Assembly in its public witness to race and gender justice, also expressed the need for the church at the national level to embody the vision expressed in our policies. The work of the General Assembly level committees, governing boards, and staff entities reflect whether the church is truly committed to transformation by the ways it embodies a new vision.

The 2004 consultation affirmed the work of the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the General Assembly Committee on Representation, and the denomination’s policies that require minimum levels of participation for people of color and women in particular entities. The consultation also underscores the importance of not segmenting race and class as the church seeks to be representative, seeking instead to pay close attention to the intersections of race and gender—so that when seeking to meet standards for racial ethnic representation we seek to have gender balance, and when seeking to assure participation of women, racial and cultural diversity is included in that representation.

The consultation also pointed to the importance of communication on multiple levels. Providing translation in meetings and publications in languages other than English are important steps to creating an inclusive church. Communicating in a culturally proficient manner encompasses other aspects as well:

- Paying attention to the diversity in the church,
- Not assuming there is only one normative way of being Presbyterian,
- Including persons of color in visual media with integrity,
- Using language that is inclusive and sensitive to the ways diverse communities speak about themselves, and
- Learning to speak to a generation that has grown up in an Internet age but remembering that not every congregation has Internet access.

These are just some of the considerations that should be reflected in the ways we communicate throughout the church.

Many of the women who participated in the consultation were invited through grassroots member-based organizations such as Presbyterian Women, the racial ethnic women’s organizations, racial ethnic caucuses, and Racial Ethnic Young Women Together. The consultation recognized that the members of these organizations also have a voice in effecting change within the church. They called on their own organizations and others throughout the church, to call their members to accountability and to equip their members to be effective agents for change. As the task force met with various entities within the church, it became more aware of the many organizations, associations, and networks that have significant impact on the life of the church—and it urges all of them to engage in the process of transformation.

## APPENDIX A

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Affirmative Action:** A set of public policies and initiatives designed to help eliminate past and present discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The actual phrase “affirmative action” was first used in President Lyndon Johnson’s 1965 Executive Order 11246 requiring federal contractors to “take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated dur-

ing employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin.” In 1967, Johnson expanded the Executive Order to include affirmative action requirements to benefit women. (Source: <http://www.now.org/nnt;08-95/affirmhs.html>.)

**Ageism:** Discrimination on the basis of age and life experience. The term is most often used to refer to discrimination against older adults, but within the church it can refer to the marginalization of young adults from leadership.

**Antiracism:** An active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism as well as the oppression and injustice racism causes. (Source: Canadian Race Relations Foundation’s Glossary of Terms.)

**Assimilation:** A process by which “outsiders” are brought into or are made to take on and then live out of, the identity of a dominant group, often resulting in the loss of the culture of the minority group. The term has a decidedly negative connotation implying coercion and a failure to recognize and value diversity. Other times this term is understood as a survival technique for individuals and groups.

**Class:** A category usually used to divide members of society into groups in terms of their economic status. The American Heritage Dictionary defines it as “a social stratum whose members share similar economic, political, and cultural characteristics.”

**Consultation:** (working definition for the 2004 consultation) Describes the process by which people engage one another at a meeting. It usually refers to a gathering where a group of people with a particular set of concerns, experience, and expertise are brought together to consult with one another with the goal of engendering a projected outcome.

**Cross-cultural:** Communication and interactions that understand and respect the difference culture makes in relationships.

**Culture:** Everything you believe and do that identifies you as a member of a group and distinguishes you from other groups. You may belong to more than one cultural group. Cultures reflect the belief systems and behaviors that are informed by ethnicity as well as other sociological factors like gender, age, sexual orientation, and physical ability. Both individuals and organizations are defined by their cultures. (Source: R.B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell, editors. *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*, 2003, 2nd edition.)

**Cultural Competence:** A term created by Terry Cross, which means interacting with one’s clients, colleagues, and community using the essential elements of cultural competence: assessing culture, valuing diversity, managing the dynamics of difference, adapting to diversity, and institutionalizing cultural knowledge. (Source: Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell.)

**Cultural Group:** A group of people that share certain characteristics such as mannerisms, beliefs (religious and other), language, values, and usually a common history, real or fictitious. See Ethnic Group.

**Cultural Identity:** Seeing oneself in relation to one’s own ethnic or cultural group. There are many different affiliations that we hold that come together to create a unique cultural identity for each of us. Our cultural identity is very complex with each group membership intersecting with the others. Because of this complexity, we cannot be judged, labeled, or categorized based on one aspect of our identity. (Source: D. Merrill-Sands, Holvino, and Cumming. Working with Diversity: Working Paper NO. 11, Center for Gender in Organizations, SIMMONS Graduate School of Management, MA, USA, 2000. [www.awid.org/ywl/glossary](http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary).)

**Cultural Filter:** Our complex cultural identity creates in our minds a sort of “cultural filter.” Everything we experience each day goes through this filter, influencing how we think, feel, and react to the world around us.

**Cultural Proficiency:** The policies and practices of an organization, or the values and behaviors of an individual, which enable that organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency is a “way of being” that is reflected in the way an organization treats its employees, its clients, and its community. There are six points along the cultural proficiency continuum: cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity, cultural indifference<sup>7</sup>, cultural precompetence, cultural competence, and cultural proficiency. (Source: Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell.)

**Dialogue:** A process of communication that allows people to share their perspectives and experiences with one another about difficult issues we tend to just debate about or avoid entirely. (Source: National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation. <http://www.thataway.org>.)

**Discrimination:** Treating members of a targeted group less favorably than those of the dominant group. Often occurs when the dominant group determines the accessibility of goods or services for, and/or the rights and privileges of, the targeted group. (Source: Association for Women’s Rights in Development, [www.awid.org/ywl/glossary](http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary).)

**Diversity:** A general term for indicating that many people with many differences are present in an organization or group. Diversity refers to ethnicity, language, gender, age, ability, and sexual orientation and all other aspects of culture. (Source: Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell.)

**Dominant Culture:** Used widely to refer to the cultural group with the greatest political power in a given context.

**Ethnic Group:** A group socially defined on the basis of cultural characteristics of diverse types such as language, religion, kinship organization, dress, and mannerism, or any other set of criteria deemed relevant to the actors concerned. (Source: Merrill-Sands, D., Holvino, and Cumming. Working with Diversity, Working Paper, No. 11, Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, MA, USA: 2000.)

**Ethnicity:** A social construct which divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base. (Source:

Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, editors. *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A sourcebook*. New York: Routledge, 2000.)

**Ethnocentrism:** The belief that one's ethnic group is superior to all others, resulting, at times, in discrimination toward those of different ethnic backgrounds or national origin. (Source: Maurianne Adams, et. al.)

**Gender (vs. Sex):** Describes the socially constructed identities (as opposed to biological), roles, and expectations assigned to women and men. Feminine and masculine are the qualifiers used to describe gender stereotypes for women and men.

**Gender Audit:** A self-assessment tool for organizations and institutions on how gender issues are addressed in programming portfolios and internal organizational processes, and not on external evaluation.

**Gender equality:** Women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social, and cultural development and to benefit equally from the results, not by becoming the same, but by correcting the systemic nature of inequality. (Source: Association of Women's Rights in Development, [www.awid.org/ywl/glossary](http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary).)

**Gender equity:** The process of ensuring fairness to both women and men, often involving making measures available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on the same level. Equity leads to equality. (Source: Association for Women's Rights in Development, <http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary>.)

**Gender lens:** Using a gender lens is like putting on spectacles. Like using a pair of glasses to correct our vision, gender lens helps us focus our attention on gender differences in needs and realities and take these differences seriously.

**Gender Roles:** Learned behavior in a given society/community that conditions certain tasks, activities, and behavior to be perceived as male or female. They vary according to culture and/or social group and according to class, ethnicity, and race. Factors such as education, technology, economic change, and sudden crises like war and famine cause gender roles and the gender division of labor to change. (Source: Association for Women's Rights in Development, [www.awid.org/glossary](http://www.awid.org/glossary).)

**Inclusive Language:** A corrective to human languages that mirror the societal values and institutions of the dominant group. The inclusive language policy adopted by the PC(USA) in 1985 stated that the language of the church "should display a sensitivity to varied metaphors that reflect our belief in a covenanting God, the limitations as well as the richness of human imagery in language about God, and diversity among Presbyterians." (Source: Definitions and Guidelines on Inclusive Language, PDS 70-420-01-003.)

**Institutional racism/sexism:** When the values, norms, beliefs, standards, and expectations of a dominant group become the basis for organizational policies, practices, arrangements, and appropriate behaviors, and result in unequal distribution of benefits and opportunities. The power to control resources, determine access, reward and punish behaviors, distribute benefits and privilege is lodged in norms of the dominant group and access is denied to people of different identity groups. (Source: Merrill-Sands, D., Holvino and Cumming. *Working with Diversity*, [www.awid.org/ywl/glossary](http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary).)

**Internalized oppression:** External oppression becomes internalized oppression when the oppressed come to believe and act as if the oppressor's belief system, values, and way of life are reality.

**Intersectionality:** The reality for women who suffer not only from gender discrimination, but also experience a range of other power relations such as racial, ethnic, caste, among others. For instance, most racial ethnic women experience discrimination not only because of their race but also because of their gender; in other words, racial ethnic women live the intersection of gender and race discrimination. (Source: Association of Women's Rights in Development, <http://www.awid.org/glossary>.)

**Male privilege:** Unearned and unquestioned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits, and choices bestowed on people solely because they are men living in a system that is built on sexism. By virtue of their maleness, men enjoy concrete benefits through access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society. Generally, men who enjoy such privilege do so without choosing it or even being conscious of it.

**Multiculturalism:** The preservation of different cultures or cultural identities within a society or nation, holding each as equally valuable to and influential upon the members of society. The educational term, multicultural, refers to teaching about different cultures. Multiculturalism differs from cultural proficiency, in that it reflects a state of being, whereas cultural proficiency is a process or a way of being. (Source: Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell, *Cultural Proficiency*.)

**Mutual Invitation:** A process designed by Eric Law to ensure that everyone who wants to engage in a dialog has the opportunity to speak and be heard in a group setting where the dynamics of power can be played out in such a way that some may dominate the conversation while silencing others.

**Patriarchy:** Literally means "rule of the father." In a patriarchal society, women are seen as the primary house workers and child raisers, and their capacity to compete economically with men is thereby limited. Cultural patterns and legal restrictions continue to limit women's economic, political, and social equality to ratify the view that women are subordinate to men as a gender group, a subordination that is interstructured with class and racial subordination. Religion and society are deeply shaped by this system. (Source: Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, Westminster/John Knox. Letty M. Russell and J. Shannon Clarkson, 1996.)

**Person of color:** Generally used to refer to "non-whites."

Prejudice: A pre-judgment drawn in the absence of evidence and held in the face of evidence that contradicts it. (Source: Working Definitions prepared for antiracism training in the PC(USA).)

Race: A socially constructed category developed during the period of European colonial expansion that uses characteristics such as skin color, facial features, and body structure as a basis for classifying people. (Source: Working Definitions prepared for antiracism training in the PC(USA).)

Racial ethnic: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1987 defined “racial ethnic” as a term to refer to a group of people that defines itself or is defined by others as different from the dominant white American group. (Source: *Minutes*, 1987, Part I, p. 565).

Racism: (Power + Racial Prejudice=Racism) results from a merger of social power and racial prejudice to create systems that treat people differently whether intentionally or unintentionally. It shapes institutions and structures so that they provide privileges for some while oppressing others. It involves inequality and unfair access to the distribution of such resources as money, education, information, and decision-making power between dominant and dominated groups.

Sex (vs. Gender): Refers to the biological differences between women and men.

Sexism: Refers to gender stereotyping of men and women as hierarchically ordered (men over women) and also as confined to limited cultural identities and roles as “masculine and “feminine.” It is expressed in the exclusion of women from certain types of employment or leadership roles that are assumed to be the prerogatives of males. Sexism is expressed in personal, interpersonal, cultural, economic, legal, and political terms, and is part of a total social and cultural system. (Source: Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, Westminster/John Knox. Letty M. Russell and J. Shannon Clarkson, 1996.)

Stereotype: A fixed notion or conception of a person, group, idea, etc., allowing for no individuality and no critical judgment of individual cases. Stereotypes are usually based on false generalizations about a particular category of people, and are often used to justify the actions taken against members of that group. (Source: Maurianne Adams, et. al.)

White Privilege: The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society which whites receive, either consciously or unconsciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society where those who are considered to be white are the dominant group. Generally white people who enjoy such privilege do so without being conscious of it. (Source: “Working Definitions” prepared for antiracism training in the PC(USA).)

## APPENDIX B

### Printed Resources

Cannon, Katie G. *Remembering What We Never Knew: The Epistemology of Womanist Theology*. Louisville: Women’s Ministries Program Area, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2001.

Garcia, Magdalena I. *Toward a Liberating Faith: Introduction to Mujerista Theology*. Louisville: Women’s Ministries Program Area, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2001.

Lee, Unzu. *Coming Home: Asian American Women Doing Theology*. Louisville: Women’s Ministries Program Area, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2006.

Lee, Unzu, ed. *Come! Be Refreshed!: A National Gathering of Women of Color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. In *Church & Society, March/April 2005*. Louisville: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2005.

Lewis, Nantawan Boonprasat, Lydia Hernandez, Helen Locklear, and Robina Marie Winbush. *Sisters Struggling in the Spirit: A Women of Color Theological Anthology*. Louisville: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 1994.

Lindsey, Randall B., Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond Terrell. *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, 2003.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). “Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community.” 211th General Assembly (1999). OGA-99-033.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). “Racial Ethnic Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy.” 208th General Assembly (1996). PDS #72-429-06-001.

### Audiovisual Resources

*Becoming the Beloved Community: People of Faith Working Together to Eradicate Racism*. Produced by Presbyterian Women, 2006. PWR-06-120.

### Web Resources

Association for Women’s Rights in Development. <<http://www.awid.org>>

Center for Women’s Global Leadership. <<http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu>>

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Racial Justice & Advocacy*. <<http://www.pcusa.org/racialjustice>>

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Office of Women’s Advocacy*. <<http://www.pcusa.org/womensadvocacy>>

## Endnotes

1. Mindful of people with hearing and speaking disabilities, it should be noted that language in this report about “hearing” and “singing” does not exclusively refer to physical activity of the bodyperson. Rather, the language of “hearing” and “singing” is metaphor that also, and perhaps more importantly, refers to activities of mind and spirit. Indeed, by the grace of God and the gift of faith, our minds and spirits both experience and express our praise and thanks to God through our “seeing” and “hearing,” through our “visioning” and “speaking” and “singing.”
2. Committee of Women of Color was eliminated with two other women’s advocacy networks: Justice for Women and Women Employed by the Church. See *Years of Strong Effort* (by Annette Chapman-Adisho, PDS #72-710-98-001).
3. Come! Be Refreshed! A National Gathering of Women of Color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *Church & Society*, Volume 95, Number 4, (March/April 2005) p. 86.
4. See Appendix C, Women of Color Consultation Report and Recommendations, p 13–14.
5. Come! Be Refreshed! A National Gathering of Women of Color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *Church & Society*, Volume 95, Number 4, (March/April 2005) p. 133.
6. “Cultural Proficiency: What is it? ©2003 The Cultural Proficiency Group, p. 1.
7. Lindsey, Randall B., Robins, Kikanza Nuri, and Terrell, Raymond D. 2003, *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin, Press, Inc.), 2nd Edition, 98. Authors of Cultural Proficiency use the term “cultural blindness” for this stage.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 09-13 is the Women of Color Consultation Task Force’s report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.”

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that Item 09-13 be approved.

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## Item 09-14

[The assembly approved Item 09-14 with amendment. See pp. 54, 55.]

*Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

**The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

**1. Approve the report, “Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform,” for study, and approve the following recommendations:**

**a. In order to strengthen the study and witness of Presbyterians across the church:**

**(1) direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to publish both resolution and study paper (together, the report) on the PC(USA) website, making available a printed copy for interested Presbyterians, for each presbytery and synod, and for use with state and federal legislators, election commissions, and other appropriate officials;**

**(2) encourage all members and friends of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to study and take actions suggested, including, above all, to vote their consciences; and**

**(3) direct the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC), through the Presbyterian Washington Office and other appropriate ministries of peace and justice, to advocate and support the positions developed in this resolution, and urge presbyteries, synods, and ecumenical ministries—national, regional, and local—to advocate and support these positions as well within their witness for the common good in a democratic society.**

**b. To increase voter participation:**

(1) commend the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by the Bush Administration and Congress, by wide majorities (July 26, 2006; Senate: 98–0; House of Representatives: 390–33);

(2) support adequate funding and non-partisan enforcement of the Voting Rights Act’s provisions by the Department of Justice, the Federal Election Commission, and other federal and state agencies, with the ultimate goal of increasing U.S. voting levels among all U.S. population groups;

(3) support a constitutional “affirmative right to vote” of all citizens to undergird full and fair exercise of the franchise in all states, counties, and municipalities, including districts, territories, commonwealth, and protectorates unless specifically excluded by law;

(4) support universal voter registration to allow all citizens over eighteen years of age to vote, unless specifically excluded by civil or criminal sanction during period of sentence, building on the “single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list” called for by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA);

(5) support making election day a holiday or weekend event, to give people of all income levels, employment situations, and family responsibilities more opportunity to get to the polls;

(6) support the easing of absentee ballot restrictions to allow general voting by mail and early voting, by mail or in person, to reduce potential for long lines and equipment failures; and

(7) support measures providing greater accessibility for all voters, including those with disabilities and those speaking foreign languages.

[(8) support polling places on or near college campuses.]

**c. To ensure equality and fairness:**

(1) support full voting rights for the more than 600,000 residents of the District of Columbia who are ~~[tax-paying citizens]~~ currently unrepresented by ~~[either]~~ a voting representative ~~[or senators]~~ [in the congress, even though many pay taxes];

(2) support restoration of voting and other civil rights to former felons (more than five million persons), helping reintegrate them into society and give more voice to their generally poorer home communities;

(3) disapprove the imposition of special identification (ID) requirements~~[-, alleged to prevent fraud, that may further discourage poor and elderly voters]~~ [that do not provide for opportunities and means by which all persons may meet the requirements without placing a disproportionate and undue burden upon any group(s) of persons];

(4) support the Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Act and similar legislation to prevent misleading mailings and advertisements, unofficial yet uniformed personnel being posted near polling stations, and other “vote-suppression” methods;

(5) support mandated publicity for voter roll purges to supplement direct mail communication in poorer and academic communities with high percentages of renters; and

(6) support nonpartisan legislative redistricting based on an adequately funded census to make districts more contiguous and competitive, including those with racial ethnic majorities.

[(7) Support efforts designed to ensure that persons otherwise qualified to vote be permitted to cast ballots only in the jurisdiction in which they are entitled legally to vote.]

**d. To provide for greater accountability and responsibility, to support:**

(1) development of a nonpartisan professional electoral infrastructure in the place of partisan elections and patronage hiring of election officials, to apply “best practice” standards for recordkeeping, staff-training, public education, and electoral management;

(2) national minimum standards for voting equipment, ballot design, ballot counting, and transparency of administration to help all citizens have their votes counted properly;

(3) increased expertise and funding for the Electoral Assistance Commission and Council to perform testing and licensing of electronic voting equipment, such machines and software to require safeguards for confidentiality, modular independence, and audit-ability;

(4) public funding and guaranteed access to airwaves for candidates to offset the great advantages of private contributions and personal wealth, as well as legislation to limit total contribution levels insofar as this is possible: examples of such legislation include the Fair Elections Now Act, the Clean Money Clean Elections Act, as well as the McCain-Feingold and McCain-Feingold-Durbin Free Air Time Acts;<sup>1</sup>

(5) legislation to restrict the privileged access of former elected officials to lobbying positions in industries they formerly regulated and other legislation to prevent the “revolving door” by which regulation in the public interest is undermined; and

(6) legislation and appropriate support for judicial cases that distinguish between campaign contributions and “free speech,” allowing meaningful regulation of special interest groups and individuals who are currently expected to spend approximately \$400 million of the \$1.5 billion 2008 election cycle.

e. To renew and broaden democratic practice, to support:

(1) alternatives to an ever-earlier primary season that would shorten the campaign process, decrease its costs, and increase the influence of diverse and urban states, through such means as the “Delaware Plan,” the “American Plan,” and other rotating primary plans designed to spread opportunity among voters in all states and allow a reasonably open field for new candidates;

~~[(2) popular majority election of the president of the United States through the National Popular Vote plan or other means to limit or eliminate the Electoral College as a force for favoring “swing” states over all others and effectively denying the “one person, one vote” principle;]~~

~~[(3)]~~ [(2)] protection of nonpartisan free speech by religious and other groups from government interference, while affirming the church-state proscription of religious and other nonprofit organizations providing election support for particular candidates or parties; and

~~[(4)]~~ [(3)] consideration of ways to increase voter choice by “instant run-off” or ranked choice voting measures that tabulate first, second, and even third choices, saving money on run-off elections and potentially increasing consensus and diminishing partisanship.

2. Approve the following practical actions for individual members and congregations:

a. Educational programs:

(1) Cosponsor or participate in political issues forums with members of differing racial ethnic groups, before both local and national elections. It is important that congregants hear both sides of an issue from two or more speakers or from the candidates themselves.

(2) Provide educational programs on the history and impacts of systemic racism in order to develop the “racial literacy” all citizens need to be able to notice assumptions and practices that marginalize racial ethnic members of our communities.

(3) Study and debate new voting processes like Instant Runoff Voting and Proportional Voting that could affect the tendencies toward two-party dominance and periodic “gridlock” in our current electoral system.

(4) Provide voter education, both about the issues and the importance and complexity of this responsibility (this could include instruction on the issues addressed in this resolution).

(5) Pastors can preach on the moral dimensions of political issues. Sermons should be clearly grounded in Scripture and be informed by our confessional heritage and past statements of the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian church.

b. Encourage voter registration and turnout:

**(1) Conduct voter registration drives in partnership with organizations led by people of color and other neighborhood institutions, including ministerial organizations and interfaith bodies.**

**(2) Survey one's community, especially neighbors with the least means, in order to find out what issues are important to them in an upcoming election.**

**(3) Participate in voter turnout efforts.**

**c. Support improvements in the political process:**

**(1) Volunteer to be a poll watcher. A poll watcher is instructed on how to monitor activities at a local polling station to ensure the electoral process is fair and open to all registered to vote at that station.**

**(2) Support and encourage the action of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly in filing briefs in the Supreme Court on issues the General Assembly has supported, including campaign finance reform and the role of "free speech" and advertising.**

**(3) Support and encourage presbyteries and synods in monitoring local and state election laws, registration laws, and the use of voting machines.**

**(4) Support legislation; especially those on issues that have been supported by the General Assembly or one's local presbytery, such as voting rights in the District of Columbia, bills against deceptive electoral practices, and felon re-enfranchisement.**

**(5) Call on ACSWP and Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries-Presbyterian Women, in consultation with ACREC, to sponsor regional conferences on the electoral process and people of color, antiracism issues and systemic discrimination.**

***Rationale***

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2004 Referral: Item 10-02. Task Force on Election Report and Recommendations, Recommendation 2. That the General Assembly Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) to Participate in the Work of Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy as It Develops a Resolution—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 56, 686–700).*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a resolution calling for the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and for a further statement by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recommending new measures to prevent voter disenfranchisement in the United States. The 2004 assembly resolution is a detailed legal assessment of the need for accountability provided by the Voting Rights Act; it directed the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to develop a resolution on "the disenfranchisement of people of color in the U.S. electoral process" for the 218th General Assembly (2008) that would "address at least two dimensions": improvements in legislation (with a strong push for uniformity across states) and options for practical engagement (*Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 56, 686–700*). This resolution answers that request with recommendations in five categories: to increase voter participation, to ensure equality and fairness, to provide for accountability and responsibility, to renew democracy more broadly, and to propose actions for individuals, congregations, and councils of the church. Fuller explanation for these measures is provided in the study paper, along with brief reflections on the Presbyterian ethos that provides our motivation for reform.

The General Assembly's 1983 policy statement, "Reformed Faith and Politics," provides an extensive theological basis for Presbyterian involvement (including a book of scholarly essays), reflected in the understanding below, which we reaffirm:

Discipleship is not only a personal, individual calling. The sovereign Lord works not only in the depths of individual souls but also in the organizations, the institutions, and the movements of human history. . . . All Presbyterians, therefore, have a political vocation. Beyond the general political vocation of citizenship there is the special political vocation of public office. Public officials are not to be despised but to be honored and to be challenged when they do wrong. We must be sure that the worthy calling of public service is not ignored or demeaned. To be realistic about politics is not to despise it but to learn how to use it as an instrument of justice. (*Minutes, 1983, Part I, pp. 776–78*)

Throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and into the 1950s, General Assemblies in all three predecessor churches laid the groundwork for supporting the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and 1970s. We reaffirm the support for democracy in the following statement from 1942:



In its emphasis on the accountability of the individual to God and on the spirit of cooperation, Christianity nourishes the very roots of democracy. For personal responsibility and voluntary cooperation are prerequisites to a true democracy. ... The enjoyment of special privilege by some because of race and creed, and the consequent discrimination against others, draws its support from sources that are at variance with the Christian principles of human worth and brotherhood (fellowship). ... We commend the efforts of our Government, in cooperation with industry and organized labor, to remove racial barriers. ... (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1942, Part I, pp. 194–95).

**Current Concerns:** This resolution by the 2008 General Assembly continues the Presbyterian tradition of witness for democracy and the equality of electoral rights necessary for its exercise, noting the persistence of low levels of voting in the United States (ranked 114th among recognized democracies, according to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance), the structural limits on the principle of “one person, one vote,” the enormously distorting influence of wealth in our electoral process, and the variety of constraints that continue to be imposed on African Americans, other persons of color, and poorer and working class citizens of all races (such as purged voter rolls, disproportionate levels of felon disenfranchisement, higher percentages of challenged voters, unproven allegations of fraud, and practical obstacles to poll access). In addition, there are increasing concerns for the security of electronic voting machines and the neutrality of election officials chosen on a partisan basis.

*A. Overview of Concerns and Limits of the Study—What We See That Concerns Us*

Our current election system is characterized by one of the world’s highest levels of campaign spending yet some of the lowest levels of voter turnout of any democracy. With a few high profile exceptions, participation among communities of color is particularly dampened due to registration processes that are inefficient, inconvenient, and inaccessible. These factors raise significant concerns about the tremendous lack of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity among those in positions of political power. With the disturbing dependence of our political representatives on continuous fundraising for their increasingly expensive campaigns, we are concerned about increasing the divisions in wealth and power and the pervasive partisanship and polarization in American politics. With the move to electronic voting equipment, we see numerous new technological and managerial vulnerabilities in our elections processes. It is time for Presbyterians to act.

Low voter participation in U.S. elections weakens the health of American democracy. Half of all eligible citizens do not participate in the election of the U.S. president or Congress members, with turnout even lower in midterm and local elections. The U.S. ranks 114th in voter turnout among recognized democracies according to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.<sup>2</sup> Low voting levels do not hold for all population groups, and for some fairly clear reasons. Voter turnout is lowest among those of low income, low education, and young citizens whose mobility makes it hard to meet arbitrary and restrictive deadlines. Requirements that voters purchase state-issued photo IDs seems likely to discriminate against low-income voters, when the Federal Election Commission’s own findings, revealed before congressional committee, reveal no significant incidence of voter fraud.<sup>3</sup> The permanent disenfranchisement of felons unfairly affects citizens of color and men. Communities of color have long been targeted in partisan-motivated purging of registration lists. Though we are aware of the original rationale for keeping the federal District of Columbia “un-political,” continuing to deprive the citizens of the District of Columbia (65 percent African American) voting rights seems a partisan and inevitably racially determined act of denial. We also recognize the necessity of civic education, especially for young people, new citizens, and inexperienced voters.

While we applaud the 2006 renewal of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, we believe that without effective, nonpartisan enforcement, historic patterns of disenfranchisement will remain. The Electoral College for presidential selection imposes another uneven burden on an even larger majority of the population, and seems to be an undemocratic anachronism remaining in our Constitution producing more “spectator states” than contested ones. Partisan-controlled redistricting has created gerrymandered districts that ensure the reelection of approximately 98 percent of all House incumbents every two years, and there are other incumbent advantages as well. Campaign finance laws need to be seriously considered in light of the increasing influence of special interest money and the rising cost of political campaigning, though we note that the problem of ineffectual congressional ethics committees is being addressed.<sup>4</sup> Media corporations, which lease the publicly owned airwaves, have a responsibility to provide equal access to all viable political candidates and parties.

Beyond the scope of this study are explorations and solutions to the perceived “brokenness” or dysfunction in the U.S. government’s response to issues like immigration, ending petroleum dependence, handling nuclear waste, limiting healthcare costs and expanding coverage, agricultural subsidies, restricting handgun violence—issues where clear majorities want reasonable solutions. Glenn Tinder, a political scientist at the University of Massachusetts, alleges that the checks and balances in our system work too well:

Since World War II, political scientists have been intensely concerned about America’s relatively ineffective and undemocratic government. Government is relatively ineffective because of the way checks and balances disrupt all efforts at orderly planning and execution; it is relatively undemocratic partly because the same checks and balances make it almost impossible for voters to assign and assess political responsibility, and partly because institutions like the federal bureaucracy are beyond the voters’ control and comprehension. ... Political scientists have for several decades been worried above all by America’s disorganized and irresponsible parties. Numerous studies have argued for stronger and more disciplined parties,

and a host of practical measures for reaching this end have been proposed. In the meantime, the national parties have steadily disintegrated and our checked-and-balanced government has increasingly come under the control of voracious and uncompromising pressure groups.<sup>5</sup>

Whether this is an entirely accurate assessment, Constitutional Law scholar, Sanford Levinson, sees accurate perceptions of the growth of presidential power fueling the enormous costs of presidential campaigning.<sup>6</sup> With vast appointive power over the federal departments and veto power (including the practice of “signing statements” that shape enforcement), the concentration of presidential power, especially in the area of national security, makes it logical to focus financial resources on that election above all others. Levinson points out other areas where the framers of the Constitution did not see all eventualities. Elections themselves may not always be the best method for solving problems. While the 17th Amendment allows governors to name persons to senatorial vacancies, for example, the Constitution decrees now-costly, often hastily waged, special elections for House seats that become vacant. In terms of larger checks and balances in the U.S. system as it currently works, Levinson advocates Supreme Court terms of eighteen years to counteract the incentives to appoint relatively young justices who may serve for literally generations. Other proposals for change involve adopting elements from parliamentary systems, such as the increased accountability that comes when a chief of state is required to present government policy in open debate, such as before the House of Commons in Britain.

With one exception, the affirmative right to vote, the study team recommendations avoid constitutional changes and larger issues of governance.<sup>7</sup> This has to do with the assignment given by the assembly, and not an undue reverence for the Constitution itself—a wonderful but not sacred document. (“The Constitution was made for the Republic, not the Republic for the Constitution.”) The widespread frustration with the electoral process alone, however, lies behind the numerous proposals to make the process fairer and more representative than the current marketing process. Hence the proposal that consideration be given to proposals by FairVote and others of methods such as<sup>8</sup> Ranked Choice, Instant Runoff Voting, and Proportional Voting—all of which are already employed in limited jurisdictions and which can empower minority communities.

Overall, this resolution brings together two profoundly important policy streams in Presbyterian social witness so that, as the prophet Amos preached, “justice may roll down like the waters.” Historically, there is our longstanding nonpartisan support for civil and representative democratic government in America. And more recently, we are challenged by our 1999 “Vision of the Beloved Community” in which the PC(USA) covenanted to become an antiracist and inclusive community: “to embrace racial and cultural diversity as God-given assets of the human family ... resisting oppression and working to overcome racism within its own life and the life of society by blending social analysis, institutional reconstruction, and individual healing with discernment, prayer and worship-based action.” This action was reinforced that same year by the policy statement, *Building Community Among Strangers* (*Minutes*, 1999, Part 1, pp. 79, 275), which addressed electoral and other means to improve the civic life of our nation. In this election year, which promises to be heated and very expensive, we are called to reflect Christ’s passion for reconciliation, justice, and love, mindful of the profound call to mutual respect and to deep listening of our church’s own 2006 resolution on the peace, unity, and purity of the church.

As Christians, we believe in the powerful “already” of Christ’s revelation of God’s equal love for every person and the “not yet” of the coming or realization of God’s reign. As Presbyterians, we believe it is our individual and corporate vocation to engage the “already” of the powers of good and evil for the sake of God’s “not yet” community. As Americans, “we the people” believe in equal rights under the law as well as “the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.” As Reformed Christians, we know that liberty, equality, and fairness of representation require constant vigilance.

## B. *Biblical Foundations*

The roots of our study go beyond John Calvin to the authority of Scripture. The Bible reveals God acting decisively in history to provide for human renewal of social structures by our struggles for freedom and truth, and for love and justice. Seven principles are emphasized here as contributing to the influence of Christianity on the foundations of democracy:

- The sovereignty of God who wills and orders, and also relativizes all human institutions and loyalties—as heard in the early binding and universalizing covenants with Adam, Noah, and Joshua, and portrayed throughout the biblical witness.
- The dignity and equal preciousness of every human being under God’s equalizing covenant of love and justice, created to be unique and free in the “image of God”—as portrayed in Genesis 1 and redeemed by Jesus Christ, the “Second Adam” of Romans 5.
- The critical tension between our human sinfulness and God’s good purposes, especially our willfulness, selfishness, and hypocrisy that issue in relationships and systems of domination—as portrayed in the primal experience of the garden of Eden, ancient Israel’s struggles with and among its wayward kings (esp. 1 Samuel 8), the prophetic traditions of Isaiah, Amos, Micah, and the witness, met with crucifixion, of Jesus.

- The power of love and reconciliation that we experience, by grace alone, near to us in Jesus Christ, through his resurrection and living Body, the Church—and moving beyond the Church by the Holy Spirit wherever freedom and truth, love and justice are being realized.
- Our mutual responsibilities for love of self and neighbor, peace and justice (right relationship), affirmed repeatedly by covenant community’s organizing of itself, from Exodus to the Pauline and pastoral letters, to reflect the double or greatest commandment to “love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and neighbor as thyself.”
- The special concern given to the suffering, vulnerable, and oppressed in our communities and the particular responsibility and accountability of those who have wealth, power, and privilege to use their gifts for fulfilling God’s vision of creation—perhaps most clearly summed up in Matthew 25.
- The call to live out these teachings as active witnesses—beyond the local church and into the world, obedient to the sovereignty of God, ever-tempted to selfishness and sin but sacrificially and sacramentally working in the world with the mind of Christ speaking to the Christian conscience (the Great Commission in Matt. 28, Rom. 12 and 13, Eph. 4).

### C. *Theological and Ethical Foundations*

John Calvin gave structure to the Reformed Churches to reflect his vision for reforming both church and political life. He understood his work in *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* to be a guide to the understanding of the Bible. He concluded the *Institutes* in Book IV in two sections on the liberty of the Christian life in the church and on liberty in the political realm. Neither our current form of the church nor of the state correspond exactly to his recommendations—both have evolved through five hundred years of history. However, our concern for liberty and accountability in both institutions remains. We maximize liberty as the fuller empowerment of human beings to live in love with God and their neighbor; we maximize accountability as we participate and advocate for the participation of all of God’s children. Toward this end, among many ministries of the church, we strive to be always reforming both institutions so that they may enable each person to develop and serve.

The Bible, John Calvin, and contemporary Christian ethics utilize at least three approaches to ethics: rules, goals, and responses to the context. This policy develops out of three goals, which can be formulated as rules, enforced by the state to render them laws, under which for us reflect Christian faith seeking justice. The three are: participation, equality and fairness in the system of voting, and accountability as citizens and officials. There is no human liberty without participation in social reality—which, in the American situation, is the representative-democratic processes of politics. Equality and fairness are constitutive aspects of both justice and love and are requirements of Christian living. Accountability is demanded of every political figure in the Bible story. Because of sin in human personal and social life, transparency and the enforcement of principles of equality and liberty is required as a condition of a fair common life. Both citizens and officials are accountable for their custody of the democratic-representative process. To deny anyone a fair vote is a sin. Reinhold Niebuhr’s aphorism that “[human] capacity for justice makes democracy possible but [human] capacity for injustice makes democracy necessary” is a fair summary of the possibilities of our political life as we strive to make it as participatory, just and accountable as possible.

We believe our democracy can evolve to greater equity and liberty for us all because, as Martin Luther King Jr. wrote from a Birmingham jail in April 1963, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Christian philosopher and social critic Cornel West updates this truth for us when he reminds: “Every historic effort to forge a democratic project has been undermined by two fundamental [shared] realities: poverty and paranoia. The persistence of poverty generates levels of despair that deepen social conflict and the escalation of paranoia produces levels of distrust that reinforce cultural divisions.”<sup>9</sup> The “good news” is that what we do for the least powerful among us politically benefits us all, opening our political system’s access to the God at work in the experience and voices of new citizens, the young, the poor and increasingly aging voters, with fewer economic resources to spare and more needs. We do not need to let poverty and fear-based thinking paralyze our democracy any further.

### D. *Presbyterian Tradition and Democracy*

Democracy has been more than simply a point of pride for Presbyterians in the United States. It is part of our heritage and an object of our repeated concern as we still struggle to make democracy real for African Americans and other voluntary immigrants and racial minorities, women, and young people. Democratic government begins in personal responsibility—to share in making the rules under which we live in society—and it includes rules and civic practices designed to ensure “liberty and justice for all.” The healthy functioning of our “system” has rarely been taken for granted. Countless Presbyterians on town councils, in state legislatures, and in our nation’s Congress itself have known how important basic fairness and integrity are to the work of government. Our tradition has never accorded special virtue or power to bishops or kings or their modern equivalents. Positively stated, each of us has an affirmative political vocation that comes with citizenship in our system of self-government.

Democratic parallels in church and state: Historically, we Presbyterians have made much of the parallels between our system of government in the church, with its elected leadership in the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly, and that of the United States, moving from local to state and to federal elections. Certainly most of us know that elected leadership carries burdens, whether one is moderator of presbytery or mayor of any town, power is held in trust for the common good. Classic studies, like James Hastings Nichols' *Democracy and the Churches* (1950), looked not simply at the processes by which the Reformed tradition shaped Western democracies, but looked at the matter of ethos, the nature of our public spirit, and sense of principle—not to idealize the past, but to acknowledge human sin in it, and even the virtue of our sense of sin. We affirm that fundamental basis for checks and balances of power, and the awareness of our ultimate accountability to God and not to other human beings and groups (Peter: “we must obey God rather than men”). Alongside this awareness of human fallibility is the strength that God gives us: “God alone is lord of the conscience and has set it free from the doctrines or rules of men, or anything contrary to the scripture.”

“The church reformed, always reforming”: Because we stand together for the ongoing reform of both the church and the society (“ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda”), Presbyterians have consistently urged governments to improve their functioning and correct injustices. For us, the separation of church and state has not meant the separation of faith and politics, for such a separation would be an abdication of responsibility. As the fine 1983 General Assembly study and policy, *Reformed Faith and Politics*, explains, “the question of the relationship of God and Caesar” is not easily answered, but the distinction remains crucial. Without a sense of God’s sovereignty, and without respect for Jesus Christ and the prophets God raises up in every time, the pretensions of states and rulers can and do lead to the casual taking of human life, disregard for the ordinary person, and the despoiling of God’s creation. Politics, then, is too often the petty or tragic expression of human folly, but to disdain it is to be corrupted in different ways by a false innocence and overly simple thinking.

The Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s remains a defining moment for the “mainline” churches, in part due to the witness of a particular prophet, Martin Luther King Jr., within the historic Black churches, but also in part due to the witness of African American leaders within those mainline communions. In Gayraud S. Wilmore’s *Black and Presbyterian: The Heritage and the Hope* (1983; 1998), he speaks of the role of African Americans within the decision-making process of the Presbyterian churches, both the North and South predecessors. He points to the importance of organizing a body within the church like the Council on Church and Race in 1964, and to the importance of actions of witness chosen. And one of the key actions of witness for justice was the voter registration drive. The unusual Hattiesburg Ministers Project in Mississippi, for example, drew more than three hundred ministers to help register voters, to teach in the Freedom Schools, and sometimes to march. It would be our study team’s claim that this was faithful politics as well as electoral reform, and something that enriches the heritage of those who are white and Presbyterian as well.

Our advocacy and social witness goals: To improve government in our time is to address, as this report and its recommendations do, the continued disenfranchisement of some Americans and the challenges for us all of new forms of voting technology and new levels of monetary power in politics. Cynicism may be today’s biggest enemy of democracy, as the rule of money threatens to disenfranchise voting itself. Yet it is not cynicism to recognize that under current practice, non-wealthy candidates need not apply, and expensive TV advertising suppresses thoughtful deliberation, while organized groups and corporate interests effectively determine policy in their chosen areas. We see what some have called “endless campaigning,” with marketing and governing increasingly mixed. This report begins with the belief that hope will continue to outpoll distrust, but only if it is a wise hope.

Despite a campaign to identify a problem of voter fraud that would necessitate further restrictions on voter access—a campaign that has led to congressional investigations of the politicization of the Justice Department, no significant levels of fraud have been found. Rather, increasing levels of corruption and lobbying abuse have been revealed with increasing numbers of members of congress under investigation. This points to the significant difference between enacting laws and enforcing them.

The pressing global need for effective government: In terms of determining need for the reforms proposed in this resolution, we look not only at problems in the electoral process, but to basic problems in our governmental decision-making—for governance is communal decision-making. Back in 1983, the General Assembly study asked, “Can the U.S. political process handle ... the energy issue for a just and sustainable future? Is the system adequate to meet the needs of the urban population of the country? Can a just migration policy be developed with all the pressure groups and fears around the issue? Finally and most important, can a just peace be secured? ... All four issues, addressed theologically and ethically by the church will require political leadership.” We can only say that solutions to these four major issues remain elusive, while the threats to the environment and world peace have only intensified. The need for effective government, in fact, is the six billion-person question for the future of the planet today.

#### E. *Historical Steps in Civil Rights Advocacy*

For the purposes of this study, to show the development of support for the 1965 Civil Rights Act, the history of the church’s official stands for civil rights is traced back to the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) 1947 General

Assembly. This is not to ignore earlier concern for non-racial democracy and denunciations of lynching, for example, that may be found in General Assembly *Minutes* and Home Mission records. A thorough review of the legislative advocacy steps can be found in the 2004 Assembly Report on Electoral Reform and the Disenfranchisement of People of Color. Highlights of the transformative post-World War II period include:

- The 1947 PCUS assembly stated its official civil rights support by condemning all organizations and individuals who aim to hinder any minorities “in the exercise of their civil rights or deny such rights on the basis of race, creed, class or color” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1947, Part I, p. 164).

- Two years later, the General Assembly received and sent down to lower judicatories the report, “States’ Rights and Human Rights.” The paper was not proposed for adoption because of its controversial character, but it was commended to the churches by the assembly for study because it “... set forth with great clarity problems in the field of civil rights ... and points up with equal clarity our responsibilities ...” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1949, Part I, p. 100).

- In 1953, the individual’s Christian political duty was affirmed as part of our responsibilities to our neighbors when the PCUS assembly encouraged men and women of the church to use the right to vote wisely and to work for the “same privileges for all citizens” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1952, Part I, p. 93; see also *Minutes*, PCUSA, 1956, Part I, p. 234, and *Minutes*, PCUS, 1974, Part I, p. 164).

- By 1956, this was brought to a practical level, the voting arena. In the northern church, the 1956 PCUSA General Assembly called upon Christians to work to eliminate the poll tax “and other restrictions which prevent many citizens from exercising their legal rights at the polls and which affront the dignity of persons ...” (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1956, Part I, p. 235; see also *Minutes*, PCUS, 1957, Part I, p. 194).

- The 171st General Assembly (1959) went on to call for measures to guarantee voting rights to all citizens of voting age and to establish the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights as a permanent agency of the U.S. government (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1959, Part I, p. 380).

- The 172nd General Assembly (1960) urged state legislatures and the United States Congress to continue to work for legislation that would effectively secure and protect the rights of all citizens to vote, regardless of race (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1960, Part I, p. 356).

- The 174th General Assembly (1962) of the UPCUSA urged federal leadership to eliminate racial restriction of voting rights by any of the states (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1962, Part I, p. 349).

- In 1965, the PCUS affirmed the historic Voting Rights Act, saying “The basic purpose of the civil rights movement should be to obtain for the Negro—and of course, for all minority groups—justice in the affairs of daily life and the right to respect as a human being under the redemptive concern of God. Jesus, by His words and life, calls us, as his followers, to support him in this struggle ...” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1965, Part I, p. 159).

- In 1981 and 1982, the UPCUSA also supported extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and opposed the attempt to deny civil rights to new immigrants to the United States (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 309; and *Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1982, Part I, p. 425).

- The 194th General Assembly (1982) of UPCUSA affirmed all efforts to include actively all citizens in the election process, including the use of bilingual ballots as mandated by the Voting Rights Acts, and declares its opposition to actions by government that have the effect of discouraging such exercise of citizen’s rights (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1982, Part I, p. 425).

To reflect on these acts of witness and solidarity is also to reflect on the enduring patterns of white privilege within both society and church, social, economic, and cultural patterns that are reflected only partly in the formal political process. Changes in the language of the resolutions—the return of “people of color,” for example, signals a changing social reality, and the prospect of a time when no one racial ethnic group may be in the majority. As a resolution team focused on the mechanisms of representation and participation, we have not analyzed the dynamics of partisanship in U.S. politics and its relation to the question of race. We can only say here that the church benefits from challenging questions that push us toward truth, in both the inward and the outward being.

#### F. *Presbyterian Precedents for Electoral Reform*

The church’s concern for voting rights, outlined above, has been accompanied by concern for electoral reform. One sentence from a 1950 General Assembly statement sums up the basic Presbyterian approach to faith and politics: “We believe that every Christian should recognize the individual responsibility of citizenship including not only the responsibility to know

about public issues and candidates, but also to provide Christian leadership in local parties and to go faithfully to the polls” (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1950, Part I, p. 236).

The church’s call for public participation and witness was stated most forcefully in 1983 when the General Assembly adopted a major policy on “Reformed Faith and Politics” in response to the rise of the new religious right and the political disappointments of the 70s.<sup>10</sup> As shown in the affirmation quoted at the beginning of the resolution that begins this study, the 1983 policy lifted up the political vocations of citizenship and leadership in public service as forms of discipleship in individual and institutional terms. It goes on to recommend that Presbyterians actively support political participation, voter registration, civil discourse, and the pursuit of political office, revitalized parties, and beyond “single-interest politics” broad coalition work for justice, always recognizing, once again, that we heed the Reformed concern to resist “human limitations, narrowness, and sin” (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, pp. 778–79). It recommended specifically that we:

- “Affirm responsible participation in politics as an indispensable part of the calling of all Christians and encourage individual Presbyterians to become active in the political process, including but not limited to being candidates for political office at all levels. ...” (*Ibid*, p. 778).
- “Request that sessions or presbyteries study the voter registration patterns of their communities and consider, where appropriate, action to assure a greater level of registration and voting as a sign of minimal participation in the political process” (*Ibid*).
- “Call on each session and presbytery to promote public dialogue on the significant political issues of the day to assist in restoring a climate of civic discourse in the country” (*Ibid*).
- “Urge presbyteries to acknowledge individual Presbyterians within their bounds who seek or hold political office. ...” (*Ibid*, p. 779).
- “Affirm the party system and encourage individual Presbyterians to work within parties to revitalize them and make them more responsive to ethical and theological demands. ...” (*Ibid*).
- “Decry the practice of ‘single-issue’ politics and recommend a broad consideration of a candidate’s position in determining whether to support the candidate” (*Ibid*).
- “Affirm coalitions of individuals to lobby for social justice issues and causes and call on the governing bodies of the church to take public policy stands on such issues” (*Ibid*).
- “Acknowledge human limitations, narrowness, and sin, which prevent any one political stance from being labeled exclusively ‘Christian’” (*Ibid*).
- “Reaffirm our historical commitment for working for economic justice, peace and disarmament, racial and civil rights, and the promotion of social righteousness” (*Ibid*).

A question, to which this study returns at its conclusion, is the matter of how much the “political vocation” envisioned implies the kind of Reformed civic virtue that, in turn, is formed in the ethos of the democratically organized congregation and presbytery.

With the 1996 “Theological Ethics and Political Participation” statement, the General Assembly summarized several earlier policies showing that they have consistently encouraged the political activity of Christians acting in response to their faith. More directly about voting rights and electoral reform, the assembly included two requests that: (1) “sessions or presbyteries study the voter registration patterns of their communities and consider, where appropriate, action to assure a greater level of registration and voting as a sign of important and needed participation in the political process. ...” and (2) “[we] acknowledge human limitations, narrowness, and sin, which prevent any one political stance from being labeled exclusively ‘Christian’; and reaffirm our historical commitment for working for economic justice, peace, and disarmament, racial and civil rights, and the promotion of social righteousness” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 76, 122, 521–22).

The 2000 Resolution on Campaign Finance Reform: The role of money in our electoral processes drew the General Assembly’s attention in 2000 when it called for campaign finance reform by “Direct[ing] the Office of the General Assembly and the Washington Office to communicate the General Assembly’s strong support for ... campaign finance reforms, in order to increase public participation in elections and fairness in allocating the benefits and burdens of society” (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, pp. 51, 424). The study group reporting in 2008 felt that a responsible analysis of this issue deserves future attention, in light of the Supreme Court’s recent ruling in support of special interests purchasing unlimited advocacy advertising under an interpretation of the right to “free speech.” Such attention would need to consider patterns of ownership of television and other media, and the remarkable influence of those at the top of our social pyramid of wealth.

## G. *Recommendations*

### 1. *Toward Increasing Voter Participation*

Since its beginning, the United States has been a democracy in the process of becoming, with each new generation taking steps to advance the goal of “government by the people.” The poet, Langston Hughes speaks to “Let America Be America Again.”<sup>11</sup> Yet despite the hard-won right to vote by landless white men (1856), African Americans (1870–1965), women (1921), Native Americans (1924–48),<sup>12</sup> Chinese Americans (1943), 18–20 year-olds (1971), and others, serious obstacles and groups depressing active voter participation remain. In recent years only about 50–55 percent of U.S. citizens of voting age have voted in presidential elections, while smaller percentages have voted in “off-year” congressional, state, and local elections. These percentages are significantly lower for racial ethnic minorities and poorer citizens. The explanation for Americans’ lack of voter participation can be found in: (a) the provisions of our Constitution, (b) our voter registration system, (c) cynicism about “meaningful choice” or that their vote counts, and (d) various other obstacles that discourage voter turnout.<sup>13</sup>

#### a. *Voter Franchise: The Affirmative Right to Vote*

The United States, the oldest constitutional democracy in the world, is one of only eleven (of the estimated 120 democracies) that do not guarantee to their citizens the right to vote. Article I of the Constitution allows each state to define for itself which of its citizens have the right to vote in both state and national elections. While the 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th Amendments prohibit states from denying the franchise on the basis of race, sex, ability to pay a poll tax, or being eighteen years of age or above, states are still able to deny voting rights to selected groups, most notably to prison inmates and to persons with a prior felony conviction. In the United States, voting is considered not a fundamental right of citizenship but rather a privilege that may be denied. What is needed is a constitutional amendment that would provide U.S. citizens with the same fundamental right to vote as is enjoyed by citizens in other democracies.

#### b. *Universal Voter Registration*

Most of the world’s constitutional democracies provide for universal voter registration of its citizens, either by automatically registering all citizens to vote, or by not requiring formal registration for elections. In the United States, by contrast, the burden to register to vote (and to maintain that registration) is placed upon the individual citizen, and states and localities differ widely in determining where, how, and when a person can register. Because of varying and changing local registration procedures, FairVote estimates that “More than eight million American citizens cannot vote where they live, but could vote if living in another state.”<sup>14</sup> A section of the 1965 Voting Rights Act was aimed specifically at eliminating tactics used by southern states to prevent blacks from registering, and in 1993 Congress passed the Motor-Voter law intended to ease the registration burden for all Americans. But only seven states have taken the much more effective step of allowing “same day” registration, allowing citizens to register on Election Day. Compounding the registration burden is the fact that state and local registration lists are often inaccurate and incomplete, resulting in voters being turned away from the polls on Election Day.

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 addressed part of the problem. The act requires each state to implement a “single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list.” That standard would help prevent some of the problems widely reported in the 2000 and 2004 elections when the names of many voters who believed that they were registered did not appear on the registration list of their jurisdiction. As the Baker-Carter Election Reform Commission reported in 2005, however, most states have yet to comply with that requirement. Our recommendation goes further than HAVA. We propose that the United States adopt legislation that would more closely follow the practice of the majority of the world’s democracies of automatically registering all citizens to vote, a registration that would be recognized in all fifty states and other U.S. jurisdictions. As noted by FairVote, universal registration would help ensure that the more than fifty million unregistered Americans, representing nearly one-third of the eligible electorate, would be eligible to vote on election day. Since unregistered voters are disproportionately young, low-income, or people of color, such a move could potentially have a dramatic impact on voter turnout and election results.

*Toward Universal Registration:* There are various methods by which universal registration can be accomplished in the United States. One of the more widely supported proposals, which we support, is the registration of high school students—making registration a requirement for graduation or for community service credit, or registering all students age seventeen and older as part of Constitution Day on September 17 each year. Other means that have been proposed to achieve universal registration include automatically registering citizens as they obtain a driver’s license or deal with a government agency, or providing every citizen upon birth or naturalization a voter registration number similar to the requirement for a social security number.

#### c. *Other Obstacles to Voter Participation*

The United States has more than ten thousand separate voting jurisdictions with separate laws and regulations. A citizen’s right to vote is thus very much dependent on the jurisdiction in which the citizen resides. Even if citizens are legally

eligible and registered to vote, they often are confronted by obstacles preventing them from doing so. One serious obstacle is the inconvenience of having to vote on a single defined day, and often encountering long lines and equipment failures.

- Voting by mail is one reform designed to eliminate those problems but only the state of Oregon has enacted that change.
- Early voting is another reform designed to address those problems and sixteen states have adopted that change.
- Reform groups also recommend easing absentee ballot restrictions.
- By far the most fundamental reform, however, and one that we endorse, is setting aside a national holiday for voting. A national election day (or weekend) holiday would enable people of all income levels, employment conditions, and family responsibilities to participate in the election. A holiday would also focus attention on this crucial event in our national lives, as well as facilitate the recruitment of poll volunteers.
- Accessibility for all eligible voters ensuring that disabled and minority language voters can vote privately and independently

d. *Community Organizing So That Voters Count*

The Presbyterian church has encouraged community involvement and political activity on the part of its members, especially toward meeting urgent human needs. For instance, in 1996, the General Assembly maintained: “There is a continuing need for those in the public arena to hear God’s voice through our political participation as citizen voters and advocates, and as politicians. As Christians this is in full accord with our belief that God is sovereign of all of life” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p. 522). The most basic political activity is the responsibility to vote and to ensure that others are empowered for that same responsibility. To this end, we encourage churches to organize their local communities for voter registration and turnout. Voter registration can happen in a variety of ways such as joining with local organizations that already engage in voter registration; sending teams of members door to door or into local shopping areas to register people to vote, and registering congregants to vote before and after church activities. It is critical that the leaders of this effort know the voter registration laws of their local jurisdiction and avoid advocating for specific candidates. In addition, churches can organize teams of member to call registered voters to remind them of an upcoming election and offer rides to polling stations. Finally, churches can work in their communities in order to find out what issues are important in an upcoming election. All of these activities are in full accord with our calling as Christians and citizens.

2. *Toward Insuring Equality and Fairness*

a. *Give the District of Columbia Full Voting Rights and Congressional Representation.*

It continues to be a travesty that the 600,000 tax-paying residents of Washington, D.C., have no voting representation in the House of Representatives or in the Senate. This is despite D.C. having a population larger than Rhode Island and Wyoming that are able to elect two Senators and one member of the House. While the intention was originally to counteract the power of local citizens (and militias) over the fledgling early capital, today the disenfranchisement of D.C. residents has become an international embarrassment, especially for its impact on the nonwhite 65 percent of the D.C. population who would likely vote for candidates of color. In the spirit of the overall recommendation that full voting rights be given to the 600,000 tax-paying citizens of D.C., we recommend passage of a bill currently before Congress that would at least give to residents of D.C. the right to elect one member of the House of Representatives, the same right that is extended to all other Americans.<sup>15</sup>

b. *Re-enfranchise Felons Who Have Paid Their Debt to Society*

According to the Brennan Center for Justice, the United States is alone among Western democracies that permit laws that lock people out of the voting booth for life once they have been convicted of a crime. These laws are often a remnant of Jim Crow discrimination—with stiffer sentences linked to crimes more likely to be committed by people of color. In three states, a felony conviction will result in a lifetime ban from voting, while in eight other states lifetime disenfranchisement may result. In other states, prisoners on parole or on probation may be denied the right to vote. Altogether across the nation, state felon disenfranchisement laws permanently bar more than five million Americans from voting and in many jurisdictions, serving on juries. Restoring the right to vote to ex-felons strengthens democracy by increasing voter investment in the system and provides incentives for ex-offenders to make more positive contributions to society. Political participation also helps people reintegrate into the community after serving time in prison. Re-enfranchisement also means that the home communities of those convicted regain their political voice and ability to elect representatives accountable to their needs and interests.<sup>16</sup>



c. *Enforce the Voting Rights Act*

Recognizing that civil rights legislation is not always enforced or well funded, the following concerns highlight the kind of protection for the vulnerable that we would like to see the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division emphasize.

d. *Reject Expensive Voter ID Requirements*

For generations, discriminatory practices such as poll taxes and literacy tests prevented people of color from voting. Today so-called “antifraud” legislation is being introduced in some southern states that will recreate similar filters by requiring voters to produce new types of identification on election day. No longer will documents such as a birth certificate or social security card suffice to prove a prospective voter’s identity. A drivers license or an accepted state-issued alternative will now be required, a burden that will heavily fall on low-income voters, and therefore also persons of color. The elderly will also be disadvantaged.

e. *Protect People and Communities of Color From Targeted Purges of Voting Lists*

Evidence has arisen that party activists in Florida targeted communities of color in particular with postcards to determine if voter-mailing addresses were still good.<sup>17</sup> They then challenged all voters whose cards were returned as “undeliverable,” including military personnel, college students, mis-delivered and recent moves—for unfair, partisan impact. We commend developing legislation that requires each state to provide notice, at least forty-five but ideally ninety days before an election, of all names that have been removed from a voter registration list, thereby giving individuals an opportunity to cure the problem that led to the purge. We also note that universal and same day registration, with proper identification and affidavit, would also make this practice less likely to be abused.

f. *Punish Deceptive Campaign Practices*

Over the past several years, voters have had to endure deceptive practices targeted at persons of color. Examples are fliers distributed in Milwaukee telling voters that they can’t vote if they didn’t pay their parking tickets; flyers in Maryland misleading voters about the party affiliations of candidates for key state offices; and e-mails sent in Virginia providing false information about where to vote. The Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Act introduced in Congress is designed to criminalize such practices. The bill has our strong support.

g. *Nonpartisan Legislative Districting*

Drawing the boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts to their partisan advantage has become a favorite tool of both political parties. The result is that most districts are heavily stacked to favor one party, resulting in incumbents almost always being reelected and voters left with few competitive races in which to participate. Many reformers, including Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California, have thus proposed that after every census a nonpartisan commission draw district boundaries. Voters would then more likely be able to participate in meaningful competitive contests, while legislators would be forced to pay more attention to the views of their constituents.<sup>18</sup>

3. *Toward Enforcing Accountability and Responsibility in Our Electoral Process*

There are thirteen thousand electoral jurisdictions in our country, each under widely varying state regulations. We need a more uniform, well-funded, credible, and popularly supported national electoral infrastructure that is nonpartisan and locally accountable. In 2004 and 2008, stories emerged from states such as Ohio, Florida, Texas, Virginia, and Maryland, of long lines at precincts with high proportions of low-income voters, including students. The following causes have been noted: a failure of funding and leadership; inadequate resources for voter education and training of election workers; inferior voting equipment and or ballot design; failure to plan for high volumes of voters, including inexperienced voters; poorly designed ballots; an unfairly executed purge system; and a resource allocation system that often left poorer counties, which often were counties with the highest percentage of black voters, adversely affected.<sup>19</sup> We recommend:

a. Development of a “best practices” standard or uniform national infrastructure for voter registration records, staff training, public education, and electoral management.

Counties are usually responsible for key functions such as the hiring, training and paying of poll workers, setting up polling places, establishing systems of election day communication, and handling breakdowns in electronic machines and poll books. We recommend a uniform and well-supported electoral infrastructure that is nonpartisan and has local accountability. (An elections official from Denver, Colorado, has shared with us one standard of such an infrastructure that we pass on as an Appendix B for local comparison and consideration.) Standards should be in place for:

- Transparency: We need utter transparency for decision-making that is too often made behind closed doors. Every election director should make public—for public review and comment in a timely way—their county’s plan for running elections that addresses any problem exposed in the primary elections and a full checklist of what they plan to do in preparation for November.

- A national (and universal) voter registration system in light of the new mobility of American voters.
- Nonpartisan elections officials: All local, state, and federal elections officials must be protected from partisan influence, even secretaries of states appointed by their governors national standards for the allocation of voting systems and poll workers for each precinct.
- Poll worker training: providing a common model and funds to states for the education and training of poll workers.
- Procedures for counting or rejecting provisional and emergency ballots, counted even if voters are sent to the wrong precinct or polling place, as long as they are voting in the correct county.
- Procedures for proper registration verification or purging: each state should provide public notice, at least forty-five days before an election, of all names removed from a voter registration list. States must also give individuals an opportunity to cure the problem that led to the purge.
- Minimum and universal national standards for voting equipment, ballot design, and ballot counting.

b. Full funding and expanded authority of the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) once nonpartisan safeguards are in place.

As a result of the controversies surrounding the 2000 presidential elections, Congress passed the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. The act funded electronic voting equipment in every state, established an Electoral Assistance Commission and Council—elected by president and approved by senate, required verification of equipment and funded numerous model programs. While we are concerned about the politicization of relatively minimal “voter fraud” cases when we see greater threats from systemic powers than wayward local voters, we also recognize the importance of this important center for the development of our electoral infrastructure. Increased federal funding should be partnered with new protections against partisan use of its oversight and funding powers.

c. Legislation to require independence and verifiability of electronic voting machines, if not paper trails.

The implications of HAVA have yet to reveal themselves fully. However, the act has been heavily criticized. Many express grave concern that electronic equipment will make balloting more susceptible to political manipulation, fraud, and racial bias. There is distrust of the manufacturers of the leading voting machines as well as in the verifiability of the software itself. We recognize the need for verifiability and the independence of electronic voting machines in order to permit selective auditing. We understand the desire of many to have a “paper trail”. Paper ballots—or even op-scan “ballots” as advocated by the League of Women Voters, however, are expensive and time-intensive to count, store and also to verify. Until sufficient safeguards for confidentiality, independence and audit ability are in place, we recommend continuing public participation in both electoral monitoring and in this important public debate about the necessary layers of protection against fraud in the handling of all electronic equipment and software.

d. Campaign finance reform and public financing—it is not too late!

Large sums of money, and the time needed to raise it, dominate our electoral and legislative processes. Money buys access to legislators as well as to the details in legislation.<sup>20</sup> If they reject special interest money, candidates fear that their opponents will outspend them—and spending counts: incumbents almost always raise more money than challengers, and the candidate who spends the most money almost always wins. (For House seats, the number is more than 90 percent.) Because the Supreme Court has ruled the campaign contributions are a protected form of “speech,” the most important reform to enhance the voice of citizens and reduce the role of powerful special interests and big money in elections is public financing.<sup>21</sup> Under such systems, candidates or parties receive public funds to replace or augment private money. Public funding can curb the appearance of the influence of big money over lawmakers, encourage candidates with limited resources to run for office, and allow politicians to spend less time raising money and more time serving their constituents.

The cost of political advertising has played a major role in driving up the expense of political campaigns. According to the League of Women Voters, candidates, parties, and issue groups spent approximately \$1 billion on political ads in 2002. We encourage Presbyterians to support the McCain-Feingold-Durbin Free Air Time legislation. That legislation will require television and radio broadcast stations to provide free airtime to candidates and political parties for political debate before elections.

We also recommend a comprehensive federal “clean elections” bill that, like bills in four states, gives public financing to qualified candidates who agree not to take campaign contributions from private sources (except for a limited number of small “qualifying” contributions that serve to establish eligibility for the full public stipend). Good examples are the Fair Elections Now Act and the Clean Money Clean Elections Act. Modeled after existing election-financing systems in states like Arizona and Maine, this legislation outlines a new system for financing congressional campaigns with public funds. Significantly, the Fair Elections Act is a voluntary program.

#### 4. *Proposals for Renewing Our Democracy*

The famed economist, Milton Friedman, is quoted saying, “We need to keep political alternatives alive ... until the politically impossible becomes the political inevitable.”<sup>22</sup> The following approaches challenge the polarizing “duopoly” of our two-party system, allow minorities to better leverage their votes for representation and offer every voter more meaningful choices and alternative choices. The local governments that are seeking new ways to empower their voters and welcome the application of these electoral mechanisms to our church government also encourage us.

##### a. *Reform Our Primary System*

While 100 million or more Americans regularly participate in the election of the president, rarely do more than a third of that number vote in the presidential primaries and caucuses that select the party candidates. Only a small percentage of these voters have a truly meaningful voice. The fortunate few in Iowa, New Hampshire, and a handful of other early voting states usually decide for the rest of the nation who the nominees will be. In 2008, particularly in the Democratic primary, more states were involved, highlighting differences in candidates’ strategy and funding. Unfortunately, the early states still do not adequately mirror the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of the country as a whole.

##### b. *Elect President by Popular Vote (Electoral College Reform)*

Our current Electoral College system produced the divisive results of the 2000 presidential election where the popularly chosen candidate does not win the overall election. That method of electing the president also allows voters in only a few “battleground” states to have their support seriously courted by the candidates. One solution to these problems would be for states to exercise their ability to distribute their electoral votes among the state’s congressional districts, thereby breaking up the statewide winner-take-all system. However, only two states have exercised that option, and unless all the large states agree to follow that example, the electoral college vote is even less likely to reflect the preference of the popular majority. Thus those who look to reform the Electoral College system have proposed another idea, the National Popular Vote plan. This plan calls upon states to enter into an interstate compact with each member state pledging to award its electoral votes not, as now, to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in that state, but rather to the presidential candidate who has received the most popular votes nationwide. States that join the compact are bound to follow that procedure only if the compact’s membership commands a majority of electoral votes to elect a president (270 or more votes). Thus the challenge for the proponents of this idea is to convince that number of states to join the compact.<sup>23</sup>

##### c. *Allow Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)*

Our representative system is oddly built around another contradiction—winner-take-all legislative elections: the candidate who receives the most votes wins the election, even if not receiving a majority of the votes; votes cast for other candidates count for nothing. Such elections reinforce two-party dominance, contribute to the polarization of our county, often lead to a lack of meaningful choices, and hence discourage voter participation. We therefore recommend consideration of “instant runoff” (or ranked choice) voting whereby voters rank their preferences by placing the numbers 1, 2, 3, etc. beside the names of their first, second, or third choice candidates. If no candidate receives a majority of first preferences, the candidate with the fewest first preferences is eliminated and those ballots are counted again, this time with the eliminated candidate’s supporters having their ballots counted for their second choice candidate. The counting process continues until one candidate receives a majority. Not only would this system save the cost of run-off elections in jurisdictions where such elections are required (hence the name), it also increases voter choices. Voters are liberated to vote for the candidates they really like instead of only having to choose the “lesser of two evils” or worry about being a “spoiler” leading to the election of their least favored candidate. The system also encourages civility during election campaigns—candidates dare not attack one another lest they forfeit second or third place preferences. The system can be used in legislative elections as well as executive offices such as mayor, and it has been endorsed by the League of Women Voters and by leaders from both major parties. It is currently being used in two major cities, San Francisco, California, and Burlington, Vermont.

##### d. *Consider Proportional Voting (PV)*

Proportional voting systems require multi-member legislative districts and are thus less likely to be adopted in the United States than an IRV system. Their strength, however, is that they allow like-minded groups to put forth on the ballot a list of

legislative candidates and ask voters to choose from among the lists. If 40 percent of the voters in a ten-member district chose the Republican list, then the top four candidates on the Republican list will be elected. The winners from the other lists will be similarly determined. Obviously political parties other than the two major parties will be favored under such a system, and the elected legislative body will more closely reflect diverse groups, interests, and viewpoints.

#### H. *Conclusion: Civic Virtue and Civic Ethos; The Reformed and Reforming Citizen and Church*

Because we believe God works through both human freedom and the love of neighbor as self, our self-love and self-interest must always be tempered by neighbor-love and neighbor-interest. Our electoral practices, like our democratic principles, must be actively respectful of the dignity, liberty, and equality of all of those neighbors created in the “image of God” who also deserve voice and vote in self-determination. When people do not have voice or vote, they exit the political system.<sup>24</sup> Politics is communal decision-making and the more diverse the community, the more personally enlarging politics can become—if our moral commitments and communities of support are strong enough. To listen to all voices, even to help lift them up as the title of this study—from James Weldon Johnson’s hymn—suggests, is not to agree with them all. It is a call to listen for God’s voice, and then to speak and act as Christians for the good of all as best as we can see it (building on the resources available to us).

The members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are among the most politically active of U.S. citizens, partly because many of us know how the system works (or doesn’t). We vote at a higher percentage than other Americans, and give significant amounts of money to political campaigns, and that translates into economic and generally racial advantage. We embody a mixture of self-interested savvy and high-minded idealism that helps us recognize how checks and balances begin on the inside. And that awareness makes us cautious in claiming “civic virtue,” but convinced that politics is about more than interests grappling for advantage. Politics is not simply a marketplace. It is about power and subsidies and resentments and fears of loss, but it is also about enduring loyalties and hopes, expanded identities, and generosity of spirit.

Reports like this produce recommendations because “truth is in order to goodness,” as the *Book of Order* says, and because even the elect benefit from guidance, as Calvin taught in the “third use of the law.” Democracy itself can be mean, if the voters and the choices before them are mean, although we suspect that such a democracy would soon leave too many people out. Popular leaders and parties can promote irresponsible ideas, ignore dangers, burden future generations. Good laws are essential but not sufficient; enforcement requires a belief that government itself should serve “the people.”

We thus advocate a Presbyterian democratic or electoral ethic of individual discipline, multicultural awareness and communal responsibility. Presbyterians cannot just plead good intentions and self interest and still be full witnesses to the loving will of God in Christ for all of creation. We seek to interpret the world through the scriptural categories of sin and grace, justice and love, death and resurrection. In that light we may find what Christian ethicist Cheryl Sanders calls a “prophetic citizenship,” which calls the privileged to concern for the “oppressed least of these.”<sup>25</sup> The recommendations in this report are to help provide a communal base for that kind of citizenship.

#### *Our Presbyterian Civic Ethos*

We are Christians first and Americans second, understanding God’s sovereignty above every nation, including our own. The gifts of the Reformed tradition to democratic life have been large, based in a clarity about justice and the importance of impartial law for the common good. This report is intended to aid in the naming and updating of that civic contribution, yet also be a contribution the life of the church itself. Do we look for the Holy Spirit in struggles of the suffering for liberation, both at home and abroad? Do we see that there is both a Christian and a citizen’s response to make to their condition, without identifying the two? The answers to these questions depend on the nature of our congregational life and the scope of our preaching.

As a fraction of the U.S. population, we must share our traditions and ethos with other churches and welcome their convergence with us in old and new ecumenical ways. In 1975, Robert N. Bellah wrote that America suffered from a “broken covenant,” something deeper than a social contract. In the 1980s and 90s, he and four colleagues wrote about the “habits of the heart” necessary for “the good society” (to use both book titles). The civic ethos called for here would be among our Presbyterian “habits,” but would point to new habits as well: deeper engagement in our churches and communities across political, racial, and class differences; more explicit and intentional practices of dialogue and discernment; and continued vigilance for the rights of individual conscience. We may find reinforcement for this sense of ethos as lived communal ethic in the proposed Social Creed of 2008, also before this assembly:

With all those who labor and are heavy-laden, we commit ourselves to a culture of peace and freedom that embraces non-violent initiatives, human dignity and greater equality, with a deeper spirituality of inward growth and outward action. By these means, we witness to our hope in the God who makes all things new, whom we know in Jesus Christ.<sup>26</sup>

## Appendix

## The Work of the Study Team

Assembled and completing its work in 2007, the study team consisted of: Elder Dianne Briscoe, Esq., chairperson, member of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and a family court officer in Denver, Colorado; the Reverend Roger Gench, Ph.D., vice-chairperson, pastor, New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C.; Elder Charles Easley, member, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, vice-chairperson, General Assembly Council, academic administrator, ret., Atlanta, Georgia; Elder Howard Scarrow, Ph.D., professor of political science, ret. State University of New York, Stony Brook, New York; Elder Ronald Stone, Ph.D., professor of Christian social ethics, ret. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Elder Patricia Petty Morse, Esq., International Affairs, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.; Wayne Vaden, Esq., former Denver city clerk, lawyer in private practice, Denver, Colorado; Khalilah L. Brown-Dean, Ph.D., assistant professor of political science, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; Beverly Ann Gaddy, Ph.D., professor of political science, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; the Reverend Rebecca Reyes, M.S.W., coordinator, Latino Health Project, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina.

The study team met twice in full, first in Washington, D.C., at the Washington Office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and then in Denver, Colorado. At the first meeting, hosted by then Presbyterian Washington Office Director the Reverend Elenora Giddings Ivory, the study team heard from eight civil rights and electoral reform organizations and received materials from several other organizations and individuals. Initial research and drafting was done by the Reverend Louisa L. Davis, Ph.D., director of Greater Washington Allies in Reconciliation, an Interfaith Antiracism Alliance, consultant to the study team, complemented by several study group members. The Reverend Christian Iosso, Ph.D., coordinator of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, provided staff services. At its Denver meeting, the team reviewed a draft of the report, reached consensus on most points, and authorized revisions. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy received the report at its October meeting and authorized further revisions for its January 2008 meeting.

[Note: A summary document on electoral process, "Election 101," by Wayne Vaden, Esq., has been posted at [www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp).]

## Endnotes

1. Information on media spending can be found at Campaign Media Analysis Group at [www.tnsmi-cmag.com](http://www.tnsmi-cmag.com).
2. For turnout data going back to 1945, access the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance at [www.idea.int/vt](http://www.idea.int/vt). Note the stress on "recognized democracies" as this site lists all countries. We note the argument of FairVote and others that it is the proportional voting of parliamentary systems that may contribute to this pattern. See Robert Ritchie and Steven Hill, "The Case for Proportional Representation," *Boston Review*, February-March 1998, p. 5 and <http://www.bostonreview.net/BR23.1/riche.html>.
3. See Ian Urbina, "Panel Altered a Draft Report on Vote Fraud," *New York Times*, April 11, 2007, p. 1.
4. David M. Herszenhorn, "Congressional Crackdown on Lobbying Is Already Show Cracks," *New York Times*, January 4, 2008. For a brief report on the effects of the McCain-Feingold, see "The Right to Spend," *New York Times*, July 8, 2007.
5. "An Innocent Proposal," Glenn Tinder, *The Christian Century*, October 2, 1991.
6. See Sanford Levinson, *Our Undemocratic Constitution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). An interview with Levinson can be found on Bill Moyers Journal (<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/12212007/transcript2.html>). While we cite Levinson, this kind of analysis is widely shared. See Thomas E. Patterson, *The Vanishing Voter: Public Involvement in an Age of Uncertainty* (New York: Knopf, 2003); Robert A. Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* (New Haven: Yale University Press); Larry J. Sabato, *A More Perfect Constitution: 23 Proposals to Revitalize Our Constitution and Make America a Fairer Country*, (New York: Walter, 2007).
7. The potential scope of recommendations is great nonetheless. The National Association of Election Officials presented a very thorough compendium of practical improvements in their *National Task Force on Election Reform*, May 2005 report. See <http://www.electioncenter.org/documents/Task%20Force%20Final%20PDF.pdf>.
8. For more information about alternative voting procedures that give more meaningful choices to voters, see the good work of FairVote, 6930 Carroll Avenue, #610 Takoma Park, MD 20912 or at [www.fairvote.org](http://www.fairvote.org). (This organization's beginnings go back to John Anderson's 1980 independent campaign for the presidency.)
9. Cornel West, *Race Matters*, (New York: Vantage Press, 1994), p. 158.
10. Ronald H. Stone, ed., *Reformed Faith and Politics*, (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983).
11. <http://www.americanpoems.com/poets/Langston-Hughes/2385>
12. In 1924, Congress granted citizenship to all Native Americans born in the U.S. Yet even after the Indian Citizenship Act, some Native Americans weren't allowed to vote because the right to vote was governed by state law. Until 1948, some states barred Native Americans from voting.
13. Other obstacles include inefficient or starved government agencies, such as Citizenship and Immigration Services not processing applications fast enough. "Citizenship Backlog to Affect Voting in '08," *Associated Press*, November 21, 2007.
14. Booklet distributed by FairVote: "The way democracy will be" (2007), p. 5.
15. Michael Luo, "House Votes to Owe the Capital a Full Voice in Congress," *New York Times*, April 20, 2007, A19.

16. Khalilah L. Brown-Dean, 2007. "Permanent Outsiders: Felon Disenfranchisement Laws and the Breakdown of Democracy." *National Political Science Review*
17. Greg Gordon, "Ohio, Florida Laws Could Dampen Democratic Voting," McClatchy Newspapers, September 26, 2007. This article describes the tactic of "caging" voters.
18. Richie and Hill, op.cit., p. 6, argue that proportional voting also takes some of the incentives for gerrymandering away.
19. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights: Voting Irregularities in Florida During the 2000 Presidential Election
20. This section is about what could be called structural corruptions. The church has always stood against public officials selling their offices. For anti-corruption legislation, see Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics. ([www.citizensforethics.org](http://www.citizensforethics.org))
21. Short of reading the actual court records, the decision is summarized in Linda Greenhouse and David D. Kirkpatrick, "Justices Loosen Ad Restrictions in Campaign Law," *New York Times*, June 26, 2007, p. 2.
22. Steven Hill, *Fixing Elections*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 196.
23. FairVote has produced a sixty-page study of the Electoral College "Presidential Election Inequity: The Electoral College in the 21st Century."
24. Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1972).
25. Cheryl Saunders, "Prophetic Citizenship" Commencement Address, Anderson University in Anderson, Indiana, on May 5, 2007. Similarly, sociologist Michael Schudson calls for a "monitorial citizen" (in contrast to what he considers the currently predominant "rights-based" citizen.) The prophetic or monitorial citizen has the critical, Calvinist eye of electoral suspicion: "It implies that they should be informed enough and alert enough to identify danger to their personal good and danger to the public good. When such danger appears on the horizon, they should have the resources—in trusted relationships, in political parties and elected officials, in relationships to interest groups and other trustees of their concerns, in knowledge of and access to the courts as well as the electoral system, and in relevant information sources to jump into the political fray and make a lot of noise."<sup>1</sup>
26. "NCCC Receives Draft Social Creed," *Presbyterian News Service*, Nov. 2006.

## Item 09-15

[The assembly approved Item 09-15. See pp. 54, 55.]

*Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) jointly recommend the 218th General Assembly (2008) receive the attached study and approve the resolution and recommendations below, together titled, "Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future."

### I. Resolution

#### *Introduction*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) received initial reports on the effects of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans and the Gulf Coast from several sources: the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), impacted presbyteries, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). Presbyteries affected by the hurricane immediately began to search for pastors displaced by the disaster, coordinated communications with churches, and assessed the impact on congregations, church members, and pastors as they developed a response and coordinated recovery efforts with PDA. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance had swung into action immediately, beginning the double process of emergency support and assessment of long-term needs. Thanks to tent communities and other logistical arrangements by PDA and the hospitality and coordination provided by presbyteries and local congregations, an astonishing number of more than 35,000 volunteers have now pitched in to help reverse the effects of a combined natural, governmental, and cultural disaster, providing more than 178,000 volunteer days of service, worth an estimated \$21 million in labor plus an additional \$95,000 in donated materials, while Presbyterians overall have contributed \$27 million in funds.

This report begins by saluting the Christian commitment of the volunteers. We believe the whole church should be proud, and we find Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Gulf Coast hosting and giving congregations, and the presbyteries of the Gulf Coast region worthy of honor. Quoting Isaiah 58:12, in 2007 the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) called on the whole church to be "repairer[s] of the breach, [and] restorer[s] of [the] streets to live in." The effects of this disaster on the church itself have also been of great concern, as congregations and presbyteries have been weakened. This is a time when most Presbyterians put aside theological differences to respond to God's call to care for one another, acknowledging that: "[when] one member suffers, all suffer together"

(1 Cor. 12:26). But we do not care only for ourselves, and we recognize that all the churches together cannot repair a Katrina-sized breach in our social fabric.

Thus this report complements that outpouring of hands-on and financial concern to look at what the tragedy revealed about New Orleans and its neighboring communities, and about our government's response. This is not an exhaustive catalog of devastation, ward-by-ward or parish-by-parish; nor does it inventory all of the weaknesses in systems of criminal justice, transportation, environmental protection, levee engineering, or urban planning. Public housing and public health remain at the core of Gulf-area needs, and the New Orleans school system is now a large and uneven experiment in non-union charter schools. Economic development remains stunted except for the tourist industry. Yet while the church must be aware of these realities, its focus must be on the suffering and vulnerability of families and communities and the responsibility of federal, state, and local government to respond.

Beyond the church's own caregiving, it is the church's divinely ordained mission to stand with the afflicted, and not to minimize the patterns that have made for soul-drowning poverty in parts of every city and rural county. The attached study looks at the "framing" coverage of the disaster, responses by the church and others to the immediate tragedy, but then looks at structural issues of race, gender, and class and the resources of our tradition to face these dynamics.

The primary author of the study was raised in New Orleans and, with their permission, shares some of the suffering of his own family, most of whom have struggled to stay, and stayed to struggle, in that city. As a professor of urban ministry, he also takes us to the hard truths beneath the deluge of data: although the emergence of a black presidential contender gives hope to our aspirations for a race-neutral society, much of our culture and civic ethos remain stunted by structural racism. Any plans for rescue must recognize these mutually reinforcing legacies of segregation in employment, housing, and education. This is part of the church's work of strengthening its witness of charity with a concomitant witness of justice advocacy, and it prompts the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) to propose a focused continuing study of our urban areas and the capacities of the church within them.

#### *Long-Range Concerns of the Church*

We have seen a great process of triage, planned and unplanned, reflecting lines of race and class, which has resulted in the virtual halving of pre-Katrina populations, with the bulk of the population loss among the poor. We have seen scores of deaths and continued hard living in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailers and moldy homes. Even for those remaining and still returning to New Orleans and its surrounding parishes, there is a great difference between families getting back on their feet and the wholeness of community. It is for the church to lift up a right of place that goes beyond land value, and the cultural and spiritual losses that require more than physical reconstruction.

Of existing policies that speak most directly to this reality, "Building Community Among Strangers," written following racial and other tensions of the Los Angeles riots in the early 1990s, expresses the need for systemic change. The church's commitments to sustainable development and against "environmental racism" or locating toxic hazards primarily in or near poor communities, often communities of color, also speak to the Gulf Coast situation. In addition to social witness policies, of course, the PC(USA) has strategies of mission and evangelism that look to building up the witness of congregations in areas of disaster and disruption.

The recommendations of this report also look to the vulnerability of countless other coastal communities threatened by accelerated climate change and other geographic challenges. The ACREC and ACSWP chose to title this report with the Bible's promise of redemption despite tragedy taken from 2 Corinthians 4:8-9. Too many people in coastal Louisiana and Mississippi have indeed been "afflicted ... but not crushed," "struck down, but not destroyed," and we pray not driven to despair. The message of the hope in all disasters must be that God the Creator does not abandon people and neither should we.

This resistance to abandonment is the other side of the church's theological concern for the common good. It does mean special assistance for those in special need, but it does not mean subsidizing ecologically or logistically unsustainable residence patterns. Insurance practices are discussed in the study paper, but wise federal regulation both holds companies to fulfill their agreements and puts scientifically justified limits on shoreline development. Similarly, there need to be limits on development in dry areas with regard to fire and everyday water depletion. In this way, reflection on the Katrina catastrophe's remediation turns one to issues of prevention, planning for disaster and emergency response, and careful study of the sociology of recovery.

The global prospect of increased internal displacement, in relation to both ecological change and warfare, prompted the United Nations Human Rights community in 1998 to put forward *Guiding Principles on Internal Dis-*

*placement*. The same group that helped develop the Guiding Principles, the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, has supported a study applying those principles to the post-Katrina situation (note: *Hurricane Katrina and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* by Chris Kromm and Sue Sturgis, Institute for Southern Studies, January 2008). This and other comprehensive reports review the adequacy and implementation of the 1988 Stafford Act, the basic five-level framework for federal disaster assistance (full name: The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act). It is thus not the church's role to duplicate this kind of study, but for appropriate agencies and representatives to examine and support key recommendations, particularly for the good of potentially affected areas and planning for the church itself.

As the attached study indicates, an extensive bibliography of reports has been distilled in the recommendations below. Both the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy have listened to a range of persons involved, and the latter body has also visited New Orleans.

## II. Recommendations

In response to the catastrophic disaster to Gulf Coast areas precipitated by Hurricane Katrina, the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008):

1. Receive the study paper entitled, "Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to A More Equitable Future," and direct that it and the resolution approved be made available on the web and in a limited printing for all presbyteries, synods, and educational institutions related to the church, as well as a copy given to each volunteer group staying at a PDA volunteer village.

2. Declare that in light of the Reformed tradition's understanding of the role of government as the arm of a whole people acting to maintain the common good, the official responses of society's agencies, public and private, to the disaster of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have been grievously inadequate regarding the needs of those affected by trauma, loss, and relocation in the Gulf Coast region and, in particular, to the African American citizens of New Orleans, the physically challenged, and the poor of that city.

3. Call the nation to repentance regarding our society's continuing failed responses by taking concrete, timely steps, through policy formation and the appropriate marshalling of financial and human resources, to transform New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region into a model of redevelopment with social and environmental justice.

4. Commend those members and bodies within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that have modeled constructive and compassionate response:

a. The 35,000 plus volunteers who gave more than 178,000 days of service estimated to value more than \$21 million in volunteer labor; and all those who contributed funds to face this unprecedented disaster;

b. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) for its outstanding role in assisting the whole church in responding to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma.

c. The congregations and presbyteries on the Gulf Coast that have welcomed and hosted volunteers and coordinated clean up and rebuilding efforts, and those from around the country and the world who have sent mission teams and resources to the Gulf Coast.

d. Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) for supporting caregivers and engaging Presbyterians from across the country in addressing systemic and specific concerns in New Orleans and elsewhere and in educating Presbyterians on the connection of charity and justice.

e. The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for waiving dues for congregations impacted by the disaster for seven months and for providing more than \$300,000 in emergency assistance grants to church workers in the affected region. The Board of Pensions also streamlined access to care with its medical plan vendors and arranged additional counseling services to address personal impacts of the devastation and stresses of care giving.

f. The synods of the impacted areas for administering funds raised by PDA for pastor and church staff salary support. More than \$714,922 was distributed to support pastors and staff of congregations.

g. The Interagency Task Force, which brought together representatives from various agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to coordinate ongoing, long-term responses to the needs of congregations, including assess-



ment and funding of congregations needing assistance with rebuilding their damaged facilities. More than \$2,218,569 has been distributed for the rebuilding of damaged church facilities.

5. Express concern regarding the health, environmental, and safety issues related to the disposal of Hurricane Katrina debris by directing the Stated Clerk to:

a. Communicate to the City Council and mayor of New Orleans the PC(USA)'s affirmation of the closure of the Chef Menteur landfill in 2007, and to communicate our continuing concern regarding the health and environmental issues involved in the use of the Old Gentilly landfill.

b. Urge the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to work with New Orleans city officials to develop a comprehensive debris management strategy that addresses environmental, safety, and health issues at landfills used for the disposal of Hurricane Katrina waste.

c. Request congressional hearings on debris management post-Katrina that examines the lessons learned from this disaster and provides recommendations for state and federal actions that guide debris management, especially in regards to hazardous waste, in future disasters.

6. Urge the Presbyterian Foundation, through its Creative Investment Program and in collaboration with the General Assembly Council through the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) and in consultation with other offices, to make a loan of \$4 million to Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) in order to create a low-interest revolving loan fund that would be available to Presbyterian congregations, presbyteries, and coalitions in which church entities are involved, in the affected Gulf region for development loans to support the construction and rehabilitation of affordable, permanent rental housing and mixed housing attached to congregational redevelopment, or to fund neighborhood initiatives organized by community development corporations in which a Presbyterian congregation or presbytery is involved. Following the precedent of \$4 million made available for development in Los Angeles in 1991, and limited to a five-year period, this investment would accrue at an interest rate to be agreed upon between the Foundation and LISC and would result in a secure investment for the PC(USA).

7. Encourage PDA and those agencies involved in disaster recovery research to work in collaboration with long-term recovery organizations in finding economically viable "green" building processes, recommended materials (appropriate to context), and models to assist in sustainable rebuilding.

8. Direct Small Church and Community Ministry, Racial Ethnic Ministries, and other appropriate ministries of the General Assembly Council, in consultation with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, to produce a resource for proactive ministry and preparation for disaster in urban and rural areas of concentrated poverty, and provide these to coastal and other vulnerable presbyteries. (This work may be done ecumenically and build on existing resources).

9. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to review the provisions of "Building Community Among Strangers" and other policies involving urban congregations and populations in light of the patterns of enduring poverty in most major U.S. cities, and to study with urban presbyteries ways that public policies may assist the redevelopment of communities and congregations.

10. Direct the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Washington Office, and other ministries of the General Assembly Council (GAC), as appropriate, to support the following public policy directions at the federal level, and urge individual Presbyterians, congregations, presbyteries and synods, as able, to support these and other equitable reconstruction policies on all levels of government, especially state and local:

a. Re-professionalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through careful investigation of its failures of communication, logistics, and coordination with local bodies and institution of new policies as necessary to ensure better emergency preparedness, communications with evacuees, cross-cultural awareness training, involvement of affected people and institutions in recovery efforts, and outreach to persons of color and women as employees and contractors.

b. Long-range planning on population displacement and study of the impacts and effectiveness of FEMA recovery efforts and state/local disaster management.

c. Federal maintenance of prevailing wage levels (under the Davis-Bacon Act), affirmative action requirements, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, and other worker and union protections in reconstruction efforts.

d. System-wide review of the fairness of charter school-based education in New Orleans, including its impacts on teachers as well as children, especially those living in trailers on a long-term basis.

e. Full compliance with environmental laws governing hazardous wastes, fairness in locating waste sites and other hazards in the full range of communities.

f. Public housing reconstruction on at least a “one-for-one” basis to ensure replacement of housing destroyed and policies to strengthen provision of affordable housing to those whose incomes range up to 200 percent of the federal poverty threshold.

g. Preserve affordable housing by instituting rent freezes immediately following disaster and providing for investigation of price gouging in the rental and housing markets in a federally declared disaster area.

h. Urge that Congress investigate: (1) whether persons displaced by the hurricanes on the Gulf Coast were allowed to live in FEMA trailers with dangerously high levels of formaldehyde as has been reported in February 2008 by the Center for Disease Control (CDC); (2) why it took FEMA more than two years to investigate health complaints from persons living in these trailers; (3) the health impact this delay has created in persons living in FEMA trailers; and (4) how FEMA plans to relocate the 36,000 people still living in FEMA trailers whose health continues to be put at risk.

i. Accountable state and federal planning by the Army Corps of Engineers and other bodies to maximize public safety and minimize public exposure to natural risks in the strengthening of levees and other infrastructure improvements.

j. Environmentally-sound planning, in light of climate change, to allow bayou and delta buffer area regeneration and the appropriate protection and regulation of fishing and other coastal economic redevelopment.

k. Effective insurance regulation to ensure clarity in coverage and fairness to policyholders.

l. Rebuilding of full hospital capacity in affected areas, and development of psychiatric resources for communities affected by large-scale depression and post-traumatic stress, with particular attention to services for the indigent and uninsured. Such resources should include youth protective and domestic violence preventive outpatient services.

11. Encourage and equip leaders in local congregations in the Gulf Coast area to help in identifying critical needs that may be addressed through local public policy, and to engage proactively in the development and implementation of such public policy. Direct the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Washington Office, and other ministries of the General Assembly Council (GAC), as appropriate, to identify and make available resources to equip and empower local leaders for this task.

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$1,800; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)] [Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$5,000; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]

### *Rationale*

This resolution comes in response to the affirmation of the 217th General Assembly (2006) that:

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns will continue to explore ways of addressing issues resulting from the Katrina disaster by consulting with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), Peacemaking, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), the Office of Black Congregational Enhancement, and other related entities that will ensure the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s appropriate response to these issues. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 941)

### *Purpose of the Study Paper*

In an effort to clarify facts concerning Jesus Christ from the variety of documents in circulation at the time, Luke wrote the New Testament book that bears his name to a friend beginning with these words: “Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us ... I too decided, after investigating ... to write an orderly account for you. ...” (Luke 1:1–3). In similar fashion, Martin Luther King Jr., in 1963, amidst many conflicting assessments of strategies employed to achieve civil rights for all citizens in that era, wrote his famous “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” to clarify his position concerning difficult social justice issues.

Today, a wide variety of helpful studies about the devastating economic, social, educational, cultural, and spiritual realities confronting New Orleans and Gulf Coast regions in the post-Hurricane Katrina era have been compiled.<sup>1</sup> “Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future,”<sup>2</sup> (2 Cor. 4:7–10) seeks to outline, from among some of these resources, recommended action-steps as set forth above for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The aim here is to affirm the vision and spirit of hope reflected in the people of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast areas in spite of the devastation that continues to impact their lives to this day. Particular attention is devoted to issues of race, gender, and economic injustice that, with disappointing regularity, are reflected in the experiences and stories of some of the most vulnerable people affected by this natural and human disaster.<sup>3</sup> As such, these recommendations are intended to assist Presbyterian Christians to implement a vision a hope and positive systemic change that safeguards the welfare of society’s most vulnerable constituencies and historically marginalized communities such that, in the words of scripture, “justice [will] roll down like waters ... righteousness like an everlasting stream” (Amos 5:24) and “the glory of the Lord [will] be revealed, and all people shall see it together. ...” (Isa. 40:5).

*Background: What Hurricane Katrina Revealed*

During September 2005, the world watched on television tragic pictures of New Orleans as it was deluged not only by water, but also by apathy, incompetence, and indifference. This situation was largely the result of irresponsible funding decisions of government officials and the Army Corps of Engineers that repeatedly ignored the inadequacy of levees and emergency preparedness plans that should have been in place for a city built below sea level. Indelible images of the flooded city remain in our minds: mostly poor and African American people waving their water-soaked clothing in the air, begging for help; women, some with infants in arms, children, men, and elderly persons perched on rooftops, bridges, or lined up to get into the Superdome. Scene after scene of pathos was daily news fare with sick people exposed to the hot summer sun lying on mats, in wheelchairs, in nursing homes or hospitals waiting for buses that never arrived, or deceased and covered with newspaper, rags, and even an American flag as grieving relatives sat nearby in stunned disbelief. Crowds of people walked across a bridge seeking dry land and shelter only to meet a wall of armed police from Gretna, a city that did not flood, refusing them entrance.

Unfortunately, the horror of this tragic reality was exacerbated by a wave of media coverage that sensationalized the incidence of crime and looting occurring in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and delayed some assistance. Mainstream newspapers, television, and radio reported that black residents were raping, looting, and shooting at rescue workers and generally running wild in the streets. These reports spread fear among people in New Orleans across race and class, and were especially terrifying to women. That crime wave later proved to have been largely fictional.<sup>4</sup> Racism is evident in the different ways that actions of black and white residents were portrayed in the media. In one Associated Press photo, a black man carrying a plastic bag through the floodwaters carried the notation that he had been “looting” a local grocery store. In another media story, a similar picture of a white couple carried the notation that they were wading through the flood waters after “finding” these items at a local grocery store.<sup>5</sup> The extent of the coverage that the media placed on looting, shootings, rapes, and violent activity gave the appearance that these behaviors were more rampant than later evidence suggests. These reports represented an additional abuse to many people and an entire city already devastated by the largest natural disaster to hit the coastal United States. Moreover, these sensationalized reports overlooked the heroic sacrifices of many people who were flood victims themselves (children, young adults, older adults, neighbors helping neighbors, medical personnel, police officers, and other public servants who did not abandon their posts) and, nonetheless, sought to reach out and help others. To this point:<sup>6</sup>

It became immediately clear that many of the heroes and heroines of Hurricane Katrina were residents of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Atlanta, Houston, Biloxi, and other surrounding communities who, without fanfare and often without outside resources, saved lives and provided not only food, shelter and clothing, but love and care for their sisters and brothers in the days, weeks, and months after the hurricane. And easily overlooked, is the fact that many of these heroes and heroines were victims themselves, who selflessly risked their own well-being of their families to help others.<sup>7</sup>

Hurricane Katrina hit the Mississippi coast heaping devastation and suffering upon thousands who lost their homes, businesses, churches, and schools with their communities torn asunder and lives shattered. Physical, economic, and emotional ruin and trauma was spread across the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama coasts and surrounding areas. Yet, it was shocking scenes from New Orleans that revealed the abandonment of people in crisis that exposed graphic race, gender, and class distinctions that continue to bedevil our society. These realities challenge the PC(USA) afresh to make its public proclamation of the Gospel, which plainly teaches the axiom summarized in Galatians 3:28 that “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.”

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina’s landfall on August 29, 2005, not only did levees break and fail to protect the city from the flood waters, but promises also broke that were supposed to protect people from the overwhelming danger, sickness, and loss of life that occurred. More pathetic than even this catastrophe are the social and economic realities that typified pre-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans, which can be found in cities across the nation whether in Seattle, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, or Atlanta and, indeed, around the globe in even more profound dimensions. Other cities may not be below sea level physically, but educationally, economically, and in terms of social challenges facing poor families in urban centers en-

gulfed by health challenges, drugs, gun and gang violence, and unemployment, they are seriously below needed safety levels.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the human losses and general vulnerability of poorer communities, there were distinctive cultural losses in the wake of Katrina. The Crescent City and The City That Care Forgot are the two most widely known nicknames long associated with New Orleans, Louisiana. The Crescent City is the nickname that bespeaks of New Orleans' location, noting its early days of having literally been settled in the crescent-shaped bend of the Mississippi River as it winds its way southward toward the Gulf of Mexico. The City That Care Forgot is the phrase that captures the spirit of New Orleans and the emphasis on enjoying life's simple pleasures. This can be seen in the city's passion for good cuisine, good conversation, its love of jazz, Mardi Gras, and all the interplay of African, French, Spanish, Haitian, Creole, other cultural, ethnic, and religious dynamics that, historically, have mocked the wider region's social and political bigotries. Although New Orleans, nonetheless, has always been governed by them. While legendary artists such as Louis Armstrong, Pete Fountain, Mahalia Jackson, and Wynton Marsalis were born in The Crescent City, their cultural contributions to the world have been shaped by the spirit of freedom and its "gumbo" of social, cultural, and artistic improvisation, syncopation, call-and-response, blues, and celebration that is The City That Care Forgot. It is this latter nickname that the tourist industry has capitalized on as it seeks to help New Orleans move beyond Hurricane Katrina, although that event and its aftermath may well have redefined the phrase into the city that a nation's compassion forgot.

In the broader area of Louisiana and Mississippi, including the city of Biloxi, also struck by the hurricanes, we recognize the human costs and heroism as well, and note the cultural impacts on areas known for Cajun traditions, Native communities, natural beauty, and tenacity of spirit. Some coastal areas were entirely swept away by the hurricanes; many churches as well as homes and businesses were severely damaged. Partly because of different governmental patterns of response and density of population, rebuilding has progressed farther in Mississippi and Louisiana areas outside New Orleans. We are also grateful for the hospitality shown by persons and churches throughout the region from Houston to the Florida Panhandle; a single Presbyterian-run program for the homeless in Shreveport, Louisiana, Providence House, lived up to its name immediately after Katrina hit, renting all available apartments for New Orleans evacuees through the action of its far-sighted director.

As we approach nearly three years beyond Hurricane Katrina and its devastating impact, the tasks of crafting viable social justice strategies to address compassionately the injustice issues this disaster exposed still remain. Sociologist Iva E. Caruthers has clearly defined the scope of the challenge facing people of faith in the wake of this crisis with these words:

... Images of the elderly, the children, the poorest of the poor—the very “least of these” spoken of by Jesus (Matthew 25:31–40)—being abandoned by all levels of government and by much of the disaster relief community still ... [remain]. More powerful than these images, however, is the apparent impotence of [our society as a whole] to engage expeditiously and forthrightly in ... [an] effort that affirms the compassionate caring and total commitment of a nation to assess and document what happened and to provide the assistance and assurances needed to the thousands of American families most devastated by this unprecedented natural disaster and national tragedy.<sup>9</sup>

### *Initial Responses*

In the wake of this tragedy, people of faith and goodwill responded nationally and internationally to help fill obvious gaps in government bureaucracy's inadequate response. The PC(USA) congregations and presbyteries responded immediately and generously by assisting those displaced by the hurricane and its aftermath with emergency housing, personal assistance, and recruiting and training volunteers to go to disaster sites throughout the Gulf Coast region to help traumatized victims begin the difficult and painful tasks of rebuilding their lives. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance immediately began a double process of emergency support and assessment of long-term needs.

Two years after Hurricane Katrina, Presbyterian work and commitment in the Gulf Coast continues. Presbyterians walk alongside survivors as they take steps toward rebuilding their communities and rebuilding their lives. This effort has involved lay leaders, ministers, and staff who are all part of a collective effort for long-term recovery along the Gulf Coast. This has been a historic event in the life of the PC(USA). Never before have thousands of volunteers from all walks of life responded so faithfully to a disaster of this magnitude and the long-term recovery ahead. More than 31,000 volunteers have given over one million hours of service estimated at a value of \$23 million. “The true impact of transformation in people's lives cannot be measured in numbers, but can be witnessed in the words of the people who have been deeply engaged in the process of recovery.”<sup>10</sup>

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) had begun to identify implications of the disaster as soon as its dimensions became clear and considered ways to develop a “... statement of prophetic witness” that would address the “social and spiritual devastation ...”(internal ACREC document). Several subsequent events contributed to the church's growing attention to the challenges to a faithful witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ wrought by Hurricane Katrina and the attendant continuing stories of pain and injustice. In September 2006, at a Stony Point Peacemaking conference, Mtangulizi Sanyika, a New Orleans activist and former academic, spoke on the neglect of the city in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Parallel to these efforts, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. convened a task force that continues to study the crisis and advocate solutions at the city, state, and federal levels.

In January 2007, PHEWA (Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association) held its biennial meeting in New Orleans, allowing persons from across the nation to see many of these challenges firsthand and hear from local residents engaged in rebuilding their lives. Quoting Isaiah 58:12, the PHEWA called on the whole church to be “repairer[s] of the breach, [and] restorer[s] of the streets to live in.” Additionally, the conference featured major presentations by scholars and church leaders, including one by professor and lawyer, Bill Quigley, who focused on challenges facing the city. On February 16, 2007, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) held panel discussions in Louisville with presbytery and General Assembly Council staff with participation from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC). Ideas for this resolution have been distilled from that conversation. Members and the executive presbyter of the Presbytery of South Louisiana, including former General Assembly Vice Moderator Jean-Marie Peacock, and Lisa Easterling of the Luling host site, have proved to be essential resources. On October 24–28, 2007, ACSWP held a meeting in New Orleans that included hearings at Berean Church with a wide range of local officials and volunteer leaders. Yet, grievous challenges remain.

### *Structural Issues of Race, Gender, and Poverty*

Although it is a well-established fact that the notion of race is a social construct and has no genetic significance biologically,<sup>11</sup> the cultural conundrum of ethnicity continues to plague all social contexts and generally plays out in ways that leave economic and political disenfranchisement unequally located among people of color.<sup>12</sup> The stamp of these social realities is seen, for example, in health statistics regarding HIV/AIDS, two-thirds world debt among poor southern nations to affluent northern nations, in the incarceration percentages of U.S. prisons, and in the continuing inequities inflicted upon the poor and people of color in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. This is what law professor Victor Goode views as structural racism, the functional outcomes of racially discriminatory behavior in society that manage to avoid identifiable definitions of law:

Structural racism is racism underneath and across society, permeating its entire history, culture and institutions. Our culture, including our education, perpetuates, normalizes and legitimates the effects of racism, while making them invisible to the narrow legal definition of unlawful segregation.<sup>13</sup>

Structural racism not only fails to serve people equally across race, culture, and ethnic origin in society through the agencies of private and government entities, but also in such vital information venues as print, radio, television, cinema, and cyberspace as well as in legislative acts ostensibly designed to foster a “colorblind” society while still culturally and psychologically affirming white supremacy and privilege. The overt goals of the colorblind or race-neutral environment are promoted as eliminating ethnicity from consideration in serving human needs, arguing that not to do so only belittles or insults people of color and encourages resentment among several of society’s white constituencies.<sup>14</sup>

Yet, a great deal of attention is paid to race and ethnicity in society whether in housing patterns, educational institutions, health care, employment, business and investment opportunities, nutrition, transportation access, and even in worship practices. It is against this social and cultural backdrop of structural racism that the nationally televised scenes from New Orleans immediately following Hurricane Katrina should be understood. As Wellesley College political science professor Jean Hardisty observed, the nation’s post-Katrina response was a metaphor of structural racism with “wealthy Whites on the high ground [and largely able to escape the city] while people of color and poor Whites were on the low ground [and the least able to escape the city’s floods].”<sup>15</sup>

Addressing the challenge of race, gender, and poverty distinctions in the social context of the United States is not a new phenomenon. Chattel slavery of the antebellum period leading up to the Civil War was a racial and economic injustice as was the extended period of legalized apartheid in the United States known as racial segregation.<sup>16</sup> Yet, what scenes from Hurricane Katrina’s aftermath exposed so shockingly and vividly was the lingering structural race and poverty distinctions of the post-Civil Rights era of the 1950s and 1960s that, while well known and documented, are typically ignored or hidden in society. Consider the following race, economic, and social justice realities that were well known before Katrina made landfall:<sup>17</sup>

- New Orleans had a black population of 67.3 percent, 26.6 percent white, 3.1 percent Latino, and 2.3 percent Asian.
- Twenty-three percent of all New Orleans residents lived at or below the official poverty level. The national average is 13.1 percent.
- At the time of Katrina, “5% of non-Latino whites did not have access to a car, while 27% of blacks in New Orleans were without cars.”<sup>18</sup>
- New Orleans median household income was \$31,369. National average was \$44,684.
- 51,707 children (42 percent of all children in the city) were poor; 48,740 of those poor children were black. Nearly one in two of all black children in pre-Katrina New Orleans were poor.<sup>19</sup>

- Fifty-seven percent of senior citizens in New Orleans had physical disabilities. The national average was 39.6 percent.
- In Louisiana, 69 percent of black children live in poverty.
- More than 90,000 people in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama made less than \$10,000 a year.<sup>20</sup>

While these realities were well known before Hurricane Katrina, the fact is that these same challenges mirror race, poverty, and gender inequities that characterize contexts throughout the nation and are in no way limited only to urbanized areas of the Gulf Coast and surrounding regions of New Orleans, Louisiana, Biloxi, Mississippi, or Mobile, Alabama. Consider the following realities that evidence the outcomes of structural racism across the nation:

- Unemployment among African Americans represents more than twice the percentage of unemployed whites.<sup>21</sup>
- In cities such as New York and Chicago, some estimates put the number of unemployed black males at 50 percent.<sup>22</sup>
- In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, nearly one-in-two black adults have no full-time job.<sup>23</sup>
- Long-term African American unemployment is now at a twenty-year high.<sup>24</sup>
- By 2002, over one in four Latino and African American families were asset poor, having no liquid financial assets, compared to 6 percent of whites. Families with small amounts or a moderate amount of wealth drew down their meager stockpile of savings to use as private safety nets.
- Of the 2.1 million inmates today, 910,000 are African American.<sup>25</sup> By contrast, only 740,000 African American males are in four-year colleges and graduate programs, though most are in a narrower age range.
- Blacks are 12.3 percent of the population, but are 43.9 percent of the state and federal prison population.<sup>26</sup>
- Latinos are 12.6 percent of the population, but are 18.3 percent of the prison population.
- Whites are 69 percent of the population, but 34.7 percent of the prison population.
- Studies by the Harvard University Civil Rights Project have shown a pattern of resegregation in education in most regions of the United States; where 34 percent of black students attended majority white public schools in 1991, by 2002 only 25 percent did so.<sup>27</sup>

These social realities represent the functional outcomes of what is best understood as structural racism and classism that ignores and tolerates poverty. Researchers from a variety of research organizations including the Brookings Institute, Children's Defense Fund, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, and the National Urban League among others have independently concluded that the evidences of structural race and poverty realities that typified pre-Hurricane Katrina have corresponding circumstances that can be found in urban centers across the nation.<sup>28</sup> Political scientist Jean Hardisty summarized the situation and its resulting challenge this way:

We should not imagine that structural racism is only found in the three states affected by Katrina. It pervades the entire country. The visual images of Katrina would be similar in Chicago, Boston, Washington, DC, Atlanta, Miami, and other cities where race and poverty reinforce each other. ... Until those of us who benefit from white privilege have to confront the consequences of that privilege, it is possible for us to believe the white supremacist line that people of color are victims of their own moral failings, not of [public and private] policies.<sup>29</sup>

### *In Keeping with Our Tradition*

Regrettably, many well-meaning Christians continue to approach social justice issues in the public square as if these were matters of secular social service concern with humanitarian merit, but somehow fail to see the visceral connection of social justice as part of their witness to the Gospel as believers in Jesus Christ. As such, the social, economic, political, and bureaucratic chicanery that characterized our nation's response to the victims of Hurricane Katrina is often viewed as an unfortunate social situation, but not clearly understood as a sinful condition that calls for a prophetic and redemptive response from us. The fact is that this situation represents an outrage to the essence of our faith in Christ and flies in the face of our Reformed tradition as Presbyterians. Our faith heritage calls us to be forthright in attending to matters of social justice because any abuse of vulnerable people, variously described throughout scripture as the widow, orphan, poor, sojourner/alien/stranger, or sick (for example in Ex. 22:21, 22; Lev. 19:10, 33; Deut. 24:17; 26:12, 13; Ps. 99:4; Amos 4:1, 5:24; Luke 10:29–37; James 2:14–17) and summarized by Jesus in Matthew 25:39–46 as “the least of these,” is an affront to God.

Through the ages the church, through its confessional statements, has affirmed human dignity as being at the core of its faith and witness and has condemned acts of economic, race, or gender discrimination as sin. Historically, the confessions of the church, spanning more than four centuries from a variety of social, political, and cultural contexts, affirm that the Holy Spirit works through faithful human beings to correct unfortunate situations in people's lives and that this is, in effect, a means of proclaiming the Gospel and calling people to repentance. Here are but a few examples from our confessional heritage stressing this reality:

#### Scots Confession, Chapter XIII, 3.13

The cause of good works, we confess, is not our free will, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, who dwells in our hearts by true faith, brings forth such works as God has prepared for us to walk in. ...

#### Heidelberg Catechism, 4.086, the Answer to Question 86

Q. 86. Since we are redeemed from our sin and its wretched consequences by grace through Christ without any merit of our own, why must we do good works?

A. Because just as Christ has redeemed us with his blood he also renews us through [the] Holy Spirit ... [in God's] own image, so that with our whole life we may show ourselves grateful to God for [God's] goodness and that [God] ... be glorified through us; and further, so that we ourselves may be assured of our faith by its fruits and by our reverent behavior may win ... neighbors to Christ.

#### Second Helvetic Confession, 5.098, Chapter XIV

Of Repentance and the Conversion of Man [People]: ...

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION. In the letter to the Corinthians the apostle says that the Lord gave the ministry of reconciliation to his ministers (II Cor. 5:18 ff.). ... And explaining his words still more clearly he adds that Christ's ministers discharge the office of an ambassador in Christ's name, as if God himself through ministers exhorted the people to be reconciled to God, doubtless by faithful obedience. Therefore, they [the believers, ministers, and members] exercise the keys [to the Kingdom of Heaven] when they persuade [people] to believe and repent. Thus they reconcile [people] to God.

#### Shorter Catechism, 7.102, Question 102

Question 102: What do we pray for in the second petition (of the Lord's Prayer)?

Answer: In the second petition, which is, "Thy kingdom come," we pray that Satan's Kingdom may be destroyed, and that the Kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the King of glory may be hastened.

#### The Theological Declaration of Barmen, 8.17, Part II: From Evangelical Truth #3

The Christian Church is the congregation ... in which Jesus Christ acts presently as the Lord in Word and Sacrament through the Holy Spirit. ... It [the Church] has to testify in the midst of a sinful world, with its faith as with its obedience, with its message as with its order, that it is solely [God's] property, and ... lives and wants to live solely from [God's] comfort and ... direction ... .

#### The Confession of 1967, 9.44, Part II, Sec. A-4a (Inclusive Language Version)

... The church is called to bring all people to receive and uphold one another as persons in all relationships of life: in employment, housing, education, leisure, marriage, family, church, and the exercise of political rights. Therefore the church labors for the abolition of all racial discrimination and ministers to those injured by it.<sup>30</sup>

#### Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, lines 65–71:

In a broken and fearful world,  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

While not a part of our constitution, the Belhar Confession, first produced in 1987 by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, provides a faithful witness in the Reformed tradition. "Belhar's relevance is not confined to Southern Africa. It addresses three key issues of concern to all churches: unity of the church and unity among all people, reconciliation within church and society, and God's justice."

#### Belhar Confession of the Uniting Reformed Church of South Africa

Section 4. We believe

- that God has revealed himself as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;
- that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;
- that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;
- that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

John Calvin used the notion of the image of God to capture the essence of the biblical understanding of what it means to be human: human beings were made by God for relationship with God and each other. For the Reformers, this understanding served not only to highlight God's purpose for human community, but as evidence that as beings who bear the indelible stamp of God's image, humans are to be accorded special, sacred status in creation as part of God's crowning achievement if this Hebrew concept is read as a future promise within creation. God calls us to fulfill the meaning of being in God's "image" by the way we live together, thereby making God's presence in the universe known. Thus, in Scripture God is portrayed as one who recognizes the value and worth of human life, and affirms the inherent dignity of human beings.<sup>31</sup> In 1999, the PC(USA) affirmed "that racism violates God's purpose for humanity and is contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ" and defined it as sin,<sup>32</sup> stating that:

God created human beings, a diverse family, to live together and to love one another as God loves us. We violate God's intention for the human family by creating false categories of value and identity, based on identifiable characteristics such as culture, place of origin, and skin color.<sup>33</sup>

The movement from our confessions to public policy is not automatic, but depends on a whole tradition of public engagement, the sense that we have a personal and corporate responsibility to reform not only ourselves but the world. This requires understanding both complex issues and the resources that are available for change.

#### *Toward a More Equitable Future*

While Hurricane Katrina has been replaced in the nation's headlines with other issues and many in society have moved on to preoccupation with other realities, it is important for people of faith to recognize that the legacy of this devastating human catastrophe continues for many people. Individuals and entire families have been affected and labor under the weight of physical, emotional, economic, and spiritual trauma to this day. Although their lives have been permanently altered, the processes of government and, in some cases, even non-governmental relief agencies to help these persons repair the harm they have experienced are far from adequate. These are ordinary people of all age ranges and social conditions, whether poor, middle income, working, retired, or unemployed, whose post-Hurricane Katrina continuing struggles of survival and faith in God largely go unnoticed and undocumented. The story of Oliver Sennett,<sup>34</sup> a deeply religious man, represents but one example of tens of thousands of ordinary and unnamed human beings who fall into this category.

Oliver is a seventy-three-year-old, lifelong New Orleans resident who has been living in a FEMA trailer since April 2006. In June 2004, Betty, Oliver's wife of nearly fifty years died from pancreatic cancer following its diagnosis three months before she died. Oliver was still coping with this loss when Hurricane Katrina struck on August 29, 2005, and wiped out their house. Although Oliver Senior earned his living as a carpenter, he lost all his tools during Katrina. Slowly, he's gotten enough to begin rebuilding his house, but moves slower than he used to move. His goal is to complete the work on restoring his house before April 2008. Of the few neighbors he has these days, most also live in trailers as he does.

Still living in the trailer, it was the after-shock following Hurricane Katrina, however, that truly tested Oliver's faith. One year after the hurricane his oldest son, Oliver Junior, died at age forty-eight leaving a wife and three teenage boys. The family wonders whether this death may have been facilitated by a misdiagnosed assessment of his chest pains by overworked and understaffed New Orleans area emergency room personnel. Oliver Jr. called his Dad on the cell phone from the emergency room to report that the two attending physicians were arguing over whether he should be sent home or kept for further observation. He was sent home.

The family's perspective on the attention Oliver Jr. received during his emergency room visit is better understood when one considers that one year after Katrina (August 2006), only three of the city's ten hospitals were reported open.<sup>35</sup> According to the *New England Journal of Medicine*, throughout the metropolitan area of New Orleans, only fifteen of twenty-two hospitals were open, with only 2,000 of the usual 4,400 beds available<sup>36</sup> leaving the capacity of area's post-Katrina healthcare delivery system severely reduced:

The number one current problem is total hospital capacity, says Joseph Uddo, chief of general surgery at East Jefferson General Hospital in neighboring Jefferson Parish. "Emergency department patients can't move into the hospital because beds aren't available ... Common at all facilities include complications in patients with untreated chronic diseases, particularly hypertension, diabetes, and AIDS. ... Many believe that mortality has also increased substantially. ... As a crude indicator, there were 25 percent more death notices in the *Times-Picayune* in January 2006 than there were in January 2005."<sup>37</sup>



The situation of former lower Ninth Ward residents, William and Alberta Sanders,<sup>38</sup> provides an example of the bureaucratic insensitivity that insurance companies have shown in light of the complete devastation of that area by flooding following a break in the levee aside the Industrial Canal. Their home was located three blocks from where the breach in the levee occurred that decimated their neighborhood, including the circa 1964 brick ranch house that was their home. They recalled quite clearly the floodwaters from 1965's Hurricane Betsy that forced them to be rescued via canoe from the roof of their newly constructed home back then. As such, when the advisory to evacuate was issued, they joined the hosts of people leaving the city, traveling with their son and his family to higher ground further north in central Mississippi.

Like several times before when hurricanes were predicted, they took only a few essential papers with them and did not bother to pack much thinking they would return home soon. In fact, they left their car preferring to let their son drive. They looked forward to returning home soon until they learned that, once again, the levee in the Ninth Ward had broken. Like thousands of others in that area, there was no way they could know that they would never see their home again or any remnants of the irreplaceable items that accompany forty-eight years of marriage. Their house was literally washed away by the tidal wave that rampaged through the neighborhood when the levee breached and leaving nothing but a pile of rubble on their property along with their neighbor's house that sat where their house used to be. Though shocked, what surprised them even more was the letter dated June 30, 2006, received from their insurance company.<sup>39</sup> The letter notified them that assessors had surveyed the damage to their home and concluded that it had sustained \$234 in wind damage, but since their policy carried a deductible of \$500, they would receive nothing from the policy that had been in force from the days following the 1965 hurricane.

A December 2006 report from the Special Commission for the "Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast" established by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA<sup>40</sup> found that:

Insurance companies have been very slow to respond to claims. Shortly after Hurricane Katrina, many insurance agents covering New Orleans made a distinction between wind damage from the hurricane, which was covered, and flood damage from the breach in the levees, which was not. Similar situations occurred in Mississippi because of the flood from the storm surge following the hurricane. This indecisiveness and the subsequent lack of coverage for homeowners has been a debilitating factor for many trying to rebuild.<sup>41</sup>

These stories are not unique, but help put a face on the tens of thousands of people whose lives have been forever changed by this situation and for whom the processes of governmental and business responses have proven totally inadequate and insensitive as a result of structural racism. The list of injustices heaped upon the citizens of this area and the surrounding communities of the Gulf Coast is staggering, whether reference is to the ugliness of the Chef Mentour Landfill controversy and the ecological disaster that is post-Katrina New Orleans,<sup>42</sup> the educational catastrophe that has become the New Orleans public system of post-Hurricane Katrina Charter Schools and the largely poor and black children enrolled or all the educators and staff who lost their jobs,<sup>43</sup> the abuse of mostly Latino migrant workers employed in clean-up and rebuilding efforts, the huge increase in crime, homelessness, as well as private security firms operating in the area, or the issues of people who continue to be in other cities across the nation unable to return home.

The magnitude of these injustices is only exacerbated by related acknowledgements from FEMA more than two years after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (February 2008), that some 144,000 trailers the agency issued to hurricane victims contained unsafe levels of formaldehyde, an industrial chemical classified as a probable carcinogen.<sup>44</sup> Hurricane victims struggle to cope with depression and ongoing stress without the ordinary social, medical, and other emergency support services and giving rise to market increases in the incidents of domestic violence, child abuse, substance abuse, and suicide.<sup>45</sup> For example, only one domestic violence shelter in New Orleans survived Hurricane Katrina<sup>46</sup> and one organization, the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, a statewide network of support organizations for battered women based in Baton Rouge, reported that one year after Katrina, the plight of victims of domestic abuse remains greatly endangered due to the lack of intervention and shelter resources:

Since Katrina, Orleans Parish has had no beds for women suffering from domestic violence. The YWCA has closed with no hope of re-opening, and the building that housed transitional living for Crescent House burned to the ground. St. Bernard Parish lost its shelter in the storm; they now have a FEMA trailer for an office ... one year after the storms the Greater New Orleans area has only eighteen beds for women experiencing violence; now many women won't leave their homes or FEMA trailers because they know that there is no safe haven to be had in the area.<sup>47</sup>

The miracle is that Oliver Sennett or William and Alberta Sanders, and the others like them, are people whose faith in God has revealed a resilience and hopefulness of spirit that defies human logic. Their determination to return to New Orleans and rebuild new lives for themselves in the future is an inspiration. They represent the very essence of what apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:8–10:

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.

It is against this backdrop that the above recommendations have been formulated to assist the PC(USA) affirm that as believers in Jesus Christ, we stand with these people in their suffering and struggles. Moreover, we also affirm that our church, too, is "afflicted in every way ... crushed ... perplexed" and often "struck down" (2 Cor. 4:8–9) by the challenges faced by

the people of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region as well as by those challenges which repeatedly call our attentions away from their plight.

The PC(USA) recognizes that analysis of the multiple evidences of institutional failure, social callousness, and bureaucratic dysfunction exposed by the structural racism and poverty revealed in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita ultimately are not helped by our society's penchant for blame and outrage. In light of this, we affirm that the PC(USA) shall not succumb to despair nor see destroyed our witness to the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us, through faith in Jesus Christ, to prophetically aright grievous wrongs in society. In the face of the structural iniquities exposed by these disasters, as people of faith, we are called to lift a new vision of what God can enable us to do, through faith and action, to transform ugly injustices into transformed and uplifting communities where love and justice are not merely utopian ideals, but form the basis of public policy informed by faith in Jesus Christ. It is toward this type of more equitable future that the above recommendations have been framed for the prayerful consideration and approval of the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

#### Endnotes

1. Some examples of special reports exclusively devoted to assessing post-Hurricane Katrina realities include Alan Berube and Bruce Katz, "Katrina's Window: Confronting Concentrated Poverty Across America," Brookings Institution, January 2008; National Council of Churches "Report Card: The Triumphs and Struggles in the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast" (Dec 2006); National Urban League, Inc. "2007 State of Black America," and the Samuel DeWitt Procter Conference, Inc. "Report of the Katrina National Justice Commission, "The Breach: Bearing Witness" (September, 2006). William Quigley, professor of law at Loyola University, has written many valuable reports including: "Trying to Make It Home: New Orleans One Year After Katrina," August 22, 2006, and "New Orleans: Locked Outside the Gates," December 28, 2007, both available online at [Truthout.org](http://Truthout.org).
2. The title of this proposed resolution, "Struck Down, But Not Destroyed," is drawn from a presentation by Ronald E. Peters entitled "What Hurricane Katrina Revealed Concerning Race and Poverty" given at the January 11-14, 2007, PHEWA Conference and references 2 Cor 4:7-10.
3. It has been forcefully argued by Chester Hartman that while Hurricane Katrina was a natural disaster, the lack of adequate protection from levees caused by irresponsible decisions and actions of government agencies and legislative bodies reveals that the aftermath of the hurricane was a manmade disaster. A summary of the between \$7 and \$14 billion to be spent on levee repair in New Orleans can be found in John Schwartz, "New Orleans Flood Plan Upgrade," *New York Times*, August 23, 2007. In that same issue, Schwartz also reports, "East St. Louis Levees Fail Test," pointing to the widespread nature of infrastructure neglect.
4. Michael Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster*: New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2006. "Television reports and newspaper accounts brimmed with the unutterable horror of what black folk were doing to each other and their helpers in the Superdome and the convention center: the rape of women and babies, sniper attacks on military helicopters, folk killed for food and water, armed gang members assaulting the vulnerable, dozens of bodies being shoved into a freezer . . . Nearly every one of the allegations provided to be baseless rumor. [Susannah Rosenblatt and James Rainey, "Katrina Takes a Toll on Truth, News Accuracy," *Los Angeles Times*, September 27, 2005, A17; Brian Thevenot and Gordon Russell, "Rape, Murder, Gunfights. For Three Anguished Days the World's Headlines Blared That the Superdome and Convention Center Had Descended into Anarchy," *The Times-Picayune*, September 26, 2005, p. A01], p. 170; and "The real total [of bodies] was six." "Four had died of natural causes, one overdosed on drugs," and one committed suicide . . . There is one possible case of homicide at the Superdome, but the case is "murky," p. 172.
5. This incident and others are analyzed in: "The Press, Race and Katrina," by Madison Gray, August 30, 2006, *Time.com: BBC News*: "New Orleans Violence 'overstated' by Laura Smith-Spark, September 29, 2005. Those observations do not contradict the sad later truth that crime plagues poorer communities. See Adam Nossiter "Storm Left New Orleans Ripe for Violence," *New York Times*, January 11, 2007.
6. The Breach; The Great Deluge, The Children's Defense Fund.
7. The Breach, 11.
8. Portions of this paragraph appear on page vii of *Urban Ministry: An Introduction* by Ronald Peters, published by Abingdon Press, 2007.
9. Iva E. Carruthers, Bernice Powell Jackson (eds). *The Breach: Bearing Witness—Report of the Katrina National Justice Commission*. Chicago: Samuel DeWitt Procter Conference, Inc. 2006. 10.
10. <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/response/usa/gulfcoast/katrina-2yearslater.htm> / December 2007.
11. There is broad consensus among social and medical scientists that race and/or ethnic distinctions in the human family of homo sapiens document culturally learned differences rather than substantive genetic variations within the species, a position affirmed in a variety of other disciplines as well. Representative articulations of this perspective are found in W. Michael Byrd, MD, MPH and Linda Clayton, MD, MPH's book *An American Health Dilemma—Volume One, A Medical History of African Americans and the Problem of Race: Beginnings to 1900* (New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 46-47); Kevin J. Christiano, William H. Swatos, Jr., and Peter Kivisto, *Sociol-*

*ogy of Religion: Contemporary Developments*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 154–59; Matthew Anderson, M.D., Susan Moscou, FNP, MPH, Celestine Fulchon, Ph.D., Daniel R. Neuspiel, MD, MPH *Journal of Family Medicine*, 2001; 33(6):430–34 and Cornel West’s “The Genealogy of Modern Racism”(chap. 2) in *Prophesy Deliverance: An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982, 47–65.

12. Peters, 2007. 25.
13. Victor Goode. “Crisis on the Campus: Affirmative Action at the Crossroads: in Color Lines Mag. (Spring 2003) quoted in Hardisty, October, 2005.
14. Jean V. Hardisty, “Hurricane Katrina and Structural Racism,” Wellesley Centers for Women, www.wcwonline.org. See also Michael Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water* (Phila: Perseus, 2006). The city’s current recovery plan also focuses on high ground: “... 14 of the 17 areas Dr. Blakely (recovery chief) singles out are in the more promising, less flooded western part of the city,” in Adam Nossiter, “Steering New Orleans Recovery With a Clinical Eye,” *New York Times*, April 10, 2007.
15. Hardisty, op.cit.
16. The period beginning with the 1898 *Plessey v Ferguson* decision of the U.S. Supreme Court sanctioning the establishment of race-based “separate but equal” facilities and the initiation of legal dismantling of such arrangements in *Brown v Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1954.
17. Except as otherwise noted, the following statistics are from Michael Eric Dyson, 2006, pp. 5–6.
18. Ibid.
19. Marian Wright Edelman, 2006.
20. Alan Berube and Bruce Katz, “Katrina’s Window: Confronting Concentrated Poverty Across America,” Brookings Institution, January 2008; National Council of Churches “Report Card: The Triumphs and Struggles in the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast” (December 2006); National Urban League, Inc. “2007 State of Black America;” ... other documentation to be supplied ... [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2005/10poverty\\_berube/20051012\\_Concentratedpoverty.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2005/10poverty_berube/20051012_Concentratedpoverty.pdf).
21. Tavis Smiley, *The Covenant with Black America* (Chicago:Third World Press, 2006), 170.
22. Ibid.
23. *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, Oct. 17, 2005, <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/05290/588966-28.stm> Accessed Oct. 31, 2007.
24. Smiley, 2006, 166.
25. All incarceration statistics cited in this and the following bulleted items in this section, except as noted otherwise, are from Smiley, 2006, 53.
26. See Alan Berube and Bruce Katz, “Katrina’s Window: Confronting Concentrated Poverty Across America,” Brookings Institution, January 2008; National Council of Churches “Report Card: The Triumphs and Struggles in the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast” (Dec 2006); National Urban League, Inc. “2007 State of Black America;” the Samuel DeWitt Procter Conference, Inc. “Report of the Katrina National Justice Commission, “The Breach: Bearing Witness” (September, 2006).
27. The numbers given are averages; regions differ. See “Is Resegregation Real? By Chungmei Lee, October 2004, p. 5, at [www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu) a paper which also addresses methodology and demographic patterns behind their determinations. An earlier publication by Gary Orfield and John T. Yun, “Resegregation in American Schools,” June 1999, gives much more data.
28. Berube and Katz, op.cit.
29. Hardisty, op.cit.
30. *The Book of Confessions*
31. *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*. A policy statement approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999) of the of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 1. Many today are less willing than the Reformers to assert as a given the centrality of human beings in God’s evolutionary design of the universe. They read the sense of the Hebrew to imply a future tense.
32. Ibid., 1.
33. Ibid., 1.
34. The information presented here on lifelong New Orleans resident Oliver Sennett Sr. (the brother-in-law of Ronald and Mary Smith Peters) and his family is used with permission.

35. Report Card: The Triumphs and Struggles in the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast. National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, December 2007, [http://www.nccusa.org/pdfs/ReportCard\\_6P.pdf](http://www.nccusa.org/pdfs/ReportCard_6P.pdf).
36. *New England Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 354:1549–1552, No. 15, April 13, 2006. <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/354/15/1549>. January 2008.
37. Ibid. See also “Shuttered Hospitals Ensure Slow Recovery in New Orleans,” Leslie Eaton, *New York Times*, July 24, 2007, p.1.
38. The information presented here on lifelong New Orleans residents William and Alberta Sanders (the sister and brother-in-law of Mary Smith Peters) is used with permission.
39. A copy of the letter is available from Professor Peters upon request.
40. Report Card: The Triumphs and Struggles in the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf Coast. National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA [NCCUSA], December 2007, [http://www.nccusa.org/pdfs/ReportCard\\_6P.pdf](http://www.nccusa.org/pdfs/ReportCard_6P.pdf).
41. Ibid.
42. Hurricane Katrina generated an estimated 22 million tons of debris, and Rita produced an additional 2.6 million tons. This was 26 times more rubbish than was hauled out of the World Trade Center site in New York after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, which created 1.5 million tons of waste. The debris and high levels of mold within New Orleans has caused concerns that those who are the most vulnerable socio-economically, namely low-income and African American residents, may be exposed to adverse environmental side effects. NCCUSA Report Card. [http://www.nccusa.org/pdfs/ReportCard\\_6P.pdf](http://www.nccusa.org/pdfs/ReportCard_6P.pdf). Information on the Chef Mentour and Gentilly landfills can be found at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2403/Default.aspx>. See also information from “Citizens for a Strong East New Orleans” at <http://neworleans.indymedia.org/news/2006/05/7620.php>.
43. It should be noted that New Orleans public school systems was in crisis prior to Hurricane Katrina and the state took control of most of the schools and the school system. 176,000 K-12 New Orleans students were displaced because of Hurricane Katrina. Of the 128 public schools in the city prior to Katrina, only 53 were slated to open by Fall 2006. In comparison, most of Mississippi’s schools resumed operations within two weeks of Hurricane Katrina.—Ibid. Also see *Katrina’s Children* published by the Children’s Defense Fund.
44. Almost immediately from the time families started occupying the trailers, complaints began to surface about respiratory and other health problems associated with formaldehyde exposure, but the agency was slow to respond. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Feb. 15, 2008, A-6.
45. June 2007 speech given by Avis A. Jones-DeWeever, Program Director, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, “Women and Katrina Two Years After the Storm,” <http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/vitalspeeches.pdf> /15 Feb08.
46. Ibid.
47. The Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, <http://ms.foundation.org/wmspage.cfm?parm=390> / 15 Feb 2008.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-15

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-15—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 09-15 is the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns’ resolution, “Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future.”

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that Item 09-15 be approved.

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#### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 09-15

*Comment on Item 09-15—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council (GAC) commends the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) for its response to the affirmation of the 217th General Assembly (2006), which called for exploration of ways to address issues resulting from the Katrina disaster. “Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future” reflects an even broader scope than the devastation that afflicted the Gulf Coast region in 2005. It explores issues revealed by, not just resulting from, Katrina and looks at the eco-

conomic, social, educational, cultural, and spiritual realities of race, class, and gender, not just in the Gulf Coast but across the nation, and decries these realities as sin.

Further, the GAC joins with ACREC and ACSWP in applauding those members and bodies within the PC(USA) that have modeled a constructive and compassionate response to the tragedies of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, including, but certainly not limited to, the volunteers and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA).

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### COGA AND GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 09-15

*Comment on Item 09-15—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

In order to be good stewards of our resources, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council urge the 218th General Assembly (2008) not to make exceptions to Standing Rule H.2.a.(12).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council remind commissioners and advisory delegates of Standing Rule H.2.a.(12), which reads: “(12) As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly’s proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk.”

This rule was added to *Manual of the General Assembly* several years ago to help control expenses and maximize distribution of documents.

If the General Assembly decides to make an exception to the rule, it will be necessary for the assembly to suspend the Standing Rules, which requires a 2/3 affirmative vote of the total enrollment of commissioners.

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## Item 09-16

[The assembly approved Item 09-16. See pp. 54, 55.]

*Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

In order to provide continuity and direction for the continuing consultations between the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Executive Officers of the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly, ACREC recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following actions:

1. Direct the General Assembly Council (GAC), Office the General Assembly (OGA), Presbyterian Board of Pensions (BOP), Presbyterian Foundation (FDN), Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) to prepare a written plan for the continuing implementation of cultural proficiency or comparable approach to organizational change. This plan will be a mechanism for assessing needs, setting goals, and developing strategies with measurable action steps, and will address the following:

a. Develop an organizational plan to sustain cultural proficiency that addresses the particular needs of both management and employees, through

- education,
- increased awareness,
- application.

b. Communicate commitment to cultural proficiency to management and staff.

- Is there a vision statement or other expression of agency policy?
- Are cultural proficiency expectations expressed in job descriptions, performance goals, and evaluations?

- Is there an agency-wide communication strategy to promote employee awareness of cultural proficiency goals?

- c. Review agency policies and practices assessing barriers to diversity and inclusiveness.

- What policies have been reviewed?
- What is the process for review?
- As a result of agency review, what changes have been made to support cultural proficiency goals?
- What policies or practices are scheduled for review?

- d. Assess employment profile using statistical data that includes

- salary range and occupational category (including senior management),
- separations and new hires, and
- breakdown by race, ethnicity, and gender.

- e. Develop strategies to increase diversity in employment through

- recruitment and hiring, and
- internal mobility.

2. Direct ACREC to develop a report format and timeline for the consultation process. The Cultural Proficiency Plan and report of accomplishments for each entity shall be reviewed as part of the regular, recurring consultations between ACREC and agency executives (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 542–43).

3. Direct the Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008)—in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, the associate for Cultural Proficiency, and the General Assembly Nominating Committee—to appoint a Climate for Change Task Force composed of eight members.

- a. Instruct the Climate for Change Task Force to review the current Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity (AA/EEO), contracting and purchasing policies; and recommend revisions.

- b. The Climate for Change Task Force shall recommend changes to:

- (1) Update churchwide AA/EEO policies to reflect the church’s commitment to using the tools of cultural proficiency for organizational change;

- (2) Provide guidance and standards for consistent application of the Minority Vendor Policy in the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly;

- (3) In consultation with staff, develop new guidelines and procedures to be used in lieu of services formerly provided by Project Equality; and

- (4) Revise and update AA/EEO and Minority Vendor policies to reflect changes in the agencies related to the General Assembly and the changing business environment created by emerging technology.

- c. In doing its work, the task force shall be staffed by the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministry (GAC), in consultation with the associate for Cultural Proficiency and the manager for Purchasing, and consult with representatives of the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly, as appropriate.

- d. The Climate for Change Task Force shall provide an interim report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), and a final report to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$12,960; (2010): \$12,960 (Per Capita-GAC)]

### *Rationale*

#### I. Introduction and Overview

The church's capacity to achieve its goals for effective multiracial and multicultural ministry in the future is dependant on its willingness today to transform itself through intentional actions:

- Reflecting the abundant diversity of God's human family;
- Equipping the church to minister effectively in diverse racial and cultural contexts; and
- Dismantling systemic barriers to full and inclusive community.

General Assembly policy calls for the agencies of the church to reflect this commitment in their employment policies and practices, helping to equip the whole church to live into this vision.

The church is called to promote social righteousness and to exhibit the Kingdom of Heaven to the world (*Book of Order*, G-1.0200). The church professes that racism in any form is a sin (*Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*, 211th General Assembly (1999)). Without deliberate efforts to transform the systems of privilege and power, we perpetuate patterns of discrimination through our inaction.

The agencies of the General Assembly, participating in the ministry of the whole church, are called to demonstrate leadership through this change.

Cultural Proficiency is a proactive process that works for individual and organizational change. The expected outcome is an organization that more effectively

- recruits, hires, and promotes for a diverse workforce;
- functions internally in ways that nurture and sustain the gifts and strengths of diversity; and
- responds constructively to the challenges of diversity.

The ACREC task force report, *Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004), directs the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly\* to utilize the tools of cultural proficiency, or other comparable processes, to develop and sustain healthy organizational cultures that support diverse workforces.

As directed by the General Assembly, ACREC's consultations with the executive leadership of the six agencies includes

- ongoing implementation of cultural proficiency or similar processes;
- monitoring and assessing the employment profile of each agency by race, ethnicity, and gender, consistent with PC(USA) AA/EEO policy; and
- monitoring and assessing General Assembly policies pertaining to Project Equality and Minority Vendors.

#### II. Summary of Findings

The 2007 consultations between ACREC and the corporate executives of the six agencies related to the General Assembly\* continued to focus on the implementation of Cultural Proficiency and the representation of women and people of color, particularly in senior management.

Cultural Proficiency is an intentional, proactive approach to creating a work environment that welcomes the diversity of race, culture, gender, class, abilities, and other factors; building an organizational culture that utilizes the strengths of diversity and can respond to conflicts that arise out of diversity in constructive ways. To sustain the commitment to Cultural Proficiency and live into the vision of creating healthy corporate cultures that reflect the vision of becoming a truly inclusive multiracial, multicultural church, ACREC finds that agencies need to be able to articulate a concrete plan of action that

- communicates management's commitment to the vision of diversity and inclusiveness; and
- provides for education, increased awareness and application of the tools for cultural proficiency.

To sustain momentum, provide direction, and create accountability for cultural proficiency efforts, agencies need to

- evaluate policies and practices, and
- identify areas for improvement, set goals, and develop action plans with measurable action steps.

The ACREC believes that efforts to implement cultural proficiency would be strengthened with a systematic approach that includes a means of accountability. A written plan developed by each agency would provide the mechanism for planning and a means of assessing its accomplishments. Future consultations between ACREC and the agency executives will focus on the implementation of each agency's plan of action. To provide clear and consistent guidance to the agencies and to facilitate the work of ACREC in monitoring the implementation of cultural proficiency, or comparable process, the committee should outline a standardized format for the agencies to use.

Since 2001, when the ACREC Task Force to Review General Assembly Entities began its work, the single most critical finding has been the persistent absence of people of color in the top management levels of the six General Assembly entities it monitors. In consultations with the executives, all reported that the greatest barrier to change at this level is the relative slow rate of turnover. The ACREC has observed this slow rate of turnover in five of the six agencies monitored. However, in the GAC—where retirement, downsizing, and reorganization created almost complete turnover in senior management between the 2005 and 2007 consultations—the GAC failed to take advantage of the opportunity to increase diversity at the top.

The ACREC laments the loss of this opportunity, and in light of this failure, it must seriously question the commitment of the GAC to the vision of Cultural Proficiency.

The 2004 report of the ACREC Task Force to Review GA Entities, *Creating a Climate for Change*, approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004), called for the General Assembly related agencies to commit resources and procedures to provide for effective recruitment to address the need for greater diversity in upper management. In the 2005 consultations, the executives of these agencies expressed their support for this concept. In 2007, the agencies reported that discussions had begun, but that a plan was not yet in place. There is a critical need for an effective recruitment strategy. The ACREC urges the GAC, working in cooperation with the other five agencies, to make this an urgent priority, and will continue to monitor its implementation.

In order to provide for a more comprehensive analysis of each agency's employment profile, ACREC requests that agencies provide statistical data on separations and new hires, in a format consistent with the data currently reported to ACREC.

The ACREC notes that strong support for Cultural Proficiency, Minority Vendor Policy, and Project Equality by an agency's governing board has a positive impact on implementation of these policies in the organization. The ACREC urges the governing boards of each of the corporate agencies to include regular education for cultural proficiency in their agendas.

There is a need to review and update the policies of the General Assembly concerning affirmative action, equal employment, and minority vendors. Current policies date to the 1980s and early 1990s. Application and implementation of these policies is not consistent across the agencies that relate to the General Assembly. Moreover, a rapidly changing business environment is changing the way General Assembly agencies do business in ways that were not anticipated by the makers of this policy.

- The Minority Vendor Policy, established in 1984, sets the goal for 10 percent of goods and services purchased by General Assembly level entities to be purchased from minority-owned businesses. Statistical data in support of the Minority Vendor Policy is not maintained or reported consistently by all General Assembly-related entities.
- Project Equality, a nonprofit organization supported by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), provided Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity audits and compiled a buyer's guide. It has been a primary resource in support of the Minority Vendor Policy. However, Project Equality closed its door in 2007, and is no longer available to provide those services.
- Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policies of the General Assembly pre-date the commitment to cultural proficiency.
- Purchasing is increasingly done through the Internet, with credit cards and by individual employees directly, rather than through a purchasing office or agent. This has made it harder to identify and track goods and services purchased from women and minority vendors. It also means that achieving the goals of the Minority Vendor policy are much more dependent on educating employees so that they make decisions consistent with church policy.

A review of these policies needs to consider



- providing guidance for consistent application in all General Assembly-related agencies;
- updating current policies to reflect the church's commitment to cultural proficiency; and
- revising existing policies to reflect organizational changes in the agencies related to the General Assembly, changes in the way they do business, and changes such as the loss of Project Equality.

### III. Agency Highlights and Areas for Growth

#### A. *General Assembly Council*

##### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

General Assembly Council has shown some faithfulness toward implementing cultural proficiency. Actions include:

- Created the Office of Cultural Proficiency and employed a full-time associate for cultural proficiency.
- Implemented training for employees in cultural proficiency.
- Launched *InterJournal*, a monthly in-house electronic commentary lodged on CenterNet, with a focus on human diversity and cultural proficiency.

##### 2. *Employment Profile*

The General Assembly Council, when given opportunity to increase its cultural proficiency profile in upper management, failed.

- In previous reports, GAC executives cited the lack of turnover as the single greatest barrier to increasing diversity in upper management. With nearly 100 percent turnover in the senior management category of the GAC, ACREC views this as a missed opportunity to be faithful to the General Assembly mandate of 2004.

- In the senior management category, there is a total of nine people: three white females (33 percent) and one person of color (11 percent). Of the three deputies for the major GAC ministries—Communications and Funds Development, Mission, and Shared Services—there are two white males and one white female.

- In contrast to the above, the total number of all managers and supervisors (209), including all associates, is 61 percent female and 23 percent people of color.

##### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy and Project Equality*

The 2006 minority vendor expenditures of 13.1 percent is the highest percentage that has been achieved in the fourteen years this report has been prepared by the purchasing office. The observation of ACREC is that the primary reason for this percentage was due to a construction project at Ghost Ranch with \$2,547,192 spent with Blue Sky Builders, Inc., a Hispanic construction company. At the same time, GAC lost some major minority vendors in other areas. Without the Ghost Ranch project, the percentage of minority vendor purchasing would have been only 5 percent, a significant drop in comparison to prior years.

The ACREC strongly encourages intentional efforts to maintaining a 10 percent minority vendor purchasing in accordance with General Assembly policy.

At the time of ACREC's consultation with the GAC, Project Equality had only recently closed its doors. The GAC was just beginning to explore alternatives to using the Project Equality Buyer's Guide and audit services.

#### B. *Office of the General Assembly*

##### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The ACREC observes that OGA is a relatively small organization. The leadership of OGA promotes a culture of inclusiveness that relates as a family. The OGA promotes a strong culture of self-development and upward mobility and actively encourages employees to take advantage of tuition reimbursement and continuing education opportunities.

##### 2. *Employment Profile*

In the senior management category, there are a total of eight people: 25 percent are women of color and 75 percent are white males. In the management category, 18 percent are people of color, 64 percent are white females.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy and Project Equality*

OGA reported that for office purchasing, it participates through the GAC.

In lieu of Project Equality, OGA reports that it works with local agencies to provide AA/EEO assessments for General Assembly arrangements with hotels and convention centers.

## C. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP)*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The PILP is a small organization of fourteen employees. It receives Human Resources services through the GAC and participates in cultural proficiency programs such as the Cultural Proficiency training in Education Day and other activities in 100 Witherspoon and have had discussions about language usage in staff meetings.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

The PILP's greatest challenge in increasing its diversity in employment is low staff turnover. In 2006, one clerical position was filled. The person selected was a white female. The PILP does not expect to increase staffing. Management expects one retirement in the next eighteen months.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy and Project Equality*

The PILP reported that for office purchasing, it participates through the GAC. The PILP reports that the major vendors with which it has contracts are committed to equal employment opportunities.

## D. *Presbyterian Publishing Corporation*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The PPC reports that it continues to promote equal opportunity in all aspects of employment: salary administration, continuing education assistance, and target recruiting. It identified its greatest accomplishment in cultural proficiency in the diversity of the titles/authors they publish.

However, it reported minimal activity directed towards creating an organizational climate for change. The ACREC noted that, regrettably, PPC terminated its minority internship program.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

Staff representation is currently below the General Assembly recommended percentage of 20 percent for persons of color. According to PPC management, two factors contribute to this: a reduction in force and voluntary turnover. The lack of diversity is greater at management levels. The PPC has six people in senior management, one Native American and two white females.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy and Project Equality*

The PPC does not gather minority vendor data on its own purchasing. It reported that it purchases catering, office supplies, printing, editorial services, production services, marketing products, and marketing services from a variety of minority vendors.

## E. *Board of Pensions*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The Board of Pensions employs *M.E.E.T. on Common Ground: Speaking Up for Respect in the Workplace* as an alternative approach to cultural proficiency.

The Board of Pensions reports the following activities to further implement cultural proficiency within its agency:

- Tuition reimbursement;
- Mentoring new and potential managers;
- Training for prevention of harassment; and
- Strong support for upward mobility.

## 2. *Employment Profile*

Senior management is a total of twelve persons: One (8 percent) person of color and four (33 percent) white females. In the official/managerial category, there are a total of forty-five persons: fourteen (31 percent) persons of color and eighteen (40 percent) white females.

## 3. *Minority Vendor Policy and Project Equality*

The Board of Pensions reports to ACREC that it does not maintain minority vendor data in the format requested by ACREC. For many local purchases, it utilizes the Project Equality Buyers Guide to identify new vendors. When minority vendors are identified, it utilizes them when appropriate. For example, BOP identified a minority owned printing and design firm. In 2006, it has spent more than \$500,000 with this firm.

The Board of Pensions reports that in its contractual arrangements with financial institutions, it actively seeks minority and women-owned companies. In addition, it seeks with all of the companies in its investment portfolio, to establish relationships with racial ethnic and/or women principals, portfolio managers, or client service officers. It requests that existing managers complete a detailed EEOC report every three years and provide their current policy on the advancement of women and racial ethnic employees in the firm. These reports are provided to the Board of Directors for the Board of Pensions.

## F. *The Presbyterian Foundation*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The ACREC observes with appreciation the efforts of the Foundation to implement cultural proficiency within its agency. It has:

- Conducted a survey of employee perceptions of the Foundation's work culture;
- Implemented a senior management team building course;
- Conducted prevention of harassment training for managers and for employees;
- Completed a one-day training program on managing diversity;
- Completed one-day training for all employees in cultural proficiency, including all field staff;
- Provided training for all employees on effective listening skills; and
- Promoted its tuition reimbursement program.

The Foundation reported that due to limited turnover, management has placed an emphasis on changing the organizational culture to increase employee satisfaction.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

In senior management, the Foundation has a total of eleven persons: one (9 percent) person of color and two (18 percent) white females. In the officials and managers category, it has a total of thirteen persons: two (15 percent) persons of color and eight (62 percent) white females.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy and Project Equality*

The Foundation has not been required by the General Assembly to gather minority vendor data. It began collecting data in 2004. In 2006 it reports the following figures for purchasing: 5.8 percent African American, .1 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 16.4 percent women.

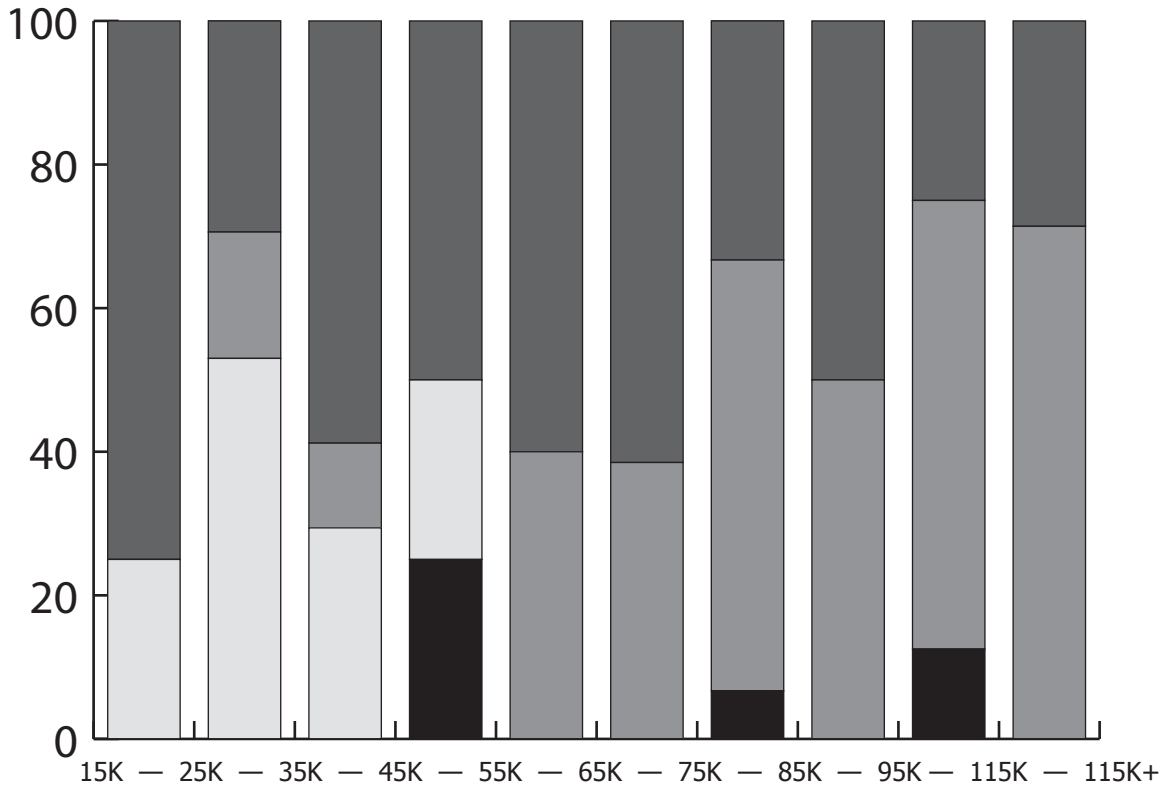
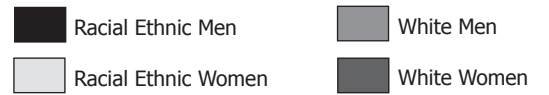
With major contractors, the Foundation expresses its commitment to equal employment policies and requests information on their equal employment opportunity policies. The Foundation reported that in one instance a company put a policy in place in order to do business with the Foundation.

#### IV. Statistical Assessment

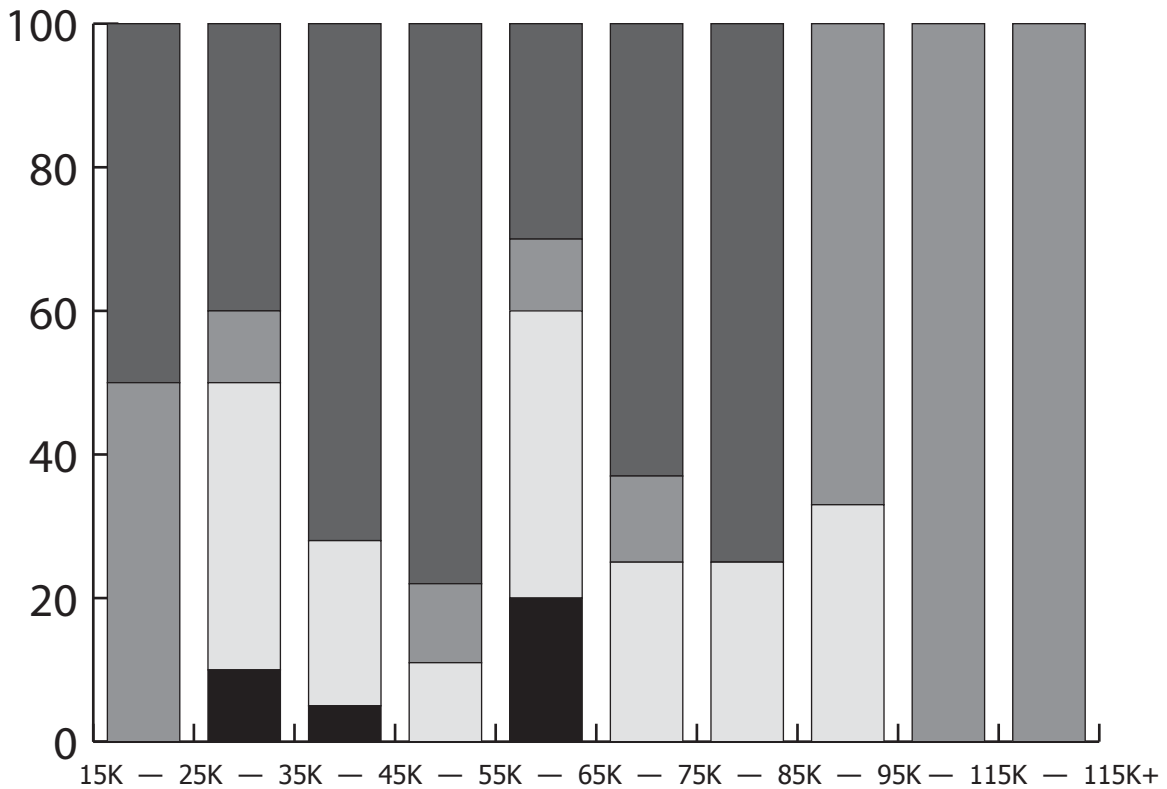
The following bar graphs illustrate employment in the six agencies, by race and gender, broken down by salary range. The data shown is by percentage. The statistical tables from which the data is drawn are included in Appendix B.

**Agency Employment Statistics**

**Jan. 1, 2007 – Dec. 31, 2007**



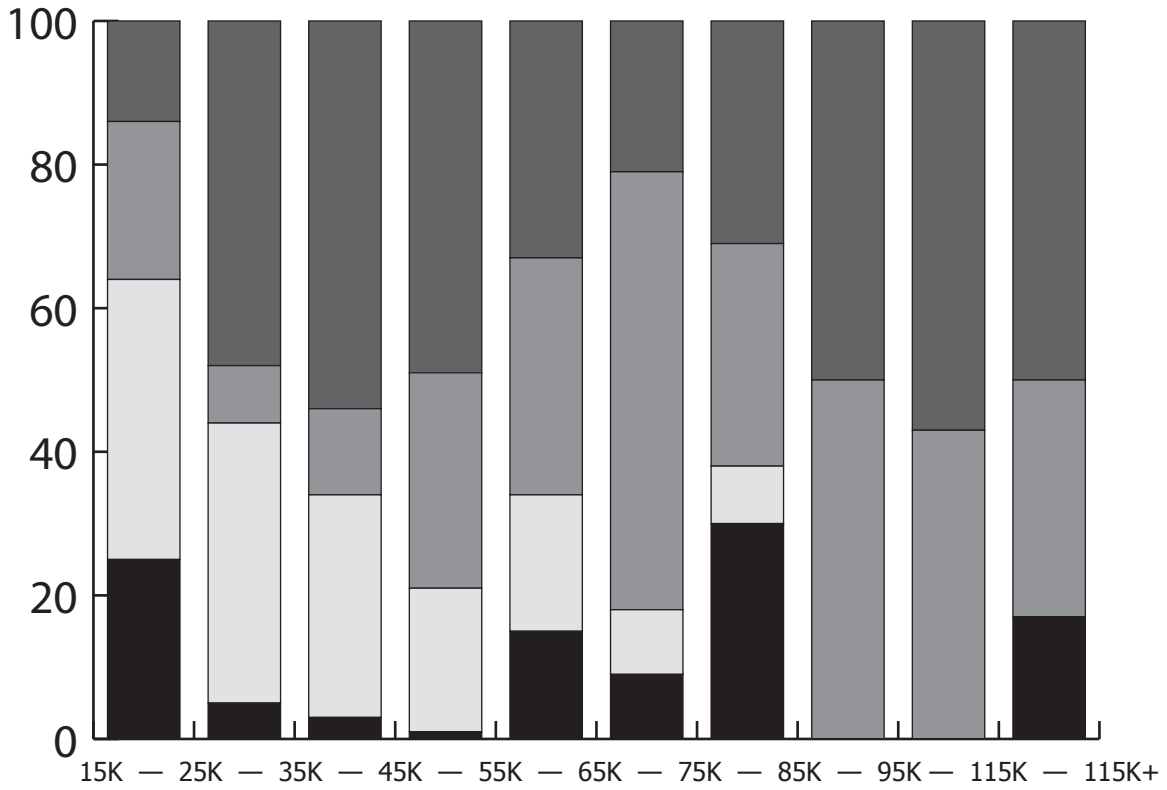
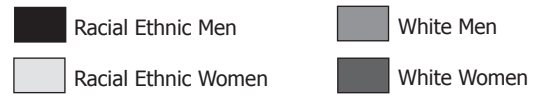
**FDN – Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**



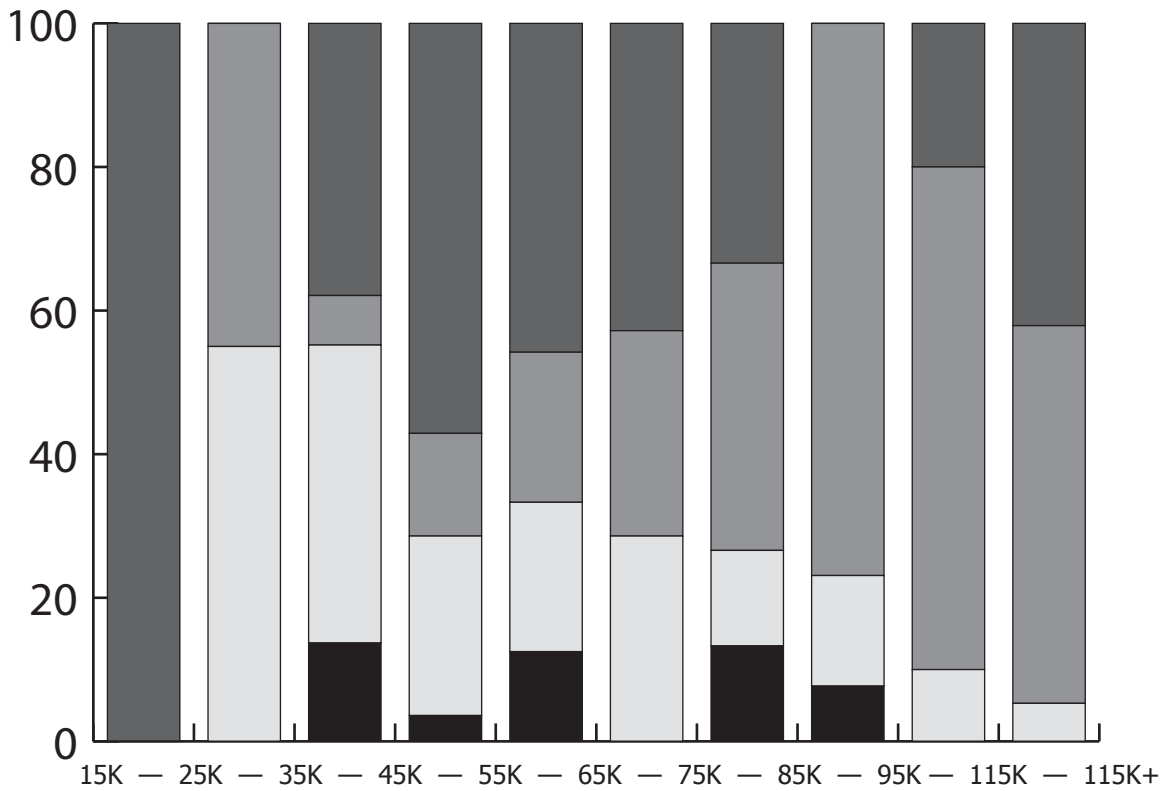
**OGA – Office of General Assembly**

**Agency Employment Statistics**

**Jan. 1, 2007 – Dec. 31, 2007**



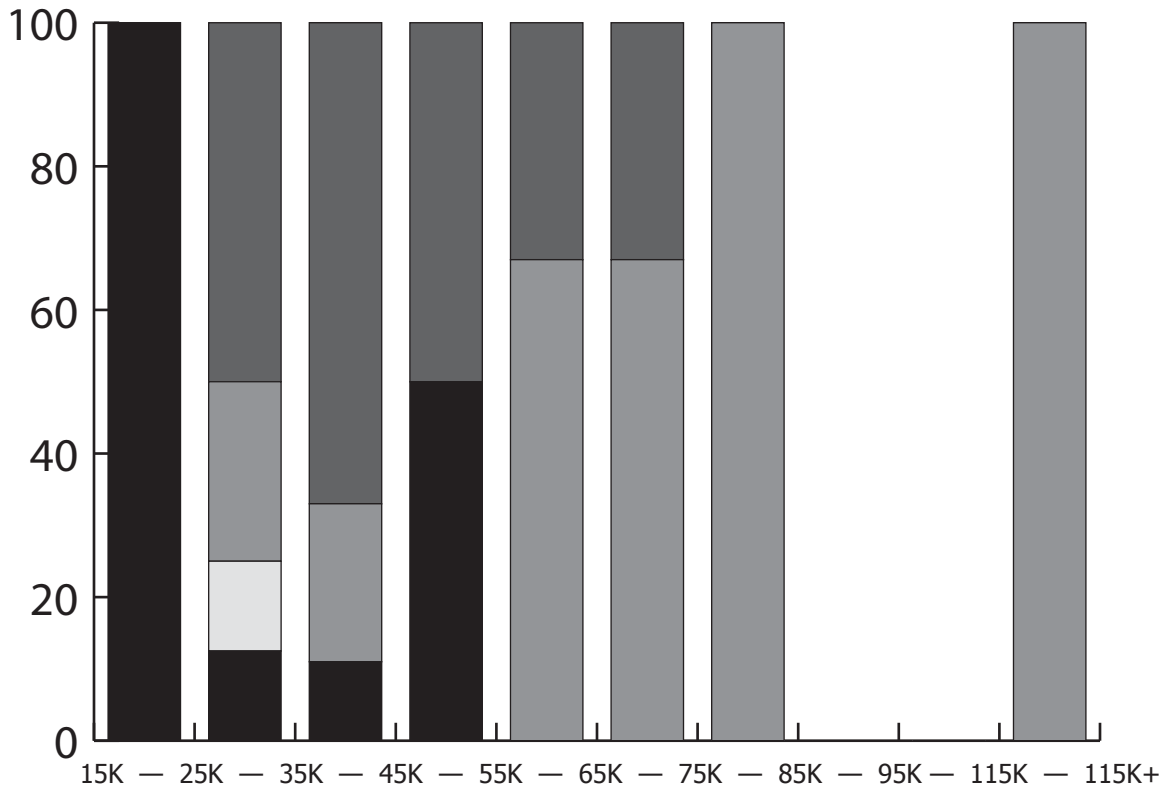
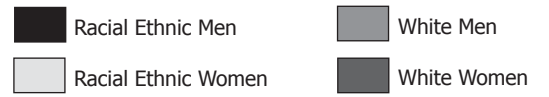
**GAC – General Assembly Council**



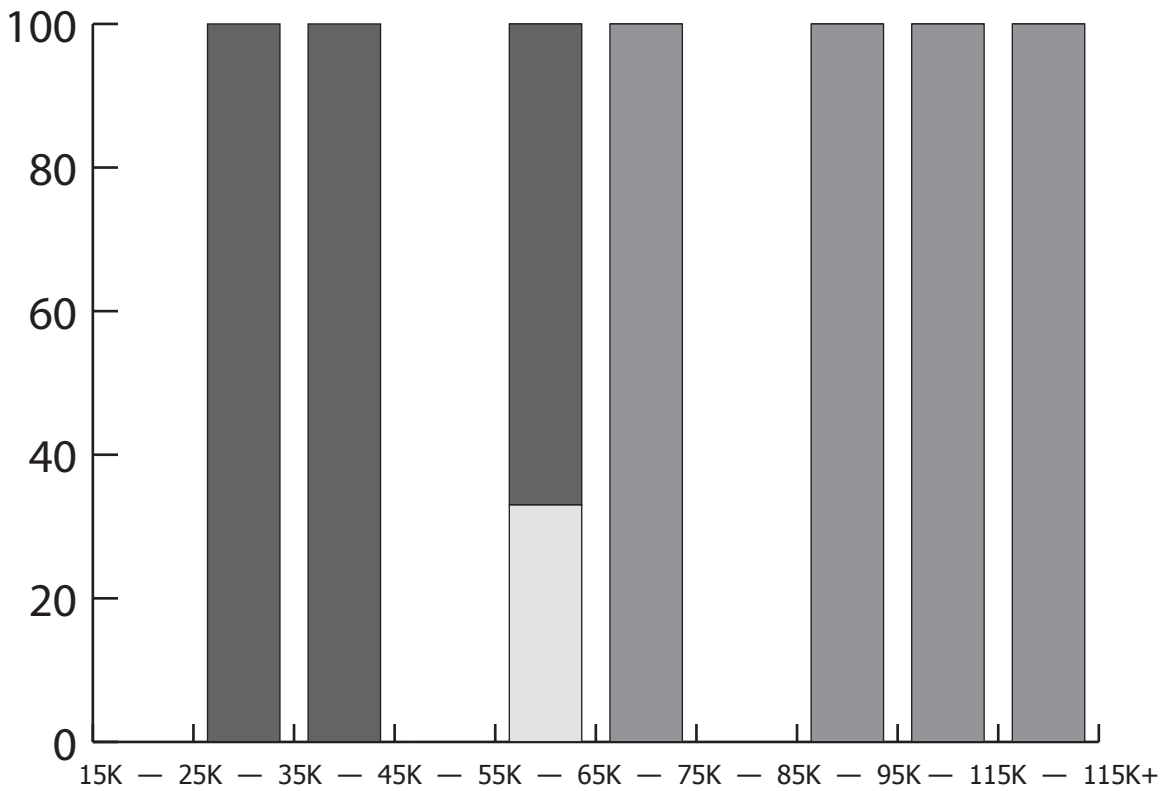
**BOP – Board of Pensions**

**Agency Employment Statistics**

**Jan. 1, 2007 – Dec. 31, 2007**



**PPC – Presbyterian Publishing Corporation**



**PILP – Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.**

## VI. Conclusions

“Justice is the order God sets in human life for fair and honest dealing and for giving rights to those who have no power to claim rights for themselves. . . .” (*Book of Order*, W-7.4002).

The church is called to give full expression to God’s abundant love by embodying the diversity of God’s human family in all facets of its life, including the work and management of its institutions. In faithful witness to God’s love and justice, the church must confront and combat the historical patterns of racism, ethnocentrism, sexism, and classism that divide our society and our church. This challenge requires that its own corporate institutions examine themselves, and work with urgency, diligence, and creativity to remove all barriers to the full and equitable participation of all of God’s people in their employment and management.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns expresses thanks to the members of its subcommittee who conducted the consultations with agency executives and prepared this report: Eugene Turner, Noushin Framke, and Irvin Porter; and staff: Teresa Chavez Saucedo and Sherri Pettway.

## Endnote

\*General Assembly Council (GAC), Office the General Assembly (OGA), Presbyterian Board of Pensions (BOP), Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC).

APPENDIX A  
DEFINITIONSCultural Proficiency:

Cultural proficiency provides language to describe, and standards to assess, both healthy and nonproductive policies, practices, and behaviors. It acknowledges that change does not happen overnight, that people and organizations move on a continuum from highly exclusive and oppressive organizations and behaviors to highly inclusive organizations and behaviors. It is built on a foundation that aligns the principles of inclusivity in diversity with the core values and mission of the organization. It also acknowledges that organizations are resistant to change and that the causes of resistance must be taken into account and addressed openly in order to bring about cultural transformation within an organization.

M.E.E.T. on Common Ground—Speaking Up for Respect in the Workplace:

A training program utilized by the Board of Pensions. It introduces a four-step practical model to promote mutual respect and improve cross-cultural communication in the working environment:

- M—Make time to discuss
- E—Explore differences
- E—Encourage respect
- T—Take responsibility

APPENDIX B  
STATISTICAL DATA

The following statistical data on employment by job category and salary range, is provided by the six General Assembly entities in response to ACREC’s request for an annual statistical update, as of 12/31/07.



**BOARD OF PENSIONS**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Senior Mgmt. Staff* #		1							7	4	7	5
%		8.3							58.4	33.3	58.3	41.7
Officials/Managers #	2	6		1		2		1	10	17	12	27
%	5.1	15.4		2.6		5.1		2.6	25.6	43.6	30.8	69.2
Professionals #		5	4	2	2				18	10	24	17
%		12.2	9.8	4.9	4.9				43.9	24.3	58.5	41.5
Technicians #		1							9		9	1
%		10							90		90	10
Sales Workers #											0	0
%												
Office & Clerical #	5	27	2	1	1	3			8	37	16	68
%	6	32.1	2.4	1.2	1.2	3.6			9.5	44	19	81
Craft Wkrs (skilled) #												
%												
Operatives #												
%												
Laborers #												
%												
Service Workers #												
%												
Total Employees #	7	40	6	4	3	5		1	52	68	68	118
%	3.8	21.5	3.2	2.2	1.6	2.7		.5	28	36.5	36.6	63.4

**NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. The *Climate for Change* paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff."

**BOARD OF PENSIONS****Agency Employment Statistics****Jan. 1, 2007 – Dec. 31, 2007**

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #										1P/T		1 P/T
%										100		100
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		6							5		5	6
%		55							45		45	55
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	5	20	2	1	1	3			4	22	12	46
%	8.6	34.5	3.1	2	2	5			6.9	37.9	20.7	79.3
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #		7	1						4	16	5	23
%		25	3.6						14.3	57.1	17.9	82.1
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #	2	2	1	1		2			5	11	8	16
%	8.3	8.3	4.2	4.2		8.3			20.9	45.8	33.3	66.7
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #		1						1	2	3	2	5
%		14.3						14.3	28.6	42.8	28.6	71.4
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #			2	2					6	5	8	7
%			13.3	13.3					40	33.4	53.3	46.7
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #		2			1				10		11	2
%		15.4			7.7				76.9		84.6	15.4
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #		1							7	2	7	3
%		10							70	20	70	30
\$115,000 + #		1							10	8	10	9
%		5.3							52.6	42.1	52.6	47.4
Total Employees #	7	40	6	4	2	5		1	53	68	68	118
%	3.8	21.5	3.2	2.2	1	2.7		.5	28.5	36.6	36.6	63.4

**BOARD OF PENSIONS****INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS BY SALARY RANGE****Jan. 1, 2006–Dec. 31, 2006**

	INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #											0	0
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		1									0	1
%		100										100
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #										1	0	1
%										100		100
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #											0	0
%												
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #											0	0
%												
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #											0	0
%												
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #		1									0	1
%		100										100
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #											0	0
%												
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #											0	0
%												
\$115,000 + #									1		1	0
%									100		100	
Total Employees #		2							1	1	1	3
%		50							25	25	25	75

**BOARD OF PENSIONS****NEW HIRES BY SALARY RANGE****Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		1							1		1	1
%		50							50		50	50
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	1			1							1	1
%	50			50							50	50
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #		3							1		1	3
%		75							25		25	75
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #									1	2	1	2
%									33.3	66.7	33.3	66.7
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #											0	0
%												
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #			1						1		2	0
%			50						50		100	
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #											0	0
%												
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #									1		1	0
%									100		100	
\$115,000 + #									1	1	1	1
%									50	50	50	50
Total Employees #	1	4	1	1					6	3	8	8
%	6	25	6	6					38	19	50	50

**BOARD OF PENSIONS****VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS BY SALARY RANGE****Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		1										1
%		100										100
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	1	1							1	1	2	2
%	25	25							25	25	50	50
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #										1		1
%										100		100
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #									1		1	
%									100		100	
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #											0	0
%												
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #									1		1	
%									100		100	
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #									1		1	
%									100		100	
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #											0	0
%												
\$115,000 + #									2	1	2	1
%									66.7	33.3	66.7	33.3
Total Employees #	1	2							6	3	7	5
%	8.3	16.7							50	25	58.3	41.7

**BOARD OF PENSIONS**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

SENIOR MANAGEMENT STAFF	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pres. & Chief Exec.									1		1	
Sr. VP, Treas. & Chief Invest. Officer										1		1
Ex. VP & COO									1		1	
Sr. VP, Benefits										1		1
Chief Info. Officer									1		1	
VP, Human Res.									1		1	
VP, Church Rel. & Corp. Secty.									1		1	
VP, Retire. Ben.										1		1
VP, Finance									1		1	
VP, Member Services		1										1
VP, Assist. & Funds Dev.									1		1	
Dr., Comm. PR, Mktg. & Edu.										1		1
Total Employees #		1							7	4	7	5
%		8.3							58.4	33.3	58.3	41.7

**NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. The *Climate for Change* paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff."

**PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION**  
**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY JOB CATEGORY**  
**Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Senior Mgmt. Staff* #	1								6	2	7	2
%	11.1%								66.7%	22.2%	77.8%	22.2%
Officials/Managers #	1	1							3	6	4	7
%	9.1%	9.1%							27.3%	54.5%	36.4%	63.6%
Professionals #	1	3							10	16	11	19
%	3.3%	10.0%							33.3%	53.3%	36.7%	63.3%
Technicians #												
%												
Sales Workers #	1					1			12	9	13	10
%	4.3%					4.3%			52.2%	39.1%	56.5%	43.5%
Office & Clerical #		10		1		1			3	12	3	24
%		37.0%		3.7%		3.7%			11.1%	44.4%	11.1%	88.9%
Craft Wkrs (Skilled) #												
%												
Operatives #												
%												
Laborers #												
%												
Service Workers #												
%												
Total Employees #	4	14		1		2			34	45	38	62
%	4.0%	14.0%		1.0%		2.0%			34.0%	45.0%	38.0%	62.0%

**NOTE:** Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report. There is one exception. The Climate for Change paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff."

## PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION

## INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS BY SALARY RANGE

Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Naty Am/Alaska Nty		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #												
%												
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #												
%												
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #												
%												
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #												
%												
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #									1	2	1	2
%									33.3%	66.7%	33.3%	66.7%
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #												
%												
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #												
%												
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #												
%												
\$115,000 + #												
%												
Total Employees #									1	2	1	2
%									33.3%	66.7%	33.3%	66.7%



## PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION

## NEW HIRES BY SALARY RANGE

Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Nativ Am/Alaska Nativ		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #										2		2
%										100.0%		100.0%
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #												
%												
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #												
%												
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #												
%												
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #									1	1	1	1
%									50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #												
%												
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #										1		1
%										100.0%		100.0%
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #												
%												
\$115,000 + #									1		1	
%									100.0%		100.0%	
Total Employees #									2	4	2	4
%									33.3%	66.7%	33.3%	66.7%

**PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION**  
**VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS BY SALARY RANGE**  
**Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		1								1		2
%		50.0%								50.0%		100.0%
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #												
%												
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #												
%												
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #	1										1	
%	100.0%											
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #									1	1	1	1
%									50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #												
%												
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #												
%												
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #												
%												
\$115,000 + #									3		3	
%									100.0%		100.0%	
Total Employees #	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	5	3
%	12.5%	12.5%							50.0%	25.0%	62.5%	37.5%

**GAC**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	Occupational Categories												Total		
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Male	Female	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
<i>Senior Mgmt. Staff*</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
%	13%									50%	38%			63%	38%
<i>Officials/Managers</i>	0	5	2	0	0	5	0	0	24	21	1	0	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	
%		9%	3%			9%			41%	36%	2%		47%	53%	
<i>Professionals</i>	6	18	6	6	4	8	0	2	52	74	1	2	<b>69</b>	<b>110</b>	
%	3%	10%	3%	3%	2%	4%		1%	29%	41%	1%	1%	39%	61%	
<i>Technicians</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	
%										100%				100%	
<i>Sales Workers</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
%															
<i>Office &amp; Clerical</i>	3	31	1	6	2	17	0	1	14	82	1	0	<b>21</b>	<b>137</b>	
%	2%	20%	1%	4%	1%	11%		1%	9%	52%	1%	0%	13%	87%	
<i>Craft Wkrs (skilled)</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	
%									100%				100%		
<i>Operatives</i>	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	
%					67%				33%				100%		
<i>Laborers/ Helpers</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	
%					25%				75%				100%		
<i>Service Workers</i>	0	1	0	0	4	16	1	0	1	5	0	1	<b>6</b>	<b>23</b>	
%		3%			14%	55%	3%		3%	17%		3%	21%	79%	
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>306</b>	
%	2%	12%	2%	3%	3%	10%	0%	1%	23%	42%	1%	1%	32%	68%	

**NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. The *Climate for Change* paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff."

**GAC**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Senior Level Management Staff**

<b>Executive Director &amp; CEO</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>
<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>
<b>Dep. Exec. Dir. Comm. &amp; Funds</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>
<b>CFO</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>MALE</b>
<b>General Counsel</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>MALE</b>
<b>Deputy Exec. Dir. For Mission</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>MALE</b>
<b>Executive Administrator</b>	<b>BLACK</b>	<b>MALE</b>
<b>Deputy Exec. Dir. Shared Service</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>MALE</b>

**GAC**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Involuntary Separation by Salary Range**  
**01/01/06–12/31/06**

	INVOLUNTARY SEPARATION SALARY RANGES													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>15,000-25,000</b>	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1
%					67%					33%			67%	33%
<b>25,001-35,000</b>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
%					100%								100%	
<b>35,001-45,000</b>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>45,001-55,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
%										100%				100%
<b>55,001-65,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>65,001-75,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>75,001-85,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>85,001-95,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>95,001-115,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>115,000+</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	25%	25%	0%	0%	75%	25%

*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*  
**Reason for Involuntary Separation:**

**Job Abandonment**

**Dissatisfaction**

**Just Cause**

**Mutual Agreement**

**Reduction-in-Force**

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**GAC**  
**New Hire Salary Ranges**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	SALARY RANGES													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15,000-25,000	0	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	4	5
%		11%			22%	33%			22%	11%			44%	56%
25,001-35,000	0	7	1	2	1	1	0	0	2	14	0	0	4	24
%		25%	4%	7%	4%	4%			7%	50%			14%	86%
35,001-45,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	3
%									25%	75%			25%	75%
45,001-55,000	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	4
%		17%							33%	50%			33%	67%
55,001-65,000	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	4	2
%	17%	17%							50%	17%			67%	33%
65,001-75,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
%										100%			0	100%
75,001-85,000	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
%		50%	50%										50%	50%
85,001-95,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
95,001-115,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
%										100%			0	100%
115,000+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
%									50%	50%			50%	50%
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>42</b>
%	2%	19%	3%	3%	5%	7%			19%	42%			29%	71%

**GAC**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Salary Ranges**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	<b>SALARY RANGES</b>													
	<b>African American</b>		<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>		<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>		<b>Natv Am/Alaska Ntv</b>		<b>White</b>		<b>TWO</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>15,000-25,000</b>	1	2	0	0	7	12	1	0	8	5	0	1	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>
%	3%	5%			19%	32%	3%		22%	14%		3%	46%	54%
<b>25,001-35,000</b>	2	18	1	6	2	16	0	1	9	52	1	0	<b>15</b>	<b>93</b>
%	2%	17%	1%	6%	2%	15%		1%	8%	48%	1%		14%	86%
<b>35,001-45,000</b>	0	18	0	2	1	6	0	0	10	45	1	0	<b>12</b>	<b>71</b>
%		22%		2%	1%	7%			12%	54%	1%		14%	86%
<b>45,001-55,000</b>	0	6	0	2	1	4	0	0	21	34	0	1	<b>22</b>	<b>47</b>
%		9%		3%	1%	6%			30%	49%		1%	32%	68%
<b>55,001-65,000</b>	3	8	6	3	3	2	0	2	26	26	0	1	<b>38</b>	<b>42</b>
%	4%	10%	8%	4%	4%	3%		3%	33%	33%		1%	48%	53%
<b>65,001-75,000</b>	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	20	7	1	0	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>
%	3%	6%	3%			3%			61%	21%	3%		70%	30%
<b>75,001-85,000</b>	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>
%	15%	8%	15%						31%	31%			62%	38%
<b>85,001-95,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2			<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
%									50%	50%			50%	50%
<b>95,001-115,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4			<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
%									43%	57%			43%	57%
<b>115,000+</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3			<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
%	17%								33%	50%			50%	50%
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>297</b>
%	2%	13%	2%	3%	3%	9%	0%	1%	24%	41%	1%	1%	33%	68%



**OGA**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	<b>Occupational Categories</b>													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Senior Mgmt. Staff*</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>Officials/Managers</b>	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	8	0	0	5	11
%	6%	13%				6%			25%	50%			31%	69%
<b>Professionals</b>	0	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	13	0	0	3	17
%		5%	5%	10%	5%	5%			5%	65%			15%	85%
<b>Technicians</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Sales Workers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Office &amp; Clerical</b>	0	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	15	1	1	2	25
%		30%		4%					4%	56%	4%	4%	7%	93%
<b>Craft Wkrs (skilled)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Operatives</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Laborers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
%									100%				100%	0%
<b>Service Workers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Total Employees</b>	1	11	1	3	1	2	0	0	10	36	1	1	14	53
%	1%	16%	1%	4%	1%	3%			15%	54%	1%	1%	21%	79%

**NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. The *Climate for Change* paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff."

**OGA**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
Senior Level Management Staff

<b>Stated Clerk</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>MALE</b>
<b>Director Strategic Operations</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>MALE</b>
<b>Director Dept. of History</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>MALE</b>

**OGA**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Involuntary Separations by Salary Range**  
**01/01/06–12/31/06**

	INVOLUNTARY SEPARATION SALARY RANGES													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>15,000-25,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>25,001-35,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>35,001-45,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
%										100%				100%
<b>45,001-55,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>55,001-65,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
%									100%				100%	
<b>65,001-75,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>75,001-85,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>85,001-95,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>95,001-115,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>115,000+</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	50%	50%

*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*  
**Reason for Involuntary Separation:**

**Job Abandonment**

**Dissatisfaction**

**Just Cause**

**Mutual Agreement**

**Reduction-in-Force**

*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*  
**OGA**  
**New Hire Salary Ranges**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	SALARY RANGES													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>15,000-25,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
%										100%				100%
<b>25,001-35,000</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
%				33%						33%	33%		33%	67%
<b>35,001-45,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>45,001-55,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
%										100%				100%
<b>55,001-65,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>65,001-75,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
%									100%				100%	
<b>75,001-85,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
%										100%				100%
<b>85,001-95,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>95,001-115,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>115,000+</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%														
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
%				13%					13%	63%	13%		25%	75%

**OGA**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Salary Ranges**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	SALARY RANGES													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>15,000-25,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
%									50%	50%			50%	50%
<b>25,001-35,000</b>	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	1		2	8
%		30%		10%					10%	40%	10%		20%	80%
<b>35,001-45,000</b>	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	1	1	17
%	6%	17%								72%		6%	6%	94%
<b>45,001-55,000</b>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	8
%		11%							11%	78%			11%	89%
<b>55,001-65,000</b>	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	3	7
%		20%	10%	10%	10%	10%			10%	30%			30%	70%
<b>65,001-75,000</b>	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	1	7
%		13%		13%					13%	63%			13%	88%
<b>75,001-85,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
%						25%				75%				100%
<b>85,001-95,000</b>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0		0	2	1
%		33%							67%				67%	33%
<b>95,001-115,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>115,000+</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>53</b>
%	1%	16%	1%	4%	1%	3%	0%	0%	15%	54%	1%	1%	21%	79%

**PILP**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	<b>Occupational Categories</b>													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natl Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Senior Mgmt. Staff*</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>Officials/Managers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>Professionals</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	3
%				25%					25%	50%			25%	75%
<b>Technicians</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Sales Workers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Office &amp; Clerical</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	7
%										100%				100%
<b>Craft Wkrs (skilled)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Operatives</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Laborers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Service Workers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Total Employees</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	9	0	0	4	10
%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	64%	0%	0%	29%	71%

**NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. The *Climate for Change* paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff."

**PILP**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
Senior Level Management Staff

**PRESIDENT & CEO**

**WHITEMALE**



**PILP**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Involuntary Separations by Salary Range**  
**01/01/06–12/31/06**

	INVOLUNTARY SEPARATION SALARY RANGES													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Naty Am/ Alaska Nty		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>15,000-25,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>25,001-35,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>35,001-45,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>45,001-55,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>55,001-65,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>65,001-75,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>75,001-85,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>85,001-95,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>95,001-115,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>115,000+</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*  
**Reason for Involuntary Separation:**

**Job Abandonment**

**Dissatisfaction**

**Just Cause**

**Mutual Agreement**

**Reduction-in-Force**

*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*  
**PILP**  
**New Hire Salary Ranges**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	SALARY RANGES												Total	
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natl Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Male	Female
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15,000-25,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
25,001-35,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
35,001-45,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
45,001-55,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
55,001-65,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
65,001-75,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
75,001-85,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
85,001-95,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
95,001-115,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
115,000+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
Total Employees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														

**PILP**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Salary Ranges**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**As of 12/31/07**

	SALARY RANGES													
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Natv Am/ Alaska Ntv		White		TWO		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>15,000-25,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>25,001-35,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6
%										100%				100%
<b>35,001-45,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
%										100%				100%
<b>45,001-55,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>55,001-65,000</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
%				33%						67%				100%
<b>65,001-75,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>75,001-85,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%														
<b>85,001-95,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>95,001-115,000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>115,000+</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
%									100%				100%	
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>
%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	64%	0%	0%	29%	71%

**Presbyterian Publishing Corporation****Agency Employment Statistics****Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Senior Mgmt. Staff* #									3	2	3	2
%									.103	.068	.103	.068
Officials/Managers #												
%												
Professionals #	2								5	5	7	5
%	.068								.172	.172	.241	.172
Technicians #									2	4	2	4
%									.068	.137	.068	.137
Sales Workers #									1		1	
%									.034		.034	
Office & Clerical #	1	1	1							2	2	3
%	.034	.034	.034							.068	.068	.103
Craft Wkrs (skilled) #												
%												
Operatives #												
%												
Laborers #												
%												
Service Workers #												
%												
Total Employees #	3	1	1						11	13	15	14
%	.103	.034	.034						.379	.448	.514	.48

**NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. The *Climate for Change* paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category “Senior Management Staff.”

**Presbyterian Publishing Corporation**

**NEW HIRES BY SALARY RANGE**

**Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Nativ Am/Alaska Nativ		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #	1											
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #										2		
%												
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #												
%												
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #												
%												
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #												
%												
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #												
%												
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #												
%												
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #												
%												
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #												
%												
\$115,000 + #												
%												
Total Employees #												
%												

**Presbyterian Publishing Corporation****Agency Employment Statistics  
Jan. 1, 2007–Dec. 31, 2007**

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Nativ Am/Alaska Nativ		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #	1										1	
%	.034										.034	
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		1	1						2	4	3	5
%		.034	.034						.068	.137	.103	.172
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	1								2	6	3	6
%	.034								.068	.206	.103	.206
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #	1									1		1
%	.034									.034		
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #									2	1	2	1
%									.068	.034	.068	.034
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #									2	1	2	1
%									.068	.034	.068	.034
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #									3		3	
%									.103		.103	
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #												
%												
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #												
%												
\$115,000 + #									1		1	
%									.034		.034	
Total Employees #	3	1	1						11	13	15	14
%	.103	.034	.034						.379	.448	.514	.48

**Presbyterian Publishing Corporation**

**VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS BY SALARY RANGE  
Jan. 1, 2007 - Dec. 31, 2007**

	VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Nativ Am/Alaska Nativ		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #												
%												
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #												
%												
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #												
%												
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #												
%												
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #												
%												
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #												
%												
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #												
%												
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #									1			
%												
\$115,000 + #												
%												
Total Employees #												
%												



## Appendix C: Minority Vendor Annual Report 2007

Minority expenditures for 2007 are 8.9% falling short of the 10% goal set by the GAC 1983 Minority Vendor Policy. This report reflects successes and area's requiring attention. Emphasis to increase expenditures with racial ethnic vendors has been successful with an increase of the percentage of expenditures with Hispanic, Asian, and Native American vendors. Purchasing Services continues to look to expand our minority owned suppliers specifically African American vendors and increase opportunities with these suppliers so that we exceed our policy goal.

# Presbyterian Church USA

## Minority Vendor Report As of 12/31/2007

<b>TOTAL by Dollars and Percent</b>	SUMMARY DATA								
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
African American \$	760,909	777,505	961,297	696,100	492,593	339,110	177,274	117,262	137,256
%	3%	2.6%	3.4%	2.7%	2.2%	1.5%	1%	.4%	.6%
Asian \$	659,726	677,249	681,803	683,017	213,129	219,827	95,872	105,315	157,220
%	2.6%	2.3%	2.4%	2.7%	1%	1%	.6%	.3%	.7%
Hispanic/Latino \$	26,924	48,793	52,604	37,318	35,391	69,924	91,702	2,669,829	484,269
%	.1%	.2%	.2%	.1%	.2%	.3	.6%	8.4%	2.3%
Natv. Am./Alaska Natv. \$	0	21,691	4,219	0	4,948	1,886	0	2,419	55,331
%	0	.1%	-	0	-	-	0	.2%	.3%
Women \$	834,627	956,315	1,030,589	810,619	811,986	1,081,566	849,738	1,092,387	854,920
%	3.3%	3.2%	3.6%	3%	3.7%	5%	5%	3.4%	4.0%
Middle East \$	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,722
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.08%
Second Tier \$	21,573	105,020	138,939	142,726	171,647	157,082	147,102	150,920	203,468
%	.1%	.3%	.5%	.6%	.8%	.7%	.9%	.4%	.9%
Independent Contracts \$	0	0	192,250	437,338	349,773	*	*	*	*
%	0	0	.7%	1.7%	1.6%	-	-	-	-
TOTAL Minority \$	2,303,759	2,586,573	3,061,701	2,807,118	2,079,467	1,869,395	1,361,688	4,138,138	1,894,186
%	9%	8.3%	10.7%	10.9%	9.4%	8.4%	8.2%	13.1%	8.9%
Total Expenditures \$	25,658,314	30,171,862	28,698,333	25,839,202	22,071,818	22,336,084	16,578,015	31,413,757**	21,298,667

\*Starting in 2004, expenditures with minority independent contractors are reported in the appropriate racial ethnic category.

\*\*The increase in expenditures in 2006 reflects the monies spent by PDA for relief work being done in the Gulf.

**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 09-16**

*Comment on Item 09-16—From the General Assembly Council.*

In its report to the 218th General Assembly (2008) on “Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns “laments the loss of [the] opportunity” to increase diversity at the top that was occasioned by “almost complete turnover in senior management between 2005 and 2007” in the General Assembly Council. We agree. In our search for senior leaders, both among existing staff and through external recruiting, we were successful in achieving strong gender diversity, but we did not achieve the racial ethnic diversity to which we aspired. The external recruiters engaged for three positions, our Human Resources Department recruitment personnel, and hiring managers all sought diverse candidates. We reached out broadly within the church and beyond for referrals and recommendations and while we did identify some candidates, our efforts did not succeed in producing the results that we wanted. We recognize that our support systems were not as adequate for the task as we would have liked them to be.

The General Assembly Council is earnest in its resolve to address this situation and is initiating actions with this goal in mind. A project team is working on developing a more effective process for identifying racial ethnic candidates for the church. We recognize that we need to inspire greater assistance from groups and individuals who can both recommend and encourage qualified racial ethnic candidates. Human Resources is working to develop better methods for advertising positions and attracting a greater representation of applicants, and staff is looking at ways of utilizing racial ethnic networks within the church to promote opportunities for employment by the church. This may have been a missed opportunity, but it need not be a self-perpetuating legacy. If done right the changes that have resulted from this experience will make a real difference in the future.

**Item 09-17**

**[The assembly answered Item 09-17 by the action taken on Item 09-04. See pp. 54, 55.]**

*On the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Their Contributions in Recovery Work—From the Synod of the Sun.*

The Synod of the Sun overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Thank Presbyterians throughout the denomination for their generous giving, prayers, and volunteer services in recovery efforts;
2. Thank, praise, and commend the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) staff and volunteers for their huge contributions in recovery work; and
3. Affirm and endorse the financial plan developed by the presbyteries, synods, and PDA.

***Rationale***

Presbyterians throughout the General Assembly have been generous and gracious in responding to the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma with gifts of time, resources, and prayers.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has been and continues to be abundantly helpful in providing leadership and resources in the affected areas and in coordinating relief efforts throughout the denomination.

The PDA and the presbyteries and synods involved in recovery efforts recognize that the work of rebuilding is far from complete and have worked together to develop a financial response plan through 2011.

The Synod of the Sun and its eleven presbyteries have been thoroughly involved with and informed about recovery efforts on many levels. The range of involvement includes hurricanes that struck the Presbyteries of New Covenant and South Louisiana, the Presbytery of Arkansas’ hosting the PDA’s national call center, and the distribution of more than \$800,000 of PDA funds and contributions for church staff salary support in affected congregations.

But many Presbyterians across the denomination are not aware of a disaster recovery meeting in Gulfport, Mississippi, in January 2008. Key persons from recovering presbyteries and synods gathered with PDA and GAC staff to share information. This group reviewed PDA expenditures from 2005 to the present and developed a plan for expenditures for recovery work through 2011. The plan indicates a need for an additional \$1.5 million to address disaster relief needs.

Also, presbyteries and synods in the recovery areas are aware of information being written that is critical of PDA. The information accuses national staff of refusing to pay out funds and wants to force the immediate expenditures of all funds. The people in the affected areas believe that such a distribution of funds would be unwise and would jeopardize the recovery work outlined in the carefully developed plan of action adopted by all of the presbyteries and synods in the affected areas. *If it were not for the good stewardship of the governing bodies involved and PDA in setting aside money, the long-term needs would not be met.*

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## Item 09-18

*On the Incorporation of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance—From the Presbytery of Peace River.*

WITHDRAWN (6-19-08)

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## \*Item 09-19

[The assembly approved Item 09-19. See pp. 53, 55.]

**In light of the continuing pattern of mutual suspicion, intimidating litigation, and labor tension, despite some apparent improvements in worker safety, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008):**

- 1. Direct that an appropriate program body of the General Assembly Council (GAC) continue to monitor the situation at the Tar Heel plant, consulting with a joint committee of persons from both presbyteries, possibly including persons of management and labor background, and reporting to the GAC itself in 2009.**
- 2. Request that the General Assembly Council (GAC) make a report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), drawing from the consulting group, a staff liaison, and other research, and making recommendations, if warranted, concerning actions Presbyterians may take.**
- 3. Commend the representatives of the presbyteries and the management and labor representatives for their willingness to engage in dialogue and provide information in order to obtain a better understanding of each other's perspectives and that of the church.**

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2006 Referral: Item 09-02. Resolution on Smithfield Packaging, Inc.—From the Presbytery of New Hope (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 51, 784–87).*

Subject: Labor rights and working conditions at the major pork processing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, operated by Smithfield Foods, Inc.

Summary: The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) was requested to work with two presbyteries on a labor relations and workplace safety matter and to report back to the 218th General Assembly (2008). Meetings have been held with all parties (representatives of Smithfield Foods management, that of a subsidiary, Murphy Brown, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and workers supportive of unionization, the North Carolina Council of Churches, and the Presbyteries of New Hope and Coastal Carolina). Relevant actions have been taken as recently as March 1 (by the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina). The plant has been visited and a recommendation developed.

### 1. *Background*

Item 09-02 from the 217th General Assembly (2006) read as follows:

The Presbytery of New Hope overtures the 217th General Assembly (2006) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

1. Support justice for workers at Smithfield Packing by requesting that Smithfield Packing
  - a. obey the law;
  - b. stop the use of threats, intimidation, and violence against workers;
  - c. implement the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) orders to respect workers rights and assure safety in the workplace.

## 09 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

2. Direct that the Office of the General Assembly communicate this call for justice to
  - a. the North Carolina attorney general, the North Carolina Department of Labor, the U.S. attorney general, and the U.S. Department of Labor;
  - b. the major food chains—Harris-Teeter, Food Lion, Bi-Lo, Lowes Foods, Piggly-Wiggly, Walmart, Winn Dixie, Target; and
  - c. Joseph Luter III, CEO, Smithfield Foods, Inc, 200 Commerce St, Smithfield, VA 23430.

### *Rationale*

Smithfield Packing Inc. is the largest pork producer and processor in the world, and the Smithfield Packing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, is the largest pork processing facility in the world, employing more than 5,000 workers and slaughtering more than 32,000 hogs a day.

Human Rights Watch, documented in “Blood, Sweat and Fear” (copyright 2004; available at <http://hrw.org/reports/2005/usa0105/> ) that Smithfield Packing has violated internationally recognized human rights standards by using intimidation, threats, and violence against workers and still continues to do so.

Human Rights Watch, in the same document, reported evidence showing that Smithfield Packing discourages workers from reporting workplace injuries; and seeking medical care from their family physician.

Evidence show that Smithfield Packing has a history of intimidating, threatening, and harassing workers who engage in organized activity to defend their labor rights, to improve their working conditions, and to ensure their well-being in the workplace.

A federal court in North Carolina ruled that Chief of Security Danny Priest violated the Ku Klux Klan Act for physically assaulting a pro-union worker and a union organizer after a union election in 1997.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found Smithfield Packing guilty of violating workers rights to organize a union and ordered Smithfield to obey the law and allow workers to exercise their legal rights and as a means to promote workplace safety without fear of retaliation or threats.

Smithfield Packing has repeatedly delayed and denied justice for Smithfield workers.

Smithfield Packing Inc. and Smithfield sub-contractor QSI Inc, were found guilty of using the company police to physically assault workers, cause the false arrest of a worker, and threaten bodily harm in retaliation for legal activities to protest working conditions, in violation of federal labor law.

The PC(USA) has a long historical record of being aligned with the poor and oppressed around the world and in our own country and of supporting worker rights and workplace safety. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 784–85)

The General Assembly Social Justice Committee recommended approval. The committee had the following comment: “That the 217th General Assembly request New Hope Presbytery, in consultation with the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, to inspect the Smithfield facility, speak with management, monitor elections, and report to the 218th General Assembly.”

Following a motion from the floor “to refer Item 09-02 to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy,” the action, guided by the Comment, was approved by a vote of 323-150, with 7 abstentions.

NOTE: At the General Assembly, in the Social Justice Committee, Dennis Pittman represented the Smithfield Company, the Reverend Mark Davidson, a commissioner from the Presbytery of New Hope, was overture advocate, and there were several union and worker representatives. Both the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) had provided advice and counsel memos supporting the overture; only ACREC’s representative took part in resourcing the committee. The committee had commissioners from both North Carolina presbyteries present and some discussion had to do with the fact that Tar Heel, where the plant is located, is in Coastal Carolina, while New Hope was the presbytery initiating action. Hence the comment recommending that the two presbyteries work together in follow-up. No funds were allocated by the General Assembly to ACSWP or any other entity along with the referral.

## 2. *The Actions and Perspectives of the Presbyteries*

### a. *The Presbytery of New Hope*

The overture on Smithfield Foods originated in the Church of the Reconciliation in Chapel Hill, N.C., and the pastor of that church served as overture advocate at the General Assembly, but the text was developed by members of the Peace and Justice Committee of the presbytery from a variety of congregations. The group studied information from the North Carolina Council of Churches, which had endorsed the Justice for Smithfield campaign, from Human Rights Watch, from several other denominations, and from union-affiliated workers. Their digest of this information is reflected in the overture’s rationale. Members of the Presbytery of New Hope committee visited the Tar Heel plant before the General Assembly but after submission of the overture; they had originally sought a meeting with the company in 2005 and had also invited a minister-member of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina to go with them (as it worked out, that person was unable to join them).

Following initial correspondence in the Fall 2006, a representative of ACSWP visited the Presbytery of New Hope on March 10–11, 2007, and found that the Peace and Justice Steering Team and several pastors to be strongly supportive of the overture. Barbara Zelter of the North Carolina Council of Churches also participated in that visit.

Representatives of the Presbytery of New Hope, including the executive presbyter, attended a May 8, 2007, “listening session” developed by the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina executive presbyter at the Graves Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Representatives of the Presbytery of New Hope, including the clerk of the presbytery, joined in the visit to the plant on November 12, 2007, which was followed by meetings with top management of Smithfield and with union representatives and supportive workers. The Presbytery of New Hope's representatives have made efforts to involve the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina on several occasions but have not wanted to condition their "witness for justice" on the involvement of persons representing the neighboring presbytery.

b. *The Presbytery of Coastal Carolina*

The clerk of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina shared the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) with his presbytery on October 7, 2006, noting his "opinion that the Presbytery of New Hope was assigned the primary responsibility for follow up to the assembly's action, as described in the approved comment, but that the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina would be called upon to consult with and assist New Hope in carrying out the tasks as described in the comment." The ACSWP has agreed that the comment served as a de facto task sheet, and that part of its role was to help the presbyteries work together.

The presbytery executive of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, in consultation with pastors from the Wallace and other churches, developed a "listening session" with Presbyterian managers from the Murphy Brown subsidiary of Smithfield on May 8, 2007. Two representatives of ACSWP attended this meeting, along with three guests from the Presbytery of New Hope, including the New Hope executive presbyter. As suggested by its title, this meeting consisted largely of the ACSWP and other church participants seated around a room listening while the corporate executives spoke from a central table. This was a very helpful, if somewhat one-way, sharing of perspectives, especially since the executives included the chief executive officer of Murphy Brown, himself a member of the Smithfield Board of Directors, and others at a high level in the firm. All were familiar with the General Assembly's statement although ACSWP staff indicated that formal notification to the company had been delayed in hopes that such a direct conversation could be held on the issues involved.

The church representatives included Hispanic missionaries from both presbyteries, both of which are sponsoring immigrant fellowships. In the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, these fellowships include workers at the Tar Heel facility, though none were available for a discussion that May 8 evening. The hardships of workers were discussed, and this was prior to the Immigration Control and Enforcement (ICE) raids on the plant in the summer of 2007. Among the majority membership of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, most members involved with Smithfield are in management and some come from Presbyterian families long in the area.

Representatives of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, including its clerk and acting executive presbyter, joined in the visit to the Tar Heel plant and meetings with top management and, later, union representatives on November 12, 2007. Concerns had been raised, however, that the presbytery had not been consulted before the overture was approved by the Presbytery of New Hope. No meetings, to our knowledge, were held concerning Smithfield issues during 2006 or 2007, either in a social concerns committee or on the floor of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, but on March 1, 2008, that presbytery approved a resolution expressing the concern that they had not been consulted or informed at the outset when the Presbytery of New Hope was initiating its overture (Full text of resolution provided upon request by the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina or ACSWP). Neither ACSWP nor the Presbytery of New Hope feel the chronology summarized at that presbytery meeting was entirely accurate. In addition, representatives of neither body were invited to be present by the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina due to the press of business. (Note: Both presbyteries are large and meet only three times per year, and the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina is going through an executive presbyter interim period.)

3. *A Summary of the Position of the Workers as Reflected by the Justice at Smithfield Campaign*

Viewpoints of the workers are reflected partly in the presenting overture itself, which cites the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) finding, confirmed by the U.S. Court of Appeals, in favor of the union's position. The primary contention was that management (including its own company police force, now disbanded) had threatened, intimidated, and fired workers and otherwise hampered the secret ballot elections of 1994 and 1997. In 2000, an NLRB administrative law judge threw out the election results, but not until 2004 did the NLRB uphold that decision, which Smithfield then appealed. During the 217th General Assembly (2006), the U.S. Court of Appeals affirmed the NLRB decision authorizing another election, free of intimidation. The initial judge determined that Smithfield had committed many "egregious" labor law violations; and the U.S. Court of Appeals cited "the intense and widespread coercion prevalent at the Tar Heel facility."<sup>1</sup> The announcement that the company would no longer fight the most recent NLRB rulings, presented while the 217th General Assembly (2006) was in session, seemed both to substantiate the position of the workers' representatives, (as did national newspaper coverage at that time), and also indicate a change in the company's approach.

Injuries are a major concern of the workers and the union. On various occasions workers have signed petitions and otherwise protested injury rates at the plant, many of which may be linked to the speed of the cutting line where 8,000 hogs are disassembled each shift. This speed is intense. On the kill floor, the hogs move past workers every three to four seconds (Bob Herbert, "Where the Hogs Come First" *The New York Times*, June 15, 2006).<sup>2</sup> The types of injuries usual in slaughterhouses are cuts with the electric knives; lifting problems; repetitive motion disorders, and falls on floors and stairs covered with

blood, internal fluids, and guts. The union cites a 2007 report by the Research Association of America that found “injuries had increased 200% from 2003 to 2006” (Summary Statement to PC(USA) on the Right of Smithfield Foods Inc Workers in Tar Heel, NC, to Organize a Union—Nov. 2007). In addition, former workers allege insufficient medical care (*Packaged With Abuse*, Research Associates of America, October 2006), termination following injury on the job (Summary Statement), and problems with workers’ compensation claims. In the report, “Workers’ Rights at Smithfield...” Human Rights Watch describes various techniques used by the company to deny workers’ compensation:

Employees described various company rationales to deny workers’ compensation, such as accusing workers of calling the rescue squad without calling the company first; of waiting to report an injury; of “lying” to a doctor about a work-related injury when the company’s injury report, written by the clinic staff, said the injury happened at home; of waiting a day to report an injury to avoid a drug test; of going to the hospital emergency room without permission, etc. ... Many workers’ accounts described companies maneuvering to put as many injuries as possible on regular medical insurance plans or short-term disability rather than workers’ compensation. (*Workers’ Rights at Smithfield Foods in Tar Heel, N.C.—An Excerpt from the Human Rights Watch Report, Blood, Sweat, and Fear: Workers’ Rights in U.S. Meat and Poultry Plants*, pp. 6–7).

Turnover is another issue. A high turnover rate is common in the industry, even in unionized plants, and is one factor cited by the union for high injury rates. This high turnover rate persists even though Smithfield’s own unionized plants are reported to pay somewhat higher wages than the Tar Heel plant. From its side, Smithfield notes that Tar Heel pays better than many other employers in the county and region—a region that has lost cotton, tobacco, and textiles to even lower-wage parts of the world. A company representative also maintained that Human Rights Watch had never actually visited the plant. The 2006 ACSWP advice & counsel memo on the overture noted that high turnover in a high unemployment area may be an indicator of harsh working conditions.

Another important issue for workers and the union is earning power and benefits. Tony Equale outlines the importance of the wage issue in his article, “By All Means Necessary,” September 1, 2007, published on the Website of the United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society:

So why does Smithfield resist unionization at its Tar Heel plant? That’s easy to answer. Just do the math: Starting wages at Tar Heel are around \$9 an hour, and the highest paid make around \$13. In the unionized plants, the starting pay is \$12 /hr and the range goes up to \$20 and higher. Even if you just stay with a \$3 an hour difference across the board, not paying those three extra dollars each hour to 5000 workers saves Smithfield \$30,000,000 per year. (Section “Smithfield,” 10th paragraph; note: these rates have been increased, partly to attract workers from as far away as South Carolina).

The wage disparity between unionized and non-union plants has a parallel in the disparity between the meatpacking industry wages and those in the general U.S. manufacturing sector. As unionization declined, wages in the meatpacking industry began declining in the 1980s. In 1983, for the first time, industry pay dropped below the U.S manufacturing average. Since that time, this decline has continued and even accelerated, falling to a point 15 percent lower in 1985, then 18 percent lower in 1990, and 24 percent lower by 2002 (“Workers’ Rights at Smithfield Foods...,” pp. 1–2).

Two other dynamics relate to the race of the workers at the plant. One involves a concern that the company may play off African American and Hispanic workers against each other (these are the two largest blocks of workers; white and Native American workers make up the remainder of the workforce). This situation was portrayed by Charlie LeDuff, a reporter who worked briefly at the plant (“At a Slaughterhouse, Some Things Never Die: Who Kills, Who Cuts, Who Bosses Can Depend on Race,” *The New York Times*, June 16, 2000). Duff outlined what it appeared to be the steering of certain racial groups into particular jobs at the Tar Heel plant. A superficial observation from the joint ACSWP and both presbytery delegations’ visit is that while African American and Hispanic workers seemed mixed throughout the plant, managerial and supervisory workers seemed disproportionately white.

The second major dynamic relates to the immigration status of employees. In the summer of 2007, a number of workers were arrested as undocumented aliens, some reportedly shipped to for-profit prisons in Georgia. Union supporters charged that many of the Hispanic workers arrested were strong union supporters (“Immigrant Crackdown Opens a Slaughterhouse’s Work Force,” by Steven Greenhouse, *The New York Times*, October 2, 2007). Company ID photos were used in identification: company officials noted that they themselves had to cooperate with the ICE (formerly, INS). However, the union’s concerns about company motivation were not without foundation. In fact, the 2000 NLRB administrative law judge’s decision indicated that the company had illegally threatened to call ICE (then the INS) to report immigrant workers if they chose to be represented by a union (“Workers’ Rights as Smithfield...,” p. 9)

Shortly after the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) delegation’s visit, on November 16, 2007, as many as 1,200 workers walked out—a very risky thing to do when one is not in a union. The union, in fact, disavowed involvement in the walk-out. Reports indicated that the workers were not solely motivated by the previous firing of Hispanic workers and the “no-match” letters sent to hundreds of employees, telling them that the Social Security numbers they use do not match the names held by the Social Security administration. According to the Hispanic missionaries and others, the company has used undocumented workers in the past. The number of Hispanic workers is now declining, and there are reportedly 1,000 fewer Hispanics in the plant as of October 2007.<sup>3</sup> These changing workforce numbers may indicate that the government’s pressure on companies

and employees is working. The net result is higher turnover and thus more instability and possibly more injuries among the less experienced workers.

In assessing workers' views, it is worth noting that a decreasing share of the U.S. workforce is unionized and that this decline is a major contributing factor, according to an MIT study, behind stagnating real wages for American workers ("Inequality and Institutions in 20th Century America," Working Paper 07-17, MIT Department of Economics, Working Paper Series, by Frank Levy and Peter Temin, June 27, 2007). As noted above, the meatpacking industry is no exception. Eric Schlosser (author of *Fast Food Nation*) notes that, "In 1970 the typical American meatpacking worker earned about 20% more than the typical factory worker. Today he or she earns about 20% less."<sup>4</sup> It is also the case that despite long delays, the NLRB finally acted on the serious allegations that have characterized Smithfield's response to unionization in the past. Under the current administration, this is seen as a rare event and perhaps indicates notably aggressive corporate tactics used in the case. North Carolina has the lowest percentage of unionized workers in the United States, and this may have been a significant factor in the 1991–1992 decision to build the massive plant in a hard-hit rural area.

A final element of the union's efforts is the corporate campaign, implemented following the election defeats of 1994 and 1997 and designed to enlist allies in other parts of society. This campaign was a response to the union's perception of the negative climate in the plant. The organization implementing the campaign, "Justice at Smithfield," which is closely allied with the union, does not advocate a "boycott" of Smithfield (since it is partly unionized) but some selective purchasing of products produced in Tar Heel. The cumulative effect of countless worker testimonies and presentations, including those of several union organizers, has led to support from many groups, including religious groups: The National Baptist Convention, the Progressive National Baptist Convention, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the United Church of Christ, the North Carolina Council of Churches, and most recently, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church (texts available from ACSWP). The Presbytery and ACSWP representatives appreciate the cooperation they received from union organizers and off-duty workers who met with our teams and provided information to us.

#### 4. *A Summary of the Position of Smithfield Foods, Inc.*

The following summary reflects information from the Smithfield.com Website; materials provided by the corporation; and two significant conversations, one with senior management of Murphy Brown, the other with the president of the company, Joseph Luter IV, the chief corporate spokesperson, Dennis Pittman, and several other managers of the Tar Heel plant. The presbytery and ACSWP representatives appreciate the high-level cooperation they received from Smithfield senior leadership and the hospitality provided, including a guided tour of the Tar Heel facility. Given the support given by the General Assembly to significant criticism of the company's operations, we also appreciate the willingness of corporate leaders to meet with church representatives and the role that presbytery and congregation leaders and pastors played in helping these meetings happen.

The company disagrees profoundly with the union position and maintains that a "third party," as it terms the union, is not needed. Conditions at the plant are better than at many comparable facilities, accident and turnover rates are at least comparable, and the immigration issues the company recently faced are unavoidable. They point to what they perceive as self-serving behavior and propaganda on the part of the union, combined with an effort to denigrate company's efforts, such as criticism of the adequacy of the company's medical facility (for non-serious injuries). The company's 2006–2007 Corporate Social Responsibility report states that the medical facility provides doctor visits, x-rays, lab work, and prescriptions. In 2006, there were 8,000 visits and 48,000 prescriptions dispensed. (For its part, the union contends that work-related problems are not treated adequately with few staff being able to speak Spanish, lack of referrals to specialists, and lack of attention to workers' health complaints that may lead to lost time or recorded incidents.) The company discloses safety performance information that indicates slippage in two of three categories between 2004 and 2005, and improvement from 2005 to 2006, but data is aggregated for the entire company, and not broken down by sector, individual plant, or even by unionized and non-union facilities. The company reports that as of April 2006, 43 percent of its U.S. workforce was unionized with 18,100 workers in pork processing, and 2,400 in beef processing being covered by union contracts.

Workforce composition in 2006 showed that 35 percent of workers were female while women were 16.8 percent of officials and managers. Racial minorities composed 67.4 percent of workers, and 24.4 percent of officials and managers.

In the "listening session," some Smithfield representatives indicated that the company felt "singled out" by the church (to which the church's long involvement with companies through Mission Responsibility Through Investment and efforts like the Taco Bell Boycott on behalf of tomato workers were mentioned). Charitable works and other examples of good corporate citizenship were mentioned by local church members not employed by the company. The executives are also very aware of the competitive business situation, increasingly on a global basis, even if Smithfield is now the largest player in their region.

From a business standpoint, Smithfield is doing very well: \$11 billion in sales in 2006, with profit rates higher than Hormel and other meat packing companies. Smithfield is expanding market share overseas, in places like China, where meat consumption has been growing. The company has expanded through acquisition not only in hog production (long a part of



North Carolina culture on a decentralized basis) but turkey production. The Tar Heel location draws from pig nurseries all over the area and the company has sought to expand the already massive plant to accommodate more than the 32,000 pigs per day. The organization of the plant itself is focused on efficiency and necessarily on cleanliness (inspectors enter the facility regularly and at will).

In addition, the company is addressing ecological issues (largely beyond the purview of this set of discussions) due to water use and treatment of hog waste and meat by-products, as well as concerns from animal rights advocates and organic hog growers about concentrated living conditions of animals in “factory farms.” As part of a settlement in 2000, Smithfield contributed \$15 million to agricultural research on the waste and water concerns; the company Website gives further information on environmental practices. With regard to the treatment of animals, Smithfield announced in March of 2007 that it was phasing out “gestation crates,” which severely confine pregnant sows throughout their pregnancies.

In discussion with top management at the Tar Heel plant, the company’s willingness to have another secret ballot election was reaffirmed. However, the alternative proposed by the union, the “check-off,” or “card check,” was seen as open to too much influence or pressure from the union when workers are off duty. In a way, the company representatives paint likely union behavior as the mirror of the coercive behavior that courts have found the company itself to have practiced. A letter after the November 2007 meeting contained extensive newspaper documentation of worker injury rates at a unionized poultry operation in Charlotte. The company’s clear message to potential union members: unions do not always help.

During some of the period in 2007 between the May and November meetings with the church, there were conversations and even negotiations between the company and union representatives. These focused on whether an agreed on period of “neutrality” could be allowed by the company at the workplace, in preparation for a secret ballot election. There was also consideration of what kind of observers and conflict specialists might help a genuine process (the Carter Center might be a model of this kind of observer role). From the company’s point of view, the Smithfield Justice campaign would also need to call off its allies from their constant criticism of the company. The question is partly one of how important the non-union position is to the company’s business model, another question is whether that centralized model itself is ecologically sustainable.

Shortly before the November 12 meeting, the company ended discussions with the union and filed suit against the union, its organizers, and some of its allies, alleging violations of racketeering and extortion law. While press coverage in some cases ridiculed the suit for comparing collective bargaining to extortion, and the company subsequently modified many of its charges of falsehood and other allegations, the suit has withstood an initial union motion for dismissal. Because this suit, especially in its unusually personal effort to criminalize individual union employees and discourage church and other civic group support, has effectively ended negotiations, ACSWP felt it important to get an outside opinion on its legal substance. An opinion by John Borger of Faegre & Benson of Minneapolis on the First Amendment issues involved is available from the committee’s Website: the opinion suggests that the company’s legal strategy does not seem well-grounded. Given the company’s history of litigating and appealing all NLRB decisions, the question is whether this suit is primarily another form of attempted intimidation and delay of a credible and good-faith voting process.

##### 5. *A Summary of the Position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

The church’s policy in favor of “industrial reconciliation” goes back into the early 20th century and is not based in an idealized picture of harmony between management and labor. Rather, in accordance with the Reformed understanding of sin and unchecked power, the church recognized that unions helped balance the power of management even in times of weak government social protections. The church has also recognized that by improving wages, working conditions, and benefits, unions have helped millions of Americans attain a foothold in the lower middle class. We quote here briefly from several General Assembly statements:

- The 98th General Assembly (1958) encouraged business and labor leaders to recognize “... their responsibility for the well being of persons in such matters as sufficient wages, health, housing and other living conditions . . .” and “to deal realistically and forthrightly with injustice and corruption of any kind . . .” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1958, Part I, p. 226).

- The 183rd General Assembly (1977) “... Reaffirm[ed] the actions of previous General Assemblies supporting the right of every employable person to a job, decent and safe working conditions, and a salary adequate to meet at least his or her basic needs” (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1977, Part I, p. 126).

- The 120th General Assembly (1980) said: “... In view of our theological understanding of economic and social justice we affirm for all persons the right to be paid adequately and treated with fairness and dignity. ... In view of our theological understanding of liberation, justice, community, and the reality of sin, we affirm the right of all workers, except those on whom national or community security depends, to join labor organizations and participate in collective bargaining” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1980, Part I, pp. 229–30).

- The 214th General Assembly (2002) “...encourage[d] members of the PC(USA) to contact legislators urging support of the family farmer/ranchers, farm and processing plant workers, and equitable world trade policy” (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, pp. 23, 535).
- The policy statement, *God’s Work in Our Hands: Employment, Community, and Christian Vocation* affirms that:

Inequalities in compensation and working conditions demand the strictest scrutiny. As our workforce becomes increasingly diverse, these concerns become even more urgent. Employment for persons who have suffered the injustices of prejudice and bias is the object of laws requiring affirmative action. A political, economic, and social system that translates unalterable human differences—race, ethnicity, gender, age, and physical ability—into occasion for oppression, exploitation, is incompatible with Reformed theology. . . . All conditions of paid employment, including compensation and working conditions, should sustain and nurture the dignity of individuals, the well-being of households and families, the social cohesiveness of communities, and the integrity of the global environment. Justice demands that social institutions guarantee all persons the opportunity to participate actively in economic decision making that affects them. All workers—including undocumented, migrant, and farm workers—have the right to choose to organize for the purposes of collective bargaining (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 59, 426).

Given the racial and ethnic composition of the Tar Heel plant workforce, we cannot ignore the role that racial patterns may play in the social relations and expectations of all parties. In documents such as *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*, approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has committed to speaking out against racism in all its forms as sin. The position of the church in this area was well-underlined by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns at the General Assembly, and a representative from ACREC participated in the meeting with top management on November 12, 2007.

At this time, the situation appears to qualify for the type of action envisioned by The Confession of 1967, when it says:

In each time and place, there are particular problems and crises through which God calls the Church to act. The church, guided by the Spirit, humbled by its own complicity and instructed by all attainable knowledge, seeks to discern the will of God and learn how to obey in these concrete situations.... (Inclusive Language Text, 9.43).

#### Endnotes

1. Bob Herbert, “Where The Hogs Come First,” *The New York Times*, June 15, 2006.
2. See also the report, “Workers’ Rights at Smithfield Foods in Tar Heel, N.C.: An Excerpt from The Human Rights Watch Report, Blood, Sweat, and Fear: Workers’ Rights in U.S. Meat and Poultry Plants,” a Smithfield manager described this speed in an unfair labor practice trial (1998-1999), noting that it takes from five to ten minutes from the time the hog “is slain to the completion of draining, cleaning, cleaving, kidney-popping, fat-pulling, snap-chilling and other steps before disassembly” (“Workers’ Rights at Smithfield...,” p. 4). For workers on the cutting line, they must finish their trim work every 17 seconds (“At a Slaughterhouse, Some Things Never Die; Who Kills, Who Cuts, Who Bosses Can Depend on Race,” by Charlies Leduff, *The New York Times*, June 16, 2000). This speed contributes to injuries.
3. According to Tony Equale, “By All Means Necessary,” in the aftermath of the January 2007 ICE raids at Tar Heel, 500 Hispanic workers left the company “rather than risk arrest and deportation,” and according to *The New York Times*, by October 2007, at least 1,000 Hispanic workers of 5,200 total employees had left company employment (“Immigrant Crackdown Upends a Slaughterhouse’s Work Force,” by Steven Greenhouse, *The New York Times*, October 2, 2007). These worker departures have significantly changed the overall proportion of workers by group. In the Tar Heel plant prior to the raids, approximately 50 percent of the workers were Latino, 40 percent were African American, and 10 percent were white and Native American (“The Story of the Smithfield Raid,” by David Bacon, Truthout, May 18, 2007, [http://www.truthout.org/issues\\_06/printer\\_051807LA.shtml](http://www.truthout.org/issues_06/printer_051807LA.shtml); and “Workers’ Rights at Smithfield Foods...,” p. 2)]
4. Eric Schlosser, “Smithfield Workers Face Modern-Day Jungle,” *The Nation*, Sept. 11, 2006, pp. 28–30.

## Item 09-20

[The assembly approved Item 09-20 with amendment and comment. See pp. 54, 55.]

*Commissioners’ Resolution. Affirming the Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner Treatment, Torture, and Cruelty.*

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

**1. Affirm the *Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner Treatment, Torture and Cruelty*, as developed by The National Religious Campaign Against Torture, The Center for Victims of Torture, and Evangelicals for Human Rights, which states:**

Though we come from a variety of backgrounds and walks of life, we agree that the use of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment against prisoners is immoral, unwise, and un-American.

In our effort to secure ourselves, we have resorted to tactics which do not work, which endanger US personnel abroad, which discourage political, military, and intelligence cooperation from our allies, and which ultimately do not enhance our security.

Our President must lead our nation back to our core principles. We must be better than our enemies, and our treatment of prisoners captured in the battle against terrorism must reflect our character and values as Americans.

Therefore, we believe the President of the United States should issue an Executive Order that provides as follows:

*The "Golden Rule."* We will not authorize or use any methods of interrogation that we would not find acceptable if used against Americans, be they civilians or soldiers.

*One national standard.* We will have one national standard for all US personnel and agencies for the interrogation and treatment of prisoners. Currently, the best expression of that standard is the US Army Field Manual, which will be used until any other interrogation technique has been approved based on the Golden Rule principle.

*The rule of law.* We will acknowledge all prisoners to our courts or the International Red Cross. We will in no circumstance hold persons in secret prisons or engage in disappearances. In all cases, prisoners will have the opportunity to prove their innocence in ways that fully conform to American principles of fairness.

*Duty to protect.* We acknowledge our historical commitment to end the use of torture and cruelty in the world. The US will not transfer any person to countries that use torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

*Checks and balances.* Congress and the courts play an invaluable role in protecting the values and institutions of our nation and must have and will have access to the information they need to be fully informed about our detention and interrogation policies.

*Clarity and accountability.* All US personnel—whether soldiers or intelligence staff—deserve the certainty that they are implementing policy that complies fully with the law. Henceforth all US officials who authorize, implement, or fail in their duty to prevent the use of torture and ill-treatment of prisoners will be held accountable, regardless of rank or position.

**2. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate [~~this action and the related positions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on issues related to torture~~] to the president of the United States, the major candidates for the presidency, and to others in the federal government charged with oversight of the policies and practices of interrogations [this action and the related positions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on issues related to torture].**

**3. Encourage individuals, congregations, and middle governing bodies to lift up our commitment to human rights, the elimination of torture, and to ethical standards in interrogation.**

**4. Direct the Peacemaking Program to identify or create devotional, study, worship, and homiletic resources, and make them available on the Web so that individuals, congregations, and middle governing bodies can lift up our opposition to torture and our commitment to human rights and ethical standards in interrogation.**

*Comment:* The 218th General Assembly (2008) commends the 217th General Assembly (2006) for their action in approving "Human Rights in a Time of Terrorism and Torture" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 867ff).

#### *Rationale*

This resolution builds on the PC(USA)'s long history of opposition to inhumane interrogation and torture and support for the rule of law and justice, most recently expressed in the approval of the 217th General Assembly (2006) of the resolution, "Human Rights in a Time of Terrorism and Torture" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 867ff), and the overture, "A Call for a Commission of Inquiry" (*Ibid*, p. 783). This resolution reaffirms and builds on these actions by setting forth basic moral guidelines on these matters for current and future government officials.

This action is timely because of the juncture we are at in the history of our nation and because we have an opportunity to join with a multitude of faithful people from many traditions who have joined together in outrage at abuse and in hope for a return to what is best in our nation.

*The National Religious Campaign Against Torture* is a growing interfaith coalition of 210 denominations and faith groups including the PC(USA). *The Center for Victims of Torture* is a nonprofit organization working to end torture and heal the victims. *Evangelicals for Human Rights* is a nondenominational group that works with the National Association of Evangelicals and was specifically founded to end torture. These groups represent the wide consensus throughout the diversity of the faith community that torture is always wrong.

*The Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner Treatment, Torture and Cruelty* was written to express this to those at the highest levels of government who are responsible for creating and implementing policies and practices regarding interrogation. This statement recognizes the need for moral clarity by government leaders, if we are

to prevent abuse and promote accountability. Therefore, the religious community, through these organizations, has worked for more than two years to articulate the basic principles that we want to see adopted and articulated by the next president as the understanding of how the United States conducts interrogations.

The Reverend Karla Norton, Presbytery of San Jose  
The Reverend Francis P. Miller, Presbytery of Western Reserve

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-20

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-20—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The ACSWP supports Item 09-20 and notes that it is in harmony with the policy statement, “Human Rights in a Time of Terrorism and Torture,” approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 867ff). Therefore, ACSWP advises that this item include a statement commending the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006).

The PC(USA) is a participating member of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, an interfaith initiative, and the Stated Clerk is a signatory to the declaration of principles.

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## Item 09-21

[The assembly approved Item 09-21 with amendment. See pp. 54, 55.]

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Local Enforcement of National Immigration Laws That Adversely Affect Local Congregations.*

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) does the following:**

1. **Declares that the common practice of police officers working in collaboration with Federal government institutions to enforce immigration laws represents a dangerous situation for families and the community in general.**
2. **Declares that the raids and road blocks near churches are unjust and represent a violation to people’s right to worship.**
3. **Denounces the suffering and hurting of thousands of young children and parents, which is the product of the separation during deportations.**
4. **Denounces the injustice and the lack of standards in the detention centers.**
5. **Deplores hate speech against immigrants in public arenas.**
6. **States that the PC(USA) believes that all humans should have access to basic human needs like health, education, and housing.**
7. **Calls upon churches, presbyteries, and synods to closely work with youth who are living with a sense of hopelessness due to lack of a legal status.**

**[8. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate these declarations in writing to the Congress and the president of the United States.**

**[9. Encourage Presbyterians to advocate for the fair and humane treatment of all persons by law enforcement officials in their local and state governments.]**

### *Rationale*

Actions of the General Assemblies in 2004 and 2006 promoted peace and a better understanding of issues regarding immigration. Recent developments in cities all over the country are evidence that attacks to the human dignity and a growing sentiment of rejection toward the immigrants continues to be a problem. Only a few churches and presbyteries are intentionally involved in denouncing the daily reality of thousands of church members that are living in fear.

Justice to the immigrant would involve:

- Recognizing his/her contributions to society;
- Making possible the basic needs for safety, shelter, food, and health.

The U.S.A. is a nation with strong roots in justice for all, including the immigrants, with the purpose to live in harmony and peace. As members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) we understand that justice is a Christian value that we have received through Jesus Christ, therefore, we are committed to preach, teach, and promote justice. We are called to be part of the solution to the suffering and pain in our community, and with courage proclaim our beliefs beyond any political, economic, religious, or cultural interest. We are called to be a voice for those that are not being heard and a beacon of light for those without hope.

We read in Deuteronomy 10:17–19, “For the Lord your God is a God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

#### Pertinent References

1. Justice for the immigrant, Exodus 22:21, “You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.”
2. Love for the immigrant, Leviticus 19:33–34, “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself ....”
3. Mathew 25:31–46 exhorts us to take care of the strangers.
4. *Book of Order*, G-5.0103 and G-9.1014.

Elder Wayne Green, Presbytery of Salem  
The Reverend Renato Alvarez, Presbytery of Grand Canyon

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-21

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-21—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 09-21 be approved.

#### *Rationale*

The resolution rightly refers to recent General Assembly policy statements that call for advocacy and welcome for all immigrants. Previous General Assemblies have frequently reaffirmed the church’s call to be a “voice for the voiceless” and to provide welcome for the stranger.

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a “Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the U.S.” which called upon the members of the PC(USA) to:

- a. Advocate the establishment by law of a comprehensive legalization program for undocumented persons already living and working in the United States.
- b. Advocate the reform of current immigration policies and procedures to ensure a more timely and humane process, with special attention to family reunification and to those persons who have been waiting for their immigrant visas and for naturalization.
- c. Adamantly oppose the exploitation of any and all workers as a violation of the humane and just treatment due to all children of God. ... (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 738)

Further, the 217th General Assembly (2006) approved, “On Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants,” which:

1. Reaffirm[ed] the 216th General Assembly (2004)’s “Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the U.S.”
2. Affirm[ed] that our denomination—mindful of the current realities and threats to our belief system—not sway from our solidarity with, and pledge of service to, all of our brothers and sisters regardless of their race, creed, color, nationality, or residency status.
3. Affirm[ed] those Presbyterian congregations and presbyteries that are already standing alongside immigrants and are actively engaged in acts of compassion, empowerment, and advocacy.

4. Challenge[ed] each Presbyterian congregation and presbytery to embrace a comprehensive approach to “advocacy and welcome” for immigrants that includes, at the very minimum

a. an opportunity for hard-working immigrants who are already contributing to this country to come out of the shadows, regularize their status upon satisfaction of reasonable criteria, and, over time, pursue an option to become lawful permanent residents and eventually United States citizens;

b. reforms in our family-based immigration system to significantly reduce waiting times for separated families who currently wait many years to be reunited;

c. the creation of legal avenues for workers and their families who wish to migrate to the U.S. to enter our country and work in a safe, legal, and orderly manner with their rights fully protected; and ... (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 880)

Additionally, commissioners are referred to Item 09-11 “A Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the United States,” which directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to “study and monitor detention in relation to immigration in the United States, giving attention to the experiences of women and children detained and affected.” This new study on detention will address several concerns lifted up by the commissioners, including the concern for families.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-21

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-21—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advice and Counsel from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and further advises that Item 09-21 be approved by adding the following recommendations:

[“8. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate these declarations in writing to the Congress and the president of the United States.”]

[“9. Encourage Presbyterians to advocate for the fair and humane treatment of all persons by law enforcement officials in their local and state governments.”]

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-21

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-21—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 09-21 deals with social justice issues and immigration.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises approval of Item 09-21.

The ACWC appreciates the wider context of the complexities of the immigration issue and supports practical ways to show justice and compassion to immigrants in the United States. Recommendations 3 and 4 of this item relate to Item 9-11 that highlights an increase in immigration detention in the United States which negatively impacts the lives of thousands of women and their children. Item 9-11 is a practical way to address several of these issues of serious concern. The ACWC shares the concerns lifted up in this item that reflect the hardship and injustices being faced by families from deportation and detention.

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## Item 09-Info

### A. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy Agency Summary

#### 1. Assigned Responsibilities: Strengthening Presbyterian Social Witness

Social witness is part of what it means for the church to be “salt” and “light” in the world today.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), as a servant of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), develops, interprets, and monitors policies that encourage and challenge the Church and society to reflect and act in faithful response to God’s call to do justice. (Mission Statement, approved October 2002 in El Paso, Texas)

In every age, the Spirit calls on the church to discern afresh God’s redemptive purpose in our particular time and place in history. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s work is to discern what it means to proclaim and

embody the Gospel in relation to contemporary society. In this work, the ACSWP and its task forces draw upon a great wealth of resources:

- the voices of the biblical text;
- the wisdom of theological discourse;
- the guidance of the Reformed confessions;
- the tradition of past policy statements;
- the insights of sociopolitical disciplines;
- the advice of members and all governing bodies of the church;
- the insights of people who are poor, victims of existing policies, and those who have not had a voice in councils of the church; and
- the counsel of ecumenical partners. (*Minutes*, 1993, Part I, p. 769).

Social witness can occur at many different points: in a church session, in a presbytery, in an advocacy group, in the participation of Christians in mission, in a meeting of the ecumenical church, in an individual Christian's brave refusal to "go along" with injustice.

For Presbyterians, however, decisions about the church's social witness are made by persons elected to serve in governing bodies (session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly). As councils of the church meet, the elected persons are commissioned "... not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ ..." (*Book of Order*, G-4.0301d). The advisory committee's structure and function go back to 1936 when "consecrated" and justice-oriented persons from the Boards of Christian Education and National Missions were elected to a Social Education and Action Committee.

In providing service and resources to meet the needs of congregations, middle governing bodies, and the General Assembly, ACSWP members find guidance in the mission statement quoted above. Theologically grounded ethical reflection is part of the salt and light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The ACSWP engages with the grassroots in assisting the General Assembly to discern what it means to proclaim and embody the Gospel in a world that remains too grim for too many. At the same time, the committee's membership contains persons with expertise in theology, social ethics, and various other disciplines, approximately half of whom hold Ph.D.s.

Making a personal social witness begins with very individual ways of growing and developing as a Christian—prayerfully studying the Scriptures, being inspired by Jesus, the prophets, and courageous stands of the church, gaining insight from past ethical witness, connecting one's faith with others in the Christian community, and then being faithful in the world beyond the church. The ACSWP seeks to be a partner in the ministry of reconciliation, for "each member [who] is the church in the world ..." (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.38).

The churchwide work of the ACSWP is based on ethical guidance from the Scriptures, *The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order*. The 1993 General Assembly policy statement, *Why and How the Church Makes a Social Policy Witness* (OGA-93-019), provides extensive documentation of key biblical passages and is a useful document in congregational interpretation of the ACSWP and its mission.

All of those biblical texts have a common theme. The Gospel says that to confess Jesus Christ as Lord is to believe that God can and has overcome the powers of sin in the world. Christians do not work alone, but join the Lord Jesus Christ who is already at work in our world. John Calvin said that social concern, expressed by action on behalf of our neighbors, is a central part of the faith. Our historic confessions, the work of theologians, and the actions of 217 General Assemblies have reaffirmed that message. Our faithfulness as Reformed Christians means action.

#### *Procedures and Personnel*

In support of the work of the assembly, the ACSWP is given direct access to the assembly as it meets biennially. Between sessions of the assembly, the ACSWP also assists the General Assembly Council (GAC), the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), and other agencies of the church as their work involves the development and interpretation of social witness policy.

The committee carries out its responsibilities in five major ways. They are the

1. development and recommendation of new social witness and policy for approval by the General Assembly;
2. interpretation and communication of the General Assembly's social witness and policy, both to the church and the world at large;

3. rendering of advice and counsel to the entities and governing bodies of the church on matters of social witness policy throughout the year;
4. rendering of advice and counsel to the General Assembly when it meets as a governing body; and
5. monitoring peace and justice concerns per mandates from the General Assembly.

The ACSWP develops and recommends new social witness and policies primarily in response to referrals from the General Assembly and its entities, and in a manner consistent with the *Manual of the General Assembly*, “On Forming Social Policy.” This policy development requires depth of theological reflection, breadth of input, and diversity of participation. Before a policy statement is approved, extensive consultation is mandated at all stages of development. Thus, the committee’s work is connected to the concerns of Presbyterians gathered in worshiping and serving communities across the land.

The committee’s advice and counsel group carries out the task of providing advice and counsel at the meeting of the General Assembly. This group of elected committee members, together with other staff and resource persons from several General Assembly Council entities, advises commissioners in assembly committees and other entities about social policies applicable to issues before the assembly. It may also comment on the need or direction for future social policy. Advice and counsel is provided throughout the meeting, through “Advice and Counsel Memoranda,” by oral testimony before assembly committees, and informally.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) consists of twelve members, nine of whom are at-large members elected by the General Assembly from the whole church and three who are General Assembly Council members. Members are: Gloria Albrecht, Detroit, Michigan; Donna C. Bradley, Tucson, Arizona; Dianne L. Briscoe (vice-chair), Denver, Colorado; Charles F. Easley Sr., Atlanta, Georgia; B. Gordon Edwards (chair), Stillwater, Oklahoma; Esperanza Guajardo, San Antonio, Texas; Ronald J. Kernaghan, Pasadena, California; Lewis S. Mudge, Berkeley, California; William Saint, Fairfax, Virginia; and Jack M. Terry, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In the fall of 2006, Nile Harper, an at-large member from Fridley, Minnesota, resigned from the committee. The following spring, Larry I. Palmer, an at-large member from Louisville, Kentucky, resigned from the committee. In the fall of 2007, the Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006) appointed Marsha Fowler, Altadena, California, and John C. Knapp, Atlanta, Georgia, to fill the positions vacated by Harper and Palmer. Staffing for the committee includes Christian Iosso, coordinator; Belinda M. Curry, associate; and Bonnie M. Hoff, senior administrative assistant.

## 2. *Accomplishments*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) members and staff make themselves available for interpretive events as requested and as time allows. The committee welcomes inquiries through its office in Louisville. All governing bodies, churches, and members are encouraged to use the “Presbyterian Social Witness Policy Compilation,” which contains the core of the assemblies’ social policy statements since 1946. It is revised regularly to meet the needs of the church and can be downloaded from the worldwide web at ([www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp)).

The ACSWP meets following each General Assembly, to discern and prioritize its work; periodically between the assemblies, to review progress on papers and projects; and in January before an assembly, to edit and approve final drafts for submission to the assembly. This year the committee has prepared one new policy statement, an ecumenical statement, and seven resolutions to strengthen current social witness policies.

- Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness
- A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century
- Costly Lessons of the Iraq War
- From Homelessness to Hope: Constructing Just, Sustainable Communities for All God’s People
- God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation
- Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform
- Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future
- The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming
- Resolution on Human Rights in Colombia



In preparation of this year's major proposed policy statement, the Task Force on "Serious Mental Illness" completed its work in the spring of 2007. This task force developed the proposed new policy and recommendations for the church to work for justice with persons living with mental illness, within both the church and the wider social order. The ACSWP took ownership of the task force's report, "Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness," at its summer 2007 meeting. A synod consultation on this report was held in the fall of 2007. Fifteen of the sixteen synods were represented at this event. Most of the synod consultation recommendations were incorporated into the mental illness report.

The committee's work on updating "The Nature and Value of Human Life," a 1981 study paper developed by the Presbyterian Church in the United States, is progressing forward. At its winter 2008 meeting, the committee discussed holding consultations across the church to obtain a diversity of theological and ethical viewpoints on the complex issues concerning this topic. The committee will submit a report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The ACSWP continues to explore ways to use the new Web technologies to enhance the communal conversation and consensus-building that strengthens our shared social witness.

In 2006, with a preface by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the ACSWP published and sent to all congregations the resolution against torture entitled, *Human Rights in a Time of Terrorism* (PDS 68-600-06-002). In addition, the committee assisted the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) in the publication of four other reports: the policy statement on *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities* (PDS OGA-06-091), *A Reformed Understanding of Usury for the Twenty-First Century* (PDS OGA-06-088), *A Report on Economic Security for Older Adult* (PDS OGA-06-089), and *Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability* (PDS OGA-06-090). These resources can be downloaded at <http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications> or <http://www.pcusa.org/acswp/>.

The ACSWP sponsored globalization consultations in Illinois in May 2007, and New York in January 2008. These will contribute to the development of study material with diverse viewpoints on globalization to go with the 2006 policy and with our study, as members of WARC, of the ACCRA Confession. The committee also convened a consultation on the Iraq War and Muslim-Christian peacemaking work at Stony Point in September of 2007.

The committee has developed a DVD to promote the new ecumenical "social creed" for the 21st century—an action item before this General Assembly and other resources, including a prayer book, scholarly essays, and an interpretive booklet.

The ACSWP works collaboratively with the six mission and ministry areas of the General Assembly Council (GAC), other entities of the GAC, and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). The ACSWP has liaisons from the Peace and Justice area, and from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC). When possible, the committee spends time with local church members, relevant presbytery committees, and with ecumenical members during its meetings. Such opportunities occurred in 2006 and 2007. One of the committee's meetings was held at the Presbyterian UN Office, for example, and included both a hearing on human rights and genocide, and a reception later with thirty local pastors and church members. In addition, the committee seeks creative ways to support the ministries of the Presbyterian theological institutions and colleges. Last year, the committee made available 100 complimentary copies of the *Resolution on Just Globalization* to Columbia Theological Seminary (CTS) in Decatur, Georgia, to distribute to the 2007 CTS Colloquium participants. Issues concerning the ecological crisis were the focus of this event.

The committee assists in organizing an annual gathering of the Theological Educators for Presbyterian Social Witness (TEPSW). This group is composed primarily of Christian ethicists currently or formerly serving in seminaries and other educational institutions related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Since the last General Assembly, the committee assisted with two such gatherings. In the fall of 2006, the TEPSW met at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. The fall 2007 meeting was held on the campus of Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Richmond, Virginia. The location of the 2008 meeting will be the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

The ACSWP will focus on emerging social witness issues and future priorities at its summer meeting. Other responses by the committee to General Assembly work may be found in the responses to referrals report.

## **B. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) Agency Summary**

"The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble." (Ps. 9:9)

"The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us." (Acts 11:12)

... [Be] doers of the word, and not merely hearers ..." (Jas. 1:22)

### 1. *Introduction*

The context of women's advocacy is a human situation where women experience injustice because they are women. Grounded in communal faith in "God [who] liberated the people of Israel from oppression . . . [and] covenanted with Israel . . . that they might do justice . . ." (*Book of Order*, G-3.0101b) and motivated by painful recognition of sexism within and without, the Presbyterian church explicitly articulated in the "Articles of Agreement" its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) is a contemporary fulfillment of this promise. Created by the mandate of the 205th General Assembly (1993) at the recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Shape and Form, ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to

give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, G-4.0403 . . . monitor[ing] and evaluat[ing] policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church . . . and advocat[ing] for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society [as a whole]. (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 262)

### 2. *Assigned Responsibilities*

The ACWC's assigned functions are delineated in the *GAC Manual of Operations* (Appendix I, EV, Section VIII.B.), and they include:

- Preparing policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on women's concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative;
- Advising the General Assembly Council on matters of women's concerns including statements concerning pressing issues that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly;
- Providing advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women's concerns;
- Assisting the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women's concerns and provide information to the church as requested;
- Providing the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women's concerns;
- Monitoring the implementation of women's policies and programs relative to women's concerns; and,
- Through advocacy maintaining a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women's concerns.

The ACWC is a function of the Office of the Executive Director, General Assembly Council, and connects to it through the executive administrator, though its direct staffing is provided by the associate of women's advocacy in the Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/PW ministry area. The committee has direct access to the General Assembly. The ACWC has organized itself with a leadership team of three co-chairs: two serve as corresponding members to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council respectively. A member of ACWC is a voting member of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment committee (MRTI). There are twelve members of the committee, ten members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly. They are chosen based on their individual qualifications and do not represent any constituencies. Members who left the committee in June 2006 were: Allison Seed (General Assembly Council), Dean Foose, Lillian Oats (Presbyterian Women), Ani Lelea, and Aleida Jernigan. Members who joined the committee in June 2006 were Mary Carter, Maria Cardenas Baez, Aisha Brooks-Lytle, Louise Davidson (Presbyterian Women), and Manley Olson (General Assembly Council). Two members resigned during this reporting period—Aisha Brooks-Lytle, in late 2006, citing life circumstances that did not allow her to fully participate (in her letter she cited a lack of understanding what the time requirements of the committee were before her election from the floor); and Mary Carter, in early 2007, due to a diagnosis that prevented her from completing her term. In November 2007, two members were appointed by the Reverend Joan Gray, Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006), as recommended by the General Assembly Nominating Committee—the Reverend Dr. Gay Byron and Belinda Rice. Their first meeting with ACWC was January 2008.

### 3. *Accomplishments*

#### a. *2006–2007: ACWC Met Three Times*

##### (1) *August 3–6, 2006, in Boise, Idaho*

- Visits were made throughout southwestern Idaho and southeastern Oregon, addressing healthcare, mental health and social services, domestic violence services, and banking as it affects family farms;
- Member orientation, Website updates, and generative conversations about the work of the committee;

- Emerging issues were discussed and prioritized for work during the two years between General Assemblies and three workgroups were formed: Health and Human Sexuality, Rural/Urban Issues, and Status of Women/Language;
- Jerri Rodewald was elected as co-moderator to fill the one year unexpired vacancy left when Lillian Oats was not re-elected; and,
- Adeline DeCastro and Jerri Rodewald were elected to the Women of Color Consultation Task Force.

(2) *October 26–28, 2006, in Washington, DC*

- Met with the Reverend Elenora Giddings Ivory and other members of the staff of the Washington Office, addressing criminal justice, domestic violence prevention and education, school crisis response programs, empowering victims of crime, and reproductive health issues;
- Health and Human Sexuality workgroup distributed a letter to all Presbyterian members of Congress stating PC(USA)'s policy on women's reproductive rights and health care;
- Absentee policy was adopted by ACWC;
- Agreed to work with ACSWP in developing the pay equity resolution; and,
- Jerri Rodewald, Terry Alexander, Rebecca Harrison, and Jack Terry were appointed to a communication subcommittee.

(3) *February 15–17, 2007, in Louisville Kentucky;*

- Elder Jerri Rodewald elected to serve a full term as co-chair, term to begin in August 2007;
- Staff guests: Peggie Blenman, HR director, and the Reverend Dr. Marcia Myers, director, Office of Vocation;
- Forum presented jointly to ACWC and ACREC focused on post-Katrina issues;
- Communications subcommittee met with designer, Dana McMahan, to scope the new Website;
- Health and Human Sexuality workgroup held three-part educational session with guest speaker, the Reverend Dee Dale (MCC);
- Status/Language workgroup met with Research Services; and
- ACSWP coordinator, the Reverend Dr. Christian Iosso, updated ACWC on work currently being done by them.

b. *2007–2008: ACWC Met Three Times*

(1) *June 6–8, 2007, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

- Met with the Reverend Joan Gray, Moderator, 217th General Assembly (2006); the Reverend Curtis Kearns, executive administrator (GAC), Board of Pensions executives and appropriate staff, and a Presbyterian Historical Society representative who provided an educational session;
- Consulted with the General Assembly Nominating Committee: the Reverend Cindy Edwards, GANC member and contact for ACWC; and Valerie Small, staff;
- Attorney Julia Thorne, manager of Immigration Services (PC(USA)) provided information and continuing education regarding immigration issues in preparation for the October meeting;
- Health and Human Sexuality working group hosted a education program on gender with guest speaker, Chris Paige;
- Consulted with Joel Hanisek, UN representative, and Jonathan Crooms, young adult intern, Presbyterian United Nations Office, about international gender justice issues; and,

- Met with the Reverend Dr. Joseph Small, director, Theology, Worship, and Education ministry to receive an update on several items coming to that office out of the 217th General Assembly (2006).

(2) *October 18–22, 2007, in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico;*

- Met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) for large sections of the educational and cultural portions of the meeting—focus of these sessions to examine what pushes immigration to the US, the a/effects on communities in Mexico and the Presbyterian Church of Mexico;
- Visited San Pablo Presbyterian Theological Seminary and Chichen Itza;
- Participated in a listening tour of Dzan, Yucatan, Mexico, a primarily Mayan community where we interacted with villagers and were hosted by municipal leaders and the nonprofit organization, IndeMaya;
- Approved the new logo for ACWC;
- Jointly reviewed the revised Form of Government, drafted letter for FOG Task Force, and appointed joint working group with ACREC to schedule a follow-up conversation; and,
- Approved the ongoing work of the working groups to develop final proposals for action at the 218th General Assembly (2008).

(3) *January 24–26, 2008 in Louisville, Kentucky*

- Leadership Team: representatives from ACWC and ACREC leadership met with Karen Schmidt, deputy executive director for Communications and Funds Development, and Dianna Ott, coordinator, Creative Services;
- Met jointly with ACREC and Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) in two sessions;
  - Discussion with the Reverend Dr. Cliff Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk, regarding denominational issues and celebrated his service;
  - Joint committee work also saw discussion about the assembly with guests Vernon Broyles, Office of the General Assembly, and Nancy Hamilton, GAC executive associate; and,
  - Extensive review of actions being taken by the three committees to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- Working Groups perfected recommendations for ACWC report to General Assembly regarding:
  - Immigration Detention; Trafficking of women; Beginning process for extensive research project on the status of women in the PC(USA); and, persons to recommend as committee resource people to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- Reviewed and adopted narrative report and the pay equity resolution to be jointly submitted with ACSWP to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
- Selection of the Advice and Counsel team and resource persons;
- Welcomed newly appointed ACWC members, the Reverend Dr. Gay Byron and Belinda Rice, to fill vacancies in the class of 2010;
- Elected Elder Adeline DeCastro as co-chair to a two-year term to begin August 2008;
- Recognized outgoing elected members with thanks, to Karen Breckenridge, Nancy Neal, and Manley Olsen (GAC); and,
- Participated in Presbyterian Center worship celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King.

4. *Highlights*

a. *Status of Women/Language*

The work group focusing on the Status of Women and Language had many ongoing projects this year. We have monitored the work being done by different entities as instructed by the 217th General Assembly (2006), including the creation of an E-hymnal and the report concerning ordination of Christian educators. We communicated with PC(USA) seminaries and

leaders to encourage the use of inclusive and expansive language. We commissioned the Presbyterian Panel, in November 2007 (see [www.pcusa.org/research/panel](http://www.pcusa.org/research/panel)), to gather information regarding the attitudes and assumptions toward women's leadership in the church. We also reviewed this data and concluded that an extensive study on women in the church would be beneficial to our work of advocating for justice within the church. The study will benefit the whole church as it will set a baseline for comparisons, reveal where women are and are not in the structures and measure the quality of their participation at all levels of the church. A portion of this work may be accomplished in approving the joint resolution from ACSWP and ACWC for a study of pay equity within the PC(USA). This comes in response to the referred action of the 200th General Assembly (1999).

b. *Rural/Urban Affairs*

The Rural and Urban Affairs work group is charged with monitoring Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policies and work regarding immigration/detention, homelessness, hurricane/disaster relief, trafficking in persons, globalization, and gender-based violence. The work group followed up on work assigned to it by ACWC, partners, and the 217th General Assembly (2006). A study of church policies and current realities regarding trafficking in women/adults led to the conclusion that the General Assembly must encourage congregations and presbyteries to engage in stronger outreach to and advocacy for trafficked persons. In partnership with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, the a/effects of globalization were examined while in the Yucatan of Mexico. A review of denominational policies on for-profit prisons and just immigration, as well as practices of for-profit detention centers and conversations and observations in Mexico resulted in the conviction that PC(USA) policy statements did not address serious concerns about immigrant detention practices in the United States. Two actions came out of this work: one expanding the concern and work against human trafficking and one seeking action regarding immigration detention in the United States.

c. *Health and Human Sexuality*

The Health and Human Sexuality Work Group has focused on emerging issues relating to women's health; access to medical care, pharmaceuticals and counseling (including availability, affordability, and accuracy); and gender and sexuality information, education, and equity. We have prepared for proposed overtures to General Assembly through an education program for ACWC members with the help of experienced educators and pastors. Recognizing the sexualization of women in culture and in the conversations of the church about reproductive health, the work continues.

d. *Women of Color Consultation Task Force and Joint Working Group*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) recommended the creation of a task force on the Women of Color Consultation. Made up of seven persons, this task force was launched in October 2006, completing its work and reporting to the 218th General Assembly (2008) in a separate report. Constituted jointly by ACWC and ACREC, in consultation with Presbyterian Women and the National Cross Caucus, the task force studied the recommendations, which came from the Women of Color Consultation in 2004. In addition to analyzing and determining what progress had been made, the task force designed and recommended a mechanism for monitoring future progress by the denomination. The task force modeled cultural proficiency and antiracism models in its work together. The joint working group for ACWC and ACREC continues to review this work and looks forward to implementing and monitoring their suggested actions.

e. *Communications Subcommittee*

A subcommittee on communications was also established by ACWC shortly after the 217th General Assembly (2006) in response to the review. The ACWC Website has been separated from the women's advocacy Website for clarity and easier access and has been redesigned. A new logo was commissioned and an informational brochure will be ready for the 218th General Assembly (2008).

5. *Actions of the Committee for Consideration of the 218th General Assembly (2008)*

- *Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the United States*
- *Resolution to Expand the Church's Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking*
- *Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA)*

6. *Other Actions*

- *God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation*, jointly submitted with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

### 7. *Appreciation*

The Reverend Molly Casteel became associate for Women's Advocacy and staff for ACWC in September 2005. With her arrival, and the continuing administrative support of Leigh Harper, senior administrative assistant, ACWC has functioned well with a large portfolio of work. The co-chairs and committee express their sincere and deepest appreciation.

—Report Submitted by the Reverend Sarah Colwill, F. William (Bill) Gray, and Jerri Rodewald, co-chairs, Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.

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## C. *General Assembly Committee on Representation Agency Summary*

### 1. *Assigned Responsibilities*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR), in its constitutional mandate, shall advise, advocate, resource, review, recommend, and consult with the General Assembly committees, councils, and Ministries Divisions in order to ensure that the principles of inclusiveness are implemented. Its main function shall be to advise the governing bodies with respect to their membership and to that of their committees, boards, agencies, and other units in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church. The committee shall advise the General Assembly on the employment of personnel in conformity with the Churchwide Plan for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity.

### 2. *Accomplishments*

The GACOR has the responsibility to assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to realize that it needs its diverse membership to participate fully in leadership and that their contribution is important and must be sought out and acknowledged.

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a recommendation that permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees and commissions of the General Assembly would be reviewed to evaluate their work to fulfill the mandates given to them by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) based on a six-year schedule. The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) was reviewed at the 217th General Assembly (2006). The GACOR established a Self-Study Task Group to evaluate the work of the committee over the previous six years. The task group established a process for self-evaluation, reviewed materials and statistics, and presented its results to the Assembly Committee for Review at the 217th General Assembly (2006) meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. Following a favorable review by the assembly committee, the 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the self-study report with the following commendations:

— We commend the GACOR for excellence in its work. The commitment of GACOR to inclusiveness and fairness is admirable.

—We commend the GACOR for its active role in the face of changing national demographics as the GACOR leads the PC(USA) in embracing the emerging multicultural facets of this church.

Orientation for new members on GACOR has continued to be provided by members and staff of GACOR in conjunction with executive committee meetings held at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Kentucky, so that new members can rapidly familiarize themselves with the workings of the committee.

Training for GACOR members was accomplished during 2006/2007 meetings by inviting speakers to full committee meetings. The Reverend Belinda Curry, associate for Policy Development and Interpretation for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy; the Reverend Gradye Parsons, director of Operations, Office of the General Assembly, and the Reverend Robina Winbush, director of the Department of Ecumenical and Agency Relations, Office of the General Assembly, were guest speakers at committee meetings, and their presentations were educational and informative. The GACOR Manager Joan E. Richardson provided training for members on "Cultural Proficiency." A presentation entitled, "Change Management," was given by GACOR member Angelica Michail to help members adjust to the many changes taking place in their churches and communities.

As part of its efforts to reach out and promote equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, GACOR has continued to circulate and publicize job postings in order to reach out to a more inclusive pool and has continued to assign GACOR members to serve as liaisons to, and attend meetings and conferences of, racial ethnic caucuses and councils and Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC).

Over a two-year period, the GACOR Program Subcommittee evaluated COR reports from fifteen synods, which is an indication of the increased interest and concern at the synod level for the committee on representation (COR). Several presbyteries have indicated a renewed interest in reviving the work of committee on representation in their presbyteries. There are a few instances where synods still need to pay closer attention to their makeup, but on a whole there is improvement in many areas across the church. The Synod of Rocky Mountains did not submit a report to GACOR.

Many synod CORs have increased their interface with their respective presbyteries by sponsoring training sessions and heightened representation. There seems to be an increase of synods COR representation on synod nominating committees. There have been increased requests for instructional materials for their presbyteries to enhance their revitalization of the work of COR.

The Planning and Strategy Subcommittee is looking at ways in which it can strengthen communication with presbytery/synod staff as how best the COR can assist them as they look at issues of diversity, inclusiveness and representation.

A special subcommittee reviewed the first and the final draft of the Form of Government Task Force Report and felt that the language regarding issues of diversity and inclusiveness was not strong enough and therefore they sent in a comment. While the proposed Foundational Principles allow for more flexibility in presbyteries, GACOR feels that church's commitment to diversity, inclusiveness, representation, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action is diminished in the new wording and lack of a definitive structure.

It is through training, worship, strategies, study, and sharing that the GACOR equips and challenges synod CORs to achieve, accomplish, realize, endorse, and preserve the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to inclusiveness and diversity in their synods and presbyteries.

The GACOR's Training Subcommittee provides both training and developmental opportunities for GACOR members and synod CORs. In October 2007, GACOR sponsored a biennial training event for synod COR staff and chairpersons in Daytona Beach, Florida. Forty-four people attended and fourteen synods were represented. The theme of the training was "Finding The Ore in COR," and the purpose of the workshop was to equip and challenge synod CORs to achieve diversity and inclusiveness in their synods and presbyteries. Leadership included:

- The Reverend A. Vanessa Hawkins, Associate for Black Congregational Enhancement, General Assembly Council, worship leader for the workshop.
- Elder Robert Wilson, Vice Moderator, 217th General Assembly (2006), keynote speaker.
- Workshops on disability and youth/young adult concerns lifted up the challenges and experiences faced by persons living with disabilities and young adults.
- A presentation by Elder Elona Street-Stewart, member of the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), highlighted the nominating process and the need for CORs and nominating committees to work together.

An examination of the evaluation forms from the training event revealed that all participants received familiar information from a new perspective. Many commented that the training provided new ways to work with synod and presbytery CORs.

The Program Subcommittee received requests to make the synod annual report form more user friendly on the PC(USA) Website for down loading. Efforts are still underway that hopefully will enable respondents to enter data directly on the Web. The form is also available in Microsoft Word that can be e-mailed to synods upon request.

The Synod of the Northeast held a COR training event entitled, "There Is No They." It was very fruitful to learn what COR is and what our responsibilities are as a result of the COR training session. The GACOR Manager Joan E. Richardson participated in the training, and the following topics were covered:

- Biblical base for the work of COR
- Unpacking committee responsibilities
- Building relationships between COR and nominating committees
- Activating inactive committees
- Doing COR work in a new way

The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii presented “Everything You Wanted to Know About COR ... To Do COR Work.” All but one of the eight presbyteries in the synod was represented. Angelica Michail spoke on the work of GACOR and explained the brochure, “How to Start or Revive Presbytery CORs.” The GACOR bookmarks, toolboxes, and various brochures were distributed. The retreat was a wonderful venue for training and establishing better communication between synod and presbytery COR members.

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies Nominating Committee and the Committee on Representation (COR) have met in joint sessions. This is an excellent opportunity for COR to see firsthand the processes, challenges, and outcomes of the work that is done by the nominating committee. It also is a great opportunity for the nominating committee to hear observations, comments, and suggestions from COR members. Topics of interest to both committees were discussed:

- For recruitment for positions in presbyteries, synods, General Assembly—what criteria, expertise is needed?
- What is the role of synod COR and nominating committee in recruitment, training, and modeling effective work?
- What is/should be our relationship with presbytery counterparts, General Assembly, and each other?

Synods of Mid-Atlantic, Trinity, and Lincoln Trails had COR meetings and training events also. The GACOR Manager Joan E. Richardson participated in the meetings and shared training materials and resources.

### 3. *Membership*

The GACOR’s commitment to inclusiveness is reflected in the diversity of its membership from the sixteen synods as follows:

Alaska-Northwest, Alma-jean Marion, African American (\*SA)  
 Covenant, Linda J. Burger, White (SA) (D)  
 Lakes and Prairies, Cindy Ray, White (A) (D)  
 Lincoln Trails, M. Coleman Gilchrist, African American (A)  
 Living Waters, John A.T. Gulden, White (YA)  
 Mid-America, William W. Gardner, White (SA)  
 Mid-Atlantic, Roy Knight, African American (SA)  
 Northeast, Yung Suk Park, Korean (A)  
 Pacific, Megan D. Acedo, White (Y)  
 Puerto Rico, Efrain Rivera-Vega, Hispanic (A)  
 Rocky Mountains, Alda Bighorn, Native American (A)  
 South Atlantic, Marinda Harris, African American (A)  
 Southern California and Hawaii, Angelica Michail, Asian (SA)  
 Southwest, Glenn Bezuyen, White (A)  
 Sun, Carol Tompkins, White (A)  
 Trinity, Stanley Bhasker, Asian ((A)

The moderator of GACOR is Stanley Bhasker; vice-moderator, Linda J. Burger; members of the executive committee and chairpersons of GACOR subcommittees are Megan Acedo, Glenn Bezuyen, and John A. T. Gulden.

\*Legend for age groups:

(Y) Youth (25 and under)  
 (YA) Young Adults (26–35)  
 (A) Adults (36–55)  
 (SA) Senior Adult (56+)  
 (D) Disability



## Item 10-01

[The assembly answered Item 10-01 by the action taken on Item 10-02. See pp. 58, 59.]

*On Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to Develop a New Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Policy for the Church—From the Presbytery of New Castle.*

The Presbytery of New Castle, recognizing that the HIV and AIDS pandemic is a critical matter of social justice, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to address the HIV and AIDS pandemic by directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), in consultation with appropriate PC(USA) staff, networks, and church partners, to develop a comprehensive HIV and AIDS policy for the PC(USA), recommending compassionate action and giving prophetic witness regarding issues related to people living with HIV and AIDS in the U.S.A. and around the world, and report that policy to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

### *Rationale*

For more than twenty years the Presbyterian General Assembly has spoken on issues regarding HIV and AIDS. Our resolutions, however, have not been matched with a denominational resolve to commit significant finances and programmatic resources for education, advocacy, prevention, treatment, and cure in the global struggle against HIV and AIDS.

Among our many resolutions and overtures in the twenty-six years of HIV and AIDS pandemic:

- We have confessed “That our own church’s response to AIDS has been tardy” (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 362, To Meet AIDS with Grace and Truth) and, noted the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) considers the AIDS/HIV crisis to be of utmost importance and urgency.”
- We have called the church to love, to compassionate care, to witness for justice, for the promotion of prevention, to deplore bigotry and intolerance. (206th General Assembly (1994), *Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 507)
- We have called the church to become advocates for persons living with HIV and AIDS...” (210th General Assembly (1998), *Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 690–91), and to become an advocate of God’s justice.

As we pass overtures, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is unrelenting:

- 39.5 million people are living with HIV worldwide, 95 percent in low- or middle-income countries;
- 2.9 million people died of AIDS during 2006—nearly 8,000 every day;
- 4.3 million people were newly infected with HIV in 2006—almost 12,000 every day;
- worldwide, less than 20 percent of people at risk of HIV infection have access to basic prevention services;
- at least 25 million people have died of AIDS since the disease was recognized in 1981.

A total of \$10 billion is expected to be available for AIDS funding in 2007—just 55 percent of the \$18.1 billion that will be needed to provide comprehensive prevention, treatment, and care worldwide (all figures from UNAIDS report, December 2006).

And the face of AIDS is changing, especially in the U.S.A., where:

- In 2004, African Americans accounted for 43 percent of all AIDS cases reported during the year, even though they make up just 12 percent of the population.
- AIDS is the number one cause of death for African Americans aged 25 to 44, before heart disease, cancer, and homicide (figures from Balm In Gilead or Kaiser Foundation).

The devastating pandemic of HIV/AIDS in the U.S.A. and around the world confronts the PC(USA) and the Church of Jesus Christ with an urgent challenge and a great opportunity to be both compassionate and prophetic as we live out our call to more fully realize the healing ministry of our Risen Lord. The PC(USA) needs a new comprehensive policy and programmatic emphasis.

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

Item 10-01 directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to develop a new comprehensive HIV and AIDS policy for the church.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that this item be approved.

*Rationale*

The rate of growth of HIV/AIDS numbers in racial ethnic communities is higher than in society at large, which makes them more vulnerable and susceptible. A successful policy needs to address this difference.

Racial ethnic communities have specific cultural needs when it comes to HIV/AIDS education and awareness.

Distinct strategies need to be developed for these communities.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)*

Item 10-01 urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to address the HIV and AIDS pandemic by directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), in consultation with appropriate PC(USA) staff, networks, and church partners, to develop a comprehensive HIV and AIDS policy for the PC(USA), recommending compassionate action and giving prophetic witness regarding issues related to people living with HIV and AIDS in the U.S.A. and around the world, and report that policy to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s advice and counsel and advises that Item 10-01 be answered by the action taken on Item 10-02.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

Item 10-01 from the Presbytery of New Castle calls on the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to develop a new comprehensive HIV and AIDS policy for the church.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 10-01 be answered by the action taken on Item 10-02.

*Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) notes that the concerns cited in Item 10-01 are similar to the concerns raised in Item 10-02. In Item 10-02, however, ACSWP notes that the rationale addresses the impact of HIV/AIDS on both the African American and Hispanic/Latino populations. Therefore, ACSWP advises that Item 10-01 be answered by the action taken on Item 10-02.

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**Item 10-02**

**[The assembly approved Item 10-02 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 58, 59.]**

*On Directing the General Assembly Council to Develop and Fund a Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Policy for the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of the Pacific.*

**The Presbytery of the Pacific, recognizing that the HIV and AIDS pandemic is a critical matter of our faith and God’s justice, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to address the HIV**

and AIDS pandemic by directing the [~~General Assembly Council (GAC), in consultation with~~] Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), [~~appropriate PC(USA)~~] [in consultation with appropriate General Assembly Council] staff, [PC(USA)] networks, and church partners, to develop and fully fund a comprehensive [study on] HIV and AIDS [~~policy~~] for the PC(USA), recommending compassionate action and giving prophetic witness regarding issues related to people living with HIV and AIDS in the U.S.A. and around the world, and report [~~that policy~~] to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

**Comment:** That those appointed to this study represent a broad range of folks theologically, since policies might be formed from this study.

### *Rationale*

For more than twenty years, the Presbyterian General Assembly has spoken on issues regarding the global struggle to confront the scourge of HIV/AIDS. However, our resolutions have not been matched with a denominational resolve to commit significant finances and programmatic resources for these ministries of compassion and advocacy. Our congregations and middle governing bodies need to be more fully equipped with HIV/AIDS-related resources, which include: education, prevention, compassion, advocacy for greater access to treatment, and increased investment in the research and development searching for a cure for HIV/AIDS.

Among our many resolutions and overtures in the twenty-six years of HIV and AIDS pandemic:

- We have confessed “That our own church’s response to AIDS has been tardy”, and, “noted the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) considers the AIDS/HIV crisis to be of utmost importance and urgency...” (To Meet AIDS with Grace and Truth, adopted by the 200<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, 1988)
- We have called the church to love, to compassionate care, to witness for justice, for the promotion of prevention, to deplore bigotry and intolerance (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 575).
- We have called the church to “become advocates for persons living with HIV and AIDS...” (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 691).

As we pass overtures, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is unrelenting:

- 39.5 million people are living with HIV worldwide, 95 percent in low- or middle-income countries.
- 2.9 million people died of AIDS during 2006—nearly 8,000 every day.
- 4.3 million people were newly infected with HIV in 2006—almost 12,000 every day.
- Worldwide, less than 20 percent of people at risk of HIV infection have access to basic prevention services.
- At least 25 million people have died of AIDS since the disease was recognized in 1981.
- A total of \$10 billion is expected to be available for AIDS funding in 2007—just 55 percent of the \$18.1 billion that will be needed to provide comprehensive prevention, treatment, and care worldwide (all figures from UNAIDS report, December 2006).

And the face of AIDS is changing, especially in the U.S.A., where:

- In 2004, African Americans accounted for 43 percent of all AIDS cases reported during the year, even though they make up just 12 percent of the population.
- AIDS is the number one cause of death for African Americans aged 25 to 44, before heart disease, cancer, and homicide (figures from Balm In Gilead or Kaiser Foundation).
- By the end of 2005, an estimated 77,125 Hispanics/Latinos with AIDS had died. <http://www.thebody.com/content/whatis/art17101.html - 2>
- The rate of HIV diagnosis among Hispanics/Latinos remains disproportionately high; in 2005, the annual rate of HIV diagnosis for Hispanics was three times that for non-Hispanic whites.

The devastating pandemic of HIV/AIDS in the U.S.A. and around the world confronts the PC(USA) and the Church of Jesus Christ with an urgent challenge and a great opportunity to be both compassionate and prophetic as we live out our call

to more fully realize the healing ministry of our Risen Lord. The PC(USA) needs a new comprehensive policy and programmatic emphasis.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-02

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 10-02 on directing the General Assembly to develop and fund a comprehensive HIV and AIDS policy for the PC(USA).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s advice and counsel.

We recommend our report, *Women and AIDS: A Global Crisis*, approved by the 213th General Assembly (2001), for consideration by the study group.

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### ACSWP ADVISE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-02

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 10-01, from the Presbytery of New Castle and Item 10-02, from the Presbytery of the Pacific, both call upon the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve a new comprehensive HIV and AIDS policy for the church.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) notes that the concerns cited in Item 10-01 are incorporated in Item 10-02, which includes a concern for occurrence of HIV/AIDS in the Latino community.

The ACSWP advises that the General Assembly approve Item 10-02 with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of the Pacific recognizing that the HIV and AIDS pandemic is a critical matter of our faith and God’s justice, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to address the HIV and AIDS pandemic by directing the [~~General Assembly Council (GAC), in consultation with~~] Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), [~~appropriate PC(USA)~~] [in consultation with appropriate General Assembly Council] staff, [PC(USA)] networks, and church partners, to develop and fully fund a comprehensive [study on] HIV and AIDS [~~policy~~] for the PC(USA), recommending compassionate action and giving prophetic witness regarding issues related to people living with HIV and AIDS in the U.S.A. and around the world, and report [~~that policy~~] to the 219th General Assembly (2010).”

### *Rationale*

For more than twenty years, the Presbyterian General Assembly has spoken on issues regarding the global struggle to confront the scourge of HIV/AIDS. However, our resolutions have not been matched with a denominational resolve to commit significant finances and programmatic resources for these ministries of compassion and advocacy. Our congregations and middle governing bodies need to be more fully equipped with HIV/AIDS related resources that include: education, prevention, compassion, advocacy for greater access to treatment, and increased investment in the research and development searching for a cure for HIV/AIDS.

While the General Assembly has repeatedly made short statements on HIV/AIDS, the need remains to take a comprehensive look at the issue in the context of its current face and the global pandemic. The study proposed would look at the key role of the church in domestic and international public policy, and consider the enduring issues of personal and collective responsibility, gender inequality, poverty, racism, and violence. Specifically, the study will examine questions of scientific research; contraceptive and prophylactic availability; access to adequate, preventative medical care; public health and epidemiology; homophobia; and the impact of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Although the church’s overall financial contribution is inevitably strategic and limited, the voice and analysis of the church is influential. Another part of the proposed study would look at the strategies already reflected in Presbyterian humanitarian assistance and consider the impacts of various potential aid, education and advocacy projects within the global campaign to eradicate this insidious disease.

Among our short resolutions and overtures in the twenty-six years of HIV and AIDS pandemic:

- We have confessed “that our own church’s response to AIDS has been tardy,” and, “noted the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) considers the AIDS/HIV crisis to be of utmost importance and urgency...” [*To Meet AIDS with Grace and Truth*, adopted by the 200th General Assembly (1988)].
- We have called the church to love, to compassionate care, to witness for justice, for the promotion of prevention, to deplore bigotry and intolerance [206th General Assembly (1994), *Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 575].
- “Urge[d] all entities of the church to pray for families, communities, and nations suffering from the epidemic; [and] consider[ed] generating funds for Extra Commitment Opportunities established to address the global AIDS epidemic and all funding entities to consider making AIDS a priority concern” [Recommendations 2.a. and b., *Women and AIDS: A Global Crisis*, 213th General Assembly (2001), *Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 335].
- We have called the church to become advocates for persons living with HIV and AIDS [210th General Assembly (1998), *Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 691], and to become an advocate of God’s justice (215th General Assembly (2003)].

Despite our statements and those of others, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is unrelenting: [Note: The statistics in this overture are cited from the 2006 AIDS epidemic update, published by UNAIDS and the World Health Organization. The changes noted below are from the more recent 2007 report, released in November 2007. Further, the decrease in numbers results from a change in the methodological approach to gathering data, which more accurately represents the problem, but does not necessarily reflect improvement.]

- ~~39.5~~ 33.2 million people are living with HIV worldwide, 95 percent in low or middle income countries.
- ~~2.9~~ 2.1 million people died of AIDS during ~~2006~~ 2007—nearly ~~8,000~~ 5,700 every day.
- ~~4.3~~ 2.5 million people were newly infected with HIV in ~~2006~~ 2007—almost ~~12,000~~ 6,800 every day.
- 15.4 million women were living with HIV in 2007, a 1.6 million increase from 2001. In sub-Saharan Africa, almost 61% of adults living with HIV in 2007 were women and the proportion of women living with HIV in the world is growing.
- Globally, the number of children living with HIV increased from 1.5 million in 2001 to 2.5 million in 2007, but the number of new infections declined.
- Worldwide, less than 20 percent of people at risk of HIV infection have access to basic prevention services.
- At least 25 million people have died of AIDS since the disease was recognized in 1981.
- A total of \$10 billion is expected to be available for AIDS funding in 2007—just 55% of the \$18.1 billion that will be needed to provide comprehensive prevention, treatment, and care worldwide. (all figures from UNAIDS report, ~~December 2006~~ November 2007)

And the face of AIDS is changing, especially in the U.S.A., where:

- A total of 1.4 million adults and children in North America are living with HIV.
- ~~In 2004,~~ According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), African Americans accounted for ~~43~~ 49 percent of all AIDS cases reported during the year, even though they make up just ~~12~~ 13 percent of the population.
- AIDS is the number one cause of death for African Americans aged 25 to 44, before heart disease, cancer, and homicide (figures from Balm In Gilead or Kaiser Foundation).
- By the end of ~~2005~~ 2006, an estimated ~~77,125~~ 80,690 Hispanics/Latinos with AIDS had died. <http://www.thebody.com/content/whatis/art17101.html - 2>
- The rate of HIV diagnosis among Hispanics/Latinos remains disproportionately high; in 2005, the annual rate of HIV diagnosis for Hispanics was three times that for non-Hispanic whites. (U.S. figures are cited from the CDC unless otherwise noted.)

Many Presbyterians and entities of the General Assembly are engaged in HIV/AIDS ministries.

- PHEWA network, Presbyterians for AIDS Network (PAN), is planning a presbytery consultation on HIV/AIDS ministry at Columbia Seminary, scheduled for October, 2008. The hope is that this event will produce a “best practices” resource for those carrying out HIV/AIDS ministries and those seeking to start such ministries.
- International AIDS Ministries of the World Mission Ministry Area.
- National Health Ministries of the Compassion, Peace, and Justice ministry area.
- Peacemaking Program encourages congregations and governing bodies to use their share of the Peacemaking offering to support ministries in response to AIDS.
- Peacemaking Program, International AIDS Ministries, and PAN sponsored a travel study seminar on HIV/AIDS to South Africa and Malawi in February 2008.
- The Presbyterian Washington Office has advocated on issues of access to comprehensive health care, funding for the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), increased international assistance for relief of poverty diseases including HIV/AIDS, and access to affordable medication.

The denomination remains committed to these ministries.

The devastating pandemic of HIV/AIDS in the USA and around the world confronts the PC(USA) and the Church of Jesus Christ with an urgent challenge and a great opportunity to be both compassionate and prophetic as we live out our call to more fully realize the healing ministry of our Risen Lord. The PC (USA) needs a new comprehensive policy and programmatic emphasis.

## **Item 10-03**

**[In response to Item 10-03, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 58, 59.]**

*On Directing PC(USA) Entities to Reflect Balance in Advocating Both Sides of the Abortion Issue—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.*

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct all PC(USA) entities in both funding and in publications to reflect balance and equality in advocating both sides of the abortion issue so that any advocacy is in full compliance with our 1992 Abortion Policy. Therefore, we direct our national offices to uphold this policy in any and all of their communications with both church and society.

### **Alternate Resolution Approved**

**In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:**

**The 218th General Assembly (2008) directs the appropriate PC(USA) entities to redevelop congregational resource materials, on the subject of reproductive options, to more adequately reflect the full spectrum of biblical, theological, and pastoral counsel, while remaining consistent with the policy of the 1992 report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion and the 2006 policy on Late-Term Pregnancies and Abortion. The General Assembly Council will report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

**[Financial Implications: (2008): \$8,378; (2009): \$65,437; (2010): \$32,686 (Mission)]**

### *Rationale*

The 1992 Abortion Policy states that “we as Presbyterians hold both Position A (“pro-life”) and Position B (“pro-choice”) positions.”

Recommendation III.B. (page 16) states “We recommend that future publications of the denomination and its ministry units reflect the diversity of positions about problem pregnancies and abortion found herein.”

Recommendation III.D. then states “We recommend that the General Assembly acknowledge the prerogative of Presbyterian entities to participate in ecumenical and interfaith organizations that represent different points of view concerning abor-

tion. We also urge the General Assembly Council and the presbyteries to affirm procedures by which particular churches may be assured that their mission funds will not be used in violation of conscience on this issue.”

However, the only groups that receive funding or produce material or advocate on behalf of the PC(USA) are Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Choice (PARO), the Washington Office, Women’s Ministries, and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP). All of these organizations produce material and advocate specifically and diligently *only* for the “pro-choice” position.

Thus, not only do publications not reflect Position A found in the 1992 Policy (but only Position B), but in addition the Washington Office, ACSWP, and Women’s Ministries are funded with undesignated funds, thus violating the call to see that churches be assured that their mission funds not be used in violation of their conscience on this issue.

There is currently no organization advocating a pro-life position that is funded by the PC(USA). This one-sidedness is not in compliance with our 1992 Abortion Policy, thus violating the 1992 policy’s call for the ecumenical and interfaith organizations to “represent different points of view concerning abortion.” While Presbyterian entities have joined and pay dues to RCRC, an entity that supports all abortions, no entity funded by the PC(USA) has joined or pays dues to the National Pro-Life Religious Council. (Presbyterians Pro-Life is totally funded by the contributions of individuals and some individual Presbyterian churches but is not funded by undesignated PC(USA) mission funds and is not part of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) or any other PC(USA) entity).

If the PC(USA) cannot comply with the 1992 policy and be equitable and even handed in its funding, advocacy, and published materials, then funding in support of any one side of this critical issue should cease immediately. This fairness would then be in compliance with the 1992 Abortion Policy and would affirm the policy’s statement that the church provide for freedom and exercise of conscience on this matter that so clearly divides us.

Examples for consideration by sessions and presbyteries:

- The Washington Office has advocated to Congress on behalf of the PC(USA) in support of all abortions, including late-term abortions.
- The PC(USA) is a member of Religious Coalition of Reproductive Choice (RCRC). We support them with non-designated money. None of their literature or advocacies reflects the current 1992 Abortion Policy, including their 2006 late-term abortion statement.
- The PC(USA) is a member of Clergy for Choice.
- The PC(USA) is a member of Progressive Religious Partnership.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 10-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 10-03, from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, and Item 10-04, from the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler, both overture the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct all entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to advocate both sides of the abortion issue equally in both funding and publications.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that these overtures be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

1. Items 10-03 and 10-04 are correct in their understanding that the 1992 policy adopted by the 204th General Assembly (1992), *Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion* (Minutes, 1992, Part I, pp. 357ff), respects the individual consciences of Presbyterians by acknowledging

a. the diversity of views that exists among Presbyterians with regard to the many complex issues involved in problem pregnancies and abortion. In fact, the first area of substantial agreement listed in the policy states:

a. The church ought to be able to maintain within its fellowship those who, on the basis of a study of Scripture and prayerful decision, come to diverse conclusions and actions.” (Ibid, p. 368, Paragraph 27.089)

b. that Presbyterians may choose to participate in interfaith groups that “represent different points of view concerning abortion” (Ibid, p. 374, Paragraph 27.145).

c. that procedures should be established to assure that mission funds offered by particular churches will not be used in violation of their conscience on the issue of abortion.

2. However, this emphasis on the diversity of views within the PC(USA) is only one of many other “areas of substantial agreement” (Ibid, p. 367–68, Paragraph 27.087, #1) reached by a “sizable majority of the special committee”—14 of 17 members—and approved by the 204th General Assembly (1992). The offices of the General Assembly must be faithful to these recommendations, many of which describe the social witness of the PC(USA) with regard to public policy on abortion. These offices include the Washington Office, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), Women’s Ministries, and Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options (PARO), which is a ministry of PHEWA and an entity of the Compassion, Peace, and Justice ministry area. Presbyterian Panel surveys of member opinion have shown that varying majorities of Presbyterians support abortion depending on the situation.

With regard to the decision to terminate a pregnancy, the 1992 policy includes the following affirmations that protect the decision-making responsibility of women and their families in both pastoral care and public policy. These particular points are selected to illustrate the public policy position taken by the General Assembly:

a. “Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and insolvable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to ... decide each situation” (Ibid, p. 368, Paragraph 27.090).

b. “We affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, ... to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies” (Ibid, Paragraph 27.091)

c. “We do not wish to see laws enacted that would attach criminal penalties to those who seek abortions or to appropriately qualified and licensed persons who perform abortions in medically approved facilities” (Ibid, Paragraph 27.097).

d. “... no law should deny access to safe and affordable services for the persons seeking to terminate a problem pregnancy” (Ibid, p. 372, Paragraph 27.129).

e. “No law or administrative decision should (1) limit access to abortions; (2) limit information and counseling concerning abortions; or (3) limit or prohibit public funding for necessary abortions for the socially and economically disadvantaged” (Ibid, Paragraph 27.131).

3. Therefore, the Washington Office, and the other offices of the General Assembly, are mandated to represent these policies of the PC(USA) in their work and communications. There is no “other side” to these policy statements.

4. The concern that the resources on problem pregnancies and abortion produced by the General Assembly Council ministries are one-sided, representing only “position B” misrepresents the content of the policy that does not divide itself into two opposing and mutually exclusive positions or use the terms “pro-life” and “pro-choice.” In the discussion of Position A and Position B the policy states:

... What follows are two different approaches as to *the biblical material* that is seen as central to this issue. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive, nor are they the only approaches (Ibid, p. 366, Paragraph 27.074) [Italics added to emphasize that the topic of Position A and Position B is biblical interpretation, not policy recommendations.]

5. Because the 1992 policy states that

Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and insolvable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to ... decide each situation. (Ibid, p. 368, Paragraph 27.090)

Resources for the pastoral care of those facing such circumstances present the full range of faithful responses to a variety of issues facing women and their families during a problem pregnancy. Such publications include *Nurturing the Children of God: The Call to Foster Parenting and Adoption, When No Choice Is Easy*, and *There’s Always a Father—Does the Father Have a Problem, Too?* For example, the brochure *When No Choice Is Easy* discusses having and keeping the baby, giving the infant up for adoption, and whether abortion would be a moral choice. These publications can be accessed on the PARO Website. (<http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/paro.htm>)

6. In addition, other General Assembly resources that do not specifically mention problem pregnancies or address the issue of abortion nonetheless respond to the directive of the 1992 policy regarding “public policy initiatives and suggestions for the life of the church” that might serve to “reduce the numbers of unintended pregnancies and the numbers of women who choose abortion” (Ibid, pp. 369–70, Paragraph 27.108). These initiatives and suggestions include addressing economic reali-



ties, pornography, access to effective contraception, the promotion of healthy family life, and many others (Ibid, pp. 370–73, Paragraphs 27.109–134). Some of these concerns have been addressed in such publications as *Transforming Families*, and *God’s Work in Our Hands*. The ACSWP reports before the 218th General Assembly (2008) concerning homelessness, pay equity for women, serious mental illness, and a new social creed address economic concerns that can cause women to consider abortion.

7. Finally, the PC(USA) is a member only of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, but provides no financial support to it. This membership is appropriate because the RCRC literature is consistent with the PC(USA)’s 1992 policy of respect for women’s capacity “to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies” (Ibid, p. 368, Paragraph 27.091) and for public policies that protect women’s access to legal abortion. The RCRC literature quotes PC(USA) policy, as well as the policies of other denominations, and includes the following disclaimer: “Coalition membership does not require or imply conformity to all the actions and initiatives of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.”

It would be inappropriate for the PC(USA) to join or financially support organizations that oppose the policy of the PC(USA) concerning the protection of women’s full range of reproductive options and the public policies that assure the availability of that range. Individual Presbyterians, of course, may choose to do so.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 10-03 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct all PC(USA) entities to reflect balance and equality in both funding and publications when advocating both sides of the abortion issue. This action is requested in order to be in full compliance with the church’s 1992 policy on abortion. It also directs national church offices to uphold this policy in all communications with church and society.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

This item mischaracterizes the policy and recommendations of the 1992 report, *Problem Pregnancies and Abortion*, and the work related to these issues by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

1. The 1992 policy is introduced with a recognition that theological and political differences coexist in the PC(USA):

Clearly there is both agreement and disagreement in our use and interpretation of Scripture. There is also agreement and disagreement on the basic issue of abortion. (*Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion*, 204th General Assembly (1992) *Minutes*, 1992, Part I, paragraph 27.086)

However, it moves from this acknowledgement to a listing of areas in which there is substantial agreement on the issue of abortion. In developing policy to be considered by the 204th General Assembly (1992), a majority of the special committee assigned to complete this study spoke about their own (“our”) agreement and disagreement. When the 1992 General Assembly adopted this report, the policy began to speak for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a whole. Within our denomination we do have differences theologically and politically on the issue of abortion. Two scriptural approaches are described as Position A and Position B in the narrative of the report. Every General Assembly since 1992 has upheld the policy of this report. Although we live with disagreements, the PC(USA) continues to be a denomination that finds “substantial agreement” on the areas that make up Presbyterian policy on the issue of abortion.

2. One of the most significant areas of Presbyterian policy addresses women’s decision-making in circumstances of problem pregnancy and abortion. There is “substantial agreement” in the 1992 policy that:

e. The considered decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy can be a morally acceptable, though certainly not the only or required, decision. (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, paragraph 27.093)

This statement is at the heart of the “pro- and anti-choice” debate. Presbyterian policy recognizes that not all Presbyterians agree, and yet, since 1992, General Assemblies have concluded that Presbyterians continue to “affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, in the context of their communities of faith, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies” (Ibid, paragraph 27.091). While abortion under any circumstances is never to be required, Presbyterians understand that there are situations in which abortion may be a “morally acceptable” decision. This is what it means to be “pro-choice.” To advocate on behalf of women’s moral agency and right to make moral decisions regarding abortion is to abide by Presbyterian policy.

3. This overture suggests that if Presbyterian entities are engaged in any kind of “pro-choice” activity, they also need to advocate “anti-choice” or “pro-life” positions as well. However, this either/or approach does not comply with the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). While the extremes of the spectrum share a careful regard for life as a gift of God, each weighs the adult and “potential life” differently. The policy recognizes that Presbyterians disagree on the issue of abortion, but there is not substantial agreement that we are both a pro-life and a pro-choice church. “Pro-life” members would not substantially agree that women’s abortion decisions can be morally acceptable; however, “pro-choice” members can agree that there is room for people to support or reject abortion as a moral alternative. Therefore, current Presbyterian policy is moderately pro-choice, acknowledging that we “hold varying points of view about when human life begins” (Ibid, paragraph 27.102) and our church “does not advocate abortion but instead acknowledges circumstances in a sinful world that may make abortion the least objectionable of difficult options” (Ibid, paragraph 27.102A).

4. This overture accuses PC(USA) entities, commonly responsible for the interpretation of General Assembly policy with regard to programming, of having only represented one side of the debate. The policy is inclusive of many differences. The only position that it excludes is one that does not allow for women’s moral agency (commonly referred to as the pro-life position). The overture contends that the Presbyterian Washington Office, Racial Ethnic, and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options (PARO) are supported by the church and not individual contributions. This is true for all mentioned but PARO who is largely supported by individual contributions.

Presbyterians Pro-Life (PPL) is not like these denominational entities of PC(USA) and it is not an appropriate comparison. The PPL is an independent organization with no line of authority or accountability to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The PC(USA) entities listed operate according to the policy of the PC(USA). Their work is monitored and reported to General Assembly (last in 2006) and has been deemed to be completely consistent with Presbyterian policy.

5. This overture suggests that entities of the PC(USA) are not in compliance with Recommendation III.B. of the 1992 policy, which recommends that publications reflect the diversity of positions about problem pregnancies and abortion. This simply is not true. Many resources have been published since 1992 on issues related to abortion, some of which include: four brochures (*When No Choice Is Easy*; *When You Need the Wisdom of Solomon*; *There’s Always a Father*; and *When Pregnancy Involves Loss*); *Nurturing the Children of God: The Call to Foster Parenting and Adoption*; and *Life Abundant: Values, Choices, and Health Care*. All of these resources convey the complexity of problem pregnancy decisions and the diversity of opinion that Presbyterians hold on how various options should be considered.

6. This overture contends that the 1992 policy is violated when PC(USA) entities partner with ecumenical and interfaith organizations such as the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC), Clergy for Choice, and the Progressive Religious Partnership. Recommendation III.D. of the 1992 report acknowledges “the prerogative of Presbyterian entities to participate in ecumenical and interfaith organizations that represent different points of view concerning abortion”(Ibid., paragraph 27.145). Pro-choice organizations recognize a wide diversity of opinion on the issue of abortion, while maintaining—as does Presbyterian policy—that the considered decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy can be morally acceptable. The PC(USA) is not a member of Clergy for Choice or the Progressive Religious Partnership. Its membership in RCRC involves no financial support for the organization.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is empowered by the PC(USA) to advocate on behalf of women and women’s issues. In advocating for the right of women to make moral decisions regarding problem pregnancies, ACWC stands with other entities in the PC(USA) who are working to uphold Presbyterian policy on abortion. This overture seeks to direct national offices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to uphold the 1992 policy on abortion in all of its communications. This is already the case and is monitored and reported on regularly. The ACWC advises that Item 10-03 be disapproved.

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#### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 10-03

*Comment on Item 10-03—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council recognizes that abortion is a highly sensitive issue that needs to be approached with prayerful consideration. The General Assembly has acknowledged that within our church there is a wide range of deeply held convictions about the matter. The 204th General Assembly (1992) reflected this diversity of opinion, in its adoption of the report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion.

Clearly there is both agreement and disagreement in our use and interpretation of Scripture. There is also agreement and disagreement on the basic issue of abortion. The committee agreed that there are no biblical texts that speak expressly to the topic of abortion, but that taken in their totality the Holy Scriptures are filled with messages that advocate respect for the woman and child before and after birth. Therefore the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) encourages an atmosphere of open de-

bate and mutual respect for a variety of opinions concerning the issues related to problem pregnancies and abortion (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, pp. 367–68, 372–74).

Consequently, as the policies of the General Assembly regarding abortion and related issues have developed, they do not fit neatly into the frequently used forced-choice between “pro-life” and “pro-choice.” There are several points in the rationale of this overture that need to be clarified to accurately reflect General Assembly Council’s role as it fulfills the directives of this policy. The overture expresses concern that General Assembly Council ministries “produce material and advocate specifically and diligently only for the ‘pro-choice’ position.” This concern is not accurate. The 217th General Assembly (2006) affirmed the monitoring report from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), which reviews the implementation of problem pregnancies and abortion policies. General Assembly Council ministries preparing resources on problem pregnancies and abortion strive to reflect a diversity of opinion in the resources that are produced. Resources prepared by ministries of the General Assembly Council cover the range of faithful responses in these difficult situations. Examples include: *Problem Pregnancy: When No Choice Is Easy, There’s Always a Father—Does the Father Have a Problem, Too?*, *When Pregnancy Involves Loss, When You Need the Wisdom of Solomon—Helping Others Face Problem Pregnancies*, *Life Abundant: Values, Choices and Health Care*, and *Nurturing the Children of God: The Call to Foster Parenting and Adoption*.

One concern raised in the overture is about the role of the Presbyterian Washington Office as it reflects General Assembly policy when legislation about abortion is before Congress or is deliberated upon in the Supreme Court. The Washington Office is mandated to express the policy of the General Assembly, and the General Assembly has been very clear on the issue of abortion legislation which states, “We do not wish to see laws enacted that would attach criminal penalties to those who seek abortions or to appropriately qualified and licensed persons who perform abortions in medically approved facilities” (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 368).

The overture also questions the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s membership in several organizations that do not, from the overture’s perspective, reflect the comprehensive nature of the denomination’s 1992 statement on abortion. As a matter of clarification, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not a member of Clergy for Choice and Progressive Religious Partnership, two organizations that were listed in the overture. The PC(USA) is a member of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) but does not provide any financial support to this organization. The RCRC literature, which cites Presbyterian policy, is in line with the 1992 policy statement. The Religious Coalition appends to all of its documents the following reminder: “Coalition membership does not require or imply conformity to all the actions and initiatives of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.”

The General Assembly Council mission and ministries continue to be guided by the 1992 policy on abortion and problem pregnancies and encourages the church to continue to approach this challenging issue with the atmosphere of “open debate and mutual respect” for a variety of opinions (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 374].

## Item 10-04

[The assembly answered Item 10-04 by the action taken on Item 10-03. See pp. 58, 59.]

*On Advocating and Funding Either Both Sides of the Abortion Issue or Neither—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.*

The Presbytery of Beaver-Butler overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to

1. Direct all PC(USA) entities, in both funding and in publications, to reflect balance and equality in advocating both sides of the abortion issue so that any advocacy is in full compliance with our 1992 abortion policy.
2. Direct the PC(USA) national offices to uphold the 1992 abortion policy in any and all funding allocations, and in all of their communications with both church and society; or to immediately cease funding in support of any one side of this critical issue. (Either of these actions would be in compliance with the 1992 Abortion Policy and would affirm the policy’s statement that the church provide for freedom and exercise of conscience on this matter which so clearly divides us.)

### *Rationale*

The 1992 Abortion Policy adopted by the General Assembly states that we as Presbyterians hold both Position A (“pro-life”) and Position B (“pro-choice”) positions. The 1992 General Assembly’s action included adoption of the following recommendations:

B. We recommend that future publications of the denomination and its ministry units reflect the diversity of positions about problem pregnancies and abortion found herein. ...

D. We recommend that the General Assembly acknowledge the prerogative of Presbyterian entities to participate in ecumenical and interfaith organizations that represent different points of view concerning abortion. We also urge the General Assembly Council and the presbyteries to affirm procedures by which particular churches may be assured that their mission funds will not be used in violation of conscience on this issue. (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, pp. 373–74)

However, the only groups that receive funding or produce material or advocate on behalf of the PC(USA) are Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Choice (PARO), the Washington Office, Women’s Ministries, and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP). All of these organizations produce material and advocate specifically and diligently *only* for the “pro-choice” position. The following examples are offered:

- The Washington Office has advocated to Congress on behalf of the PC (USA) in support of all abortions, including late-term abortions.
- The PC(USA) is a member of Religious Coalition of Reproductive Choice (RCRC). We support them with non-designated money. None of their literature or advocacies, including their 2006 late-term abortion statement, reflects the current 1992 abortion policy.

Thus not only do publications not reflect Position A found in the 1992 Policy (but only Position B), but in addition, the Washington Office, ACSWP, and Women’s Ministries are funded with undesignated funds. This violates the call to see that churches be assured that their mission funds not be used in violation of their conscience on this issue:

Currently, there is no organization funded by the PC(USA) at the denomination level that advocates a pro-life position. This one-sided advocacy is not in compliance with our 1992 abortion policy, thus violating the 1992 policy’s call for the ecumenical and interfaith organizations to “represent different points of view concerning abortion.” While Presbyterian entities have joined and pay dues to RCRC, an entity that supports all abortions, no entity funded by the PC(USA) has joined or pays dues to the National Pro-Life Religious Council.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the recommendations of Item 10-04 be answered by the action taken on Item 10-03.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 10-04 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct all PC(USA) entities to reflect balance and equality in both funding and publications when advocating both sides of the abortion issue. This action is requested in order to be in full compliance with the church’s 1992 policy on abortion.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises this item be disapproved and refers to its comment on Item 10-03.

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## §Item 10-05

[The assembly approved Item 10-05 with amendment. See pp. 58, 59.]

*Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

1. Commend the *Resolution on the Church and Serious Mental Illness* approved by the 200th General Assembly (1988) (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, pp. 443–46).

2. Approve the following recommendations related to “Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness”:

- a. Approve the policy statement and recommendations.
- b. Receive the background sections and appendixes.
- c. Approve the report as a whole for churchwide study and use.

d. Direct the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to publish the entire report “Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness” with appendixes and a related study/action guide; distribute it to the middle governing bodies and their resource centers, to sessions, and to libraries of the Presbyterian theological seminaries; and make additional copies available for sale to aid study and implementation efforts in the church.

e. Commend the members of the Task Force on Serious Mental Illness, the Synod Consultation on “Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness,” the staff of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), and the many individuals and groups who offered comments and suggestions in the development of this report on behalf of the whole church.

3. Approve the following definitions of (a) mental illness and (b) serious mental illness:

a. *Mental Illness* is a medical disorder characterized by disturbance in thought, mood, or behavior that causes distress or impairment of spiritual, interpersonal, behavioral, and emotional functioning. If left untreated, all mental illnesses are impairing.

b. *Serious Mental Illnesses* are severe and persistent medical disorders characterized by impairment in mood or behavior that cause distress and/or impairment in spiritual, interpersonal, and behavioral functioning. Salient examples are the disorders known as schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, and major depression. Characteristic symptoms of serious mental illness include hallucinations, delusions, disorganized thinking, extreme mood changes, overwhelming hopelessness and sadness, severely impaired perception, judgment, or insight, and problems with concentration and attention. Serious mental illness is an enduring condition that affects one’s ability to cope with everyday challenges. If left untreated all mental illnesses may impair one’s ability to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships, practice one’s faith, worship God, attend school, go to work, or live independently. All mental illnesses can be impairing.

4. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to send a letter commending the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC), the American Hospital Association (AHA), the American Nurses Association (ANA), the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the American Psychological Association (APA), and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for including spiritual assessment and religious history when designing care plans fully informed by cultural awareness.

5. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to send a letter encouraging the middle governing bodies, sessions, and individual members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and its ecumenical partners to give prayerful attention to this policy statement as a help in responding to serious mental illness in their families, congregations, and in the communities where they live, minister, and work.

6. Urge the presbyteries to do the following:

a. Provide educational opportunities for members to learn about treatment, counseling, ministry with people with serious mental illnesses, and how to address the stigma of serious mental illness in their congregations, particularly in regard to the experiences of children and youth, women and men, the elderly, and racial ethnic groups.

b. Provide training for pastors, staff, and lay care providers to help them develop appropriate identification and intervention strategies for persons at risk for suicide, especially teenagers, young adults, and the elderly.

c. Provide continuing education for pastors, staff, and lay care providers to train them to recognize and intervene when a person with a serious mental illness also abuses drugs, including alcohol.

d. Provide continuing education opportunities for pastors to help them learn how to support and advocate for families in crisis and to make appropriate treatment referrals.

e. Require mandatory continuing education credits for pastors on issues of pastoral care such as serious mental illness, addiction, domestic violence, child abuse, and other pertinent health-care issues.

f. Encourage pastors to become aware of the quality of services provided at local treatment facilities by consulting with administrators and care providers of those facilities, touring those facilities, and talking with people who receive such services.

g. Encourage pastors to preach sermons and provide Bible studies about serious mental illness.

h. Support the ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN), Presbyterians for Addiction and Action (PAA), and the Presbyterian Association of Specialized Pastoral Ministries (PASPM) of the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), and Pathways to Promise, and encourage pastors and local sessions to do the same.

i. Encourage pastors to learn about the resources of the Veterans Administration (VA), as well as educating them to the needs of veterans of all ages, genders, and ethnicity.

7. Urge committees on preparation for ministry (CPMs), in consultation with the Office of Vocation of the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), to do the following:

a. Educate themselves about serious mental illness in order to help discern the call of individuals under care with understanding and compassion. This discernment should include consideration as to whether this person can be effective in the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

b. Assist individuals under care to find resources and support for any serious mental health concerns.

c. ~~[If an inquirer or candidate does not pass ordination exams, explore alternative means for administering ordination exams among the range of tools for assessing readiness for ministry.]~~ [Explore alternative means for administering ordination exams among the range of tools for assessing readiness for ministry, if an inquirer or candidate does not pass ordination exams.]

d. Encourage uniform standards and a uniform process for the psychological evaluation of candidates for ministry.

e. Require candidates for ministry and commissioned lay pastors (CLPs) to have successfully completed at least one unit of accredited clinical pastoral education (CPE).

8. Encourage committees on ministry (COMs) to do the following:

a. Educate themselves for early identification of pastors who may have a serious mental illness.

b. Develop more effective early intervention strategies and follow-up in dealing with pastors, sessions, and congregations when serious mental illness may be involved.

9. Urge sessions and congregations to do the following:

a. Prominently display educational material regarding serious mental illness, such as location and times for local meeting of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)— support groups/family-to-family training).

b. Display pamphlets from national advocacy groups such as Pathways to Promise, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA), and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

c. Subscribe to newsletters or web-based information updates from agencies listed above and post in newsletter/bulletin boards.

d. Provide support and advocate for individuals and families affected by serious mental illness.

e. Provide meeting room space for support groups and guidance for prayer-based support programs.

- f. Consider forming a relationship with a local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) for the purpose of fostering relationships between members of the congregations, their families, and people with serious mental illness.
  - g. Advocate for establishment of funding of not-for-profit agencies, counseling centers, and treatment programs for persons who struggle with mental illness, including those with dual diagnoses of alcohol and drug abuse.
  - h. Work to end the stigma of serious mental illness within the congregation and in the surrounding community.
  - i. Invite local mental health professionals to address serious mental illness in small groups and in worship services, and encourage family members with serious mental illness to attend them.
  - j. Create a church environment open to the transforming work of God where people know confidences will be kept and they will be accepted and supported when they ask for help.
  - k. In under-served areas, advocate for greater availability of mental health resources.
  - l. Encourage all members to prepare a Psychiatric Advance Directive (PAD), which specifies plans for their treatment in case of a mental health emergency. (Refer to Appendix D for an example of a PAD.)
  - m. Gain a deeper awareness of our own perceptions and attitudes regarding mental illness by making use of the recommendations here as well as the information provided in the background or rationale section of this report.
  - n. Encourage greater awareness regarding race, ethnicity, gender, class, age, and language as these relate to persons with a serious mental illness.
  - o. Advocate for housing for people living with a serious mental illness.
  - p. Encourage local sessions to adopt specific psychiatric units for prayer support, visits (when permitted), and material donations.
  - q. Conduct acts of worship recognizing Serious Mental Illness Awareness when designated in the *Presbyterian Planning Calendar*, Mental Health Awareness Month (May), and Serious Mental Illness Awareness Week (the first week in October).
  - r. Support the ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN), Presbyterians for Addiction and Action (PAA), and the Presbyterian Association of Specialized Pastoral Ministries (PASPM) of the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), and Pathways to Promise, and encourage pastors and local sessions to do the same.
  - s. Encourage local hospitals to design comprehensive discharge plans for all psychiatric patients and to collaborate in and monitor the full implementation of these plans with available social service agencies post discharge.
  - t. Support church-based counseling services staffed by mental health professionals.
  - u. Support and advocate for resources to assist veterans such as: the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and The American Legion.
  - v. Inform and encourage veterans within the congregation to seek available resources to help them such as: the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and The American Legion.
  - w. Become active in helping members of the congregation prepare a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP).
10. Encourage the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA) to establish a churchwide web-based network of congregations who are engaged in ministries with persons and families affected by serious mental illness.

11. Direct the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO) do the following:

- a. Advocate for federal legislation that would increase and improve availability of mental health services in under-served areas.
- b. Advocate for federal legislation that would increase and improve care for vulnerable, high-need groups in racial and ethnic populations. Such legislation should include an increase in the number of multilingual and minority mental health practitioners.
- c. Advocate for federal legislation aimed at reducing the alarmingly high rate of suicides among elderly people. In addition to traditional psychological and medical interventions/treatments, efforts should be directed to reducing many of the social problems of the elderly, such as isolation and poverty that exacerbate mental illness.
- d. Advocate for federal legislation that would create health maintenance systems for persons with a serious mental illness to reduce symptom relapse and suicide risk.
- e. Advocate for federal legislation that requires parity in the coverage of mental health care and general health care, so that mental illnesses are covered on the same terms as other illnesses.
- f. Advocate for federal legislation that would increase and improve the Veterans Administration (VA)'s ability to care for veterans with mental illness.

**12. Direct the Presbyterian United Nations Office (PUNO) to do the following:**

- a. Advocate for international human rights treaties that would protect the rights of persons with a mental illness.
- b. Advocate for international human rights treaties that would improve mental health care universally.

**13. Urge the Board of Pensions (BOP) to maintain its practice of providing benefits parity for treatment of mental illness.**

**14. Urge Presbyterian theological institutions and those related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by covenant agreement to do the following:**

- a. Instruct students about the spiritual and social dimensions of mental health, and equip them to recognize the signs of mental illness and inform them of available treatments.
- b. Instruct students about the most recent medical research and findings regarding the causes of mental and serious mental illnesses.
- c. Instruct students on how to listen to, pray for, and follow-up with people who have a serious mental illness crisis and their families, including how to make appropriate referrals.
- d. Encourage those who are training to be worship leaders to use sermons and stories to educate their congregations about mental health and mental illness, and also to plan worship that celebrates occasions for mental health awareness.
- e. Provide educational opportunities about public advocacy issues affecting people with serious mental illness.

**15. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, stated clerks of the middle governing bodies, stated clerks of the local sessions, and individual Presbyterians to:**

- a. Urge local police to be trained to respond justly and humanely to persons with serious mental illness.
- b. Urge the department of corrections to recognize and respond appropriately to the needs of inmates with serious mental illness and provide timely, accessible, and high-quality treatment for incarcerated persons with serious mental illness.
- c. Support treatment and care facilities as alternatives to incarceration for persons with serious mental illness.



d. Urge careful planning for the release of prisoners so they receive immediate and intensive short-term support.

e. Encourage the criminal justice system to incorporate an evaluation for serious mental illness in sentencing and release guidelines.

f. Urge continuing education requirements and training programs for legal professionals, so they can keep well-informed about treatments for persons affected by serious mental illness.

**[16. Direct General Assembly Council to provide certified chaplains and/or pastoral counselors in collaboration with the Presbyterian Association of Specialized Pastoral Ministries (PASPM) at large Presbyterian gatherings such as the Peacemaking Conference, the Youth Triennium, the triennial gathering of Presbyterian Women and the biennial meeting of the General Assembly.]**

[Financial Implications: (2006): \$0; (2009): \$10,800; (2010): \$10,800 (Mission)]

### *Rationale*

This report with recommendations is in response to the following referral: *1999 Referral: 25.039 Response to Recommendation Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in Consultation with Appropriate Entities, to Develop a Comprehensive Serious Mental Illness Policy, Including Justice Issues and Full Participation in the Life of the Church and Report to the 217th General Assembly (2005)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 42.309).*

The recommendation read as follows:

Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with appropriate entities, to develop a comprehensive serious mental illness policy, including justice issues and full participation in the life of the church, and report to the 217th [218th] General Assembly (2005) [2008] (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 42, 309).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) received further instructions from the 213th General Assembly (2001): “Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to instruct its task forces on disabilities and serious mental illness to include the dimension of domestic violence and its impact in their respective work” (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 61, 239). In addition, the 217th General Assembly (2006) instructed the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to “include consideration of youth suicide and self-injury in the ongoing work being done by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s Task Force on ... Serious Mental Illness” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 917). This report focuses specifically on issues explored by the task force on serious mental illness, while an earlier disabilities policy, *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities*, treats broader disability concerns (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 50, 919–39).

### I. Introduction

The biblical theme of “exile” guides this policy statement. After offering a working definition and an account of the historical context, the report focuses on two major themes. The first theme is “The Land of Exile,” which explores the difficulties and injustices endured by people with serious mental illness. The experience of mental illness disorders people’s lives in ways that exile them from themselves, their families, and their community. The second theme, “God’s Call to Comfort,” focuses on appropriate ways congregations can minister with and to people with a serious mental illness. Throughout this report, people are understood from a Christian incarnational perspective, called to be delivered from chaos and disorder into the wholeness and communion of salvation. At the same time, the report recognizes the validity of the “medical model,” with its gifts of biochemical medication and social-scientific analysis. The goal of restoration from exile includes the integration of both perspectives and the renewal of a healthier culture and society. Especially because this document will be read to give hope to those suffering from mental illness and their families, stories are included from various perspectives that illumine and give depth to this policy statement. The stories have been altered to conceal the identities of the people in them.

#### A. *God’s People in Exile, God’s Call to Proclaim Comfort*

“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.” (Isa. 40:1, NRSV)

God sent the Prophet Isaiah to proclaim comfort to a people in exile, and also to bring that comfort to them in his own person. God’s people were suffering from exile from Jerusalem, the center of their covenantal life. It was in Jerusalem that they were able to celebrate and experience the wholeness of life as a people of the covenant with God.

Through the message of comfort, God affirmed that Israel was still beloved, though in exile. The covenant, “I . . . will be your God, and you shall be my people” (Lev. 26:12, NRSV), was confirmed. This, in and of itself, would bring comfort to an exiled people. God had not forgotten them nor abrogated the covenant with them.

Isaiah’s comforting was not to be in words only; his commission to comfort demanded personal involvement in preparing the way for the Lord to come to them. Their deliverance would come through the Lord, who would bring them back to Jerusalem in celebration of the glory of the Lord.

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. (Isa. 40:3–5, NRSV)

To God’s people in exile the Prophet Isaiah declared a message of comfort, and then was commanded to prepare the terrain for the advent of the Lord as Deliverer. Hebrew thought often merged message and deed. Accordingly, the Prophet was bid not merely to proclaim, but also to enact God’s message. The Prophet’s presence among them brought comfort to them, and embodied the vision that they were to prepare the way of the Lord, so that God might be among them.

Remembering both aspects of Isaiah’s call, the speaking and the doing, today our church acknowledges God’s call to be among and comfort persons with serious mental illness and their loved ones—persons who all too often have been exiled from the covenant community. Of course, exile may happen for various reasons. Some biblical scholars interpret the Hebrews’ exile as the consequence of their disobeying God, thus it is understood as divine punishment. However, persons living with serious mental illness are often exiled by the covenant community not because they themselves have disobeyed God, but because of a lack of information and understanding in the faith community. [Refer to the story of the man blinded at birth (John 9:1–12).]

If we reflect deeply enough we will realize that the people exiled include not only those afflicted with a serious mental illness, and their families and caretakers, but also the covenant community itself; for exiling others alienates the majority and fractures the family of God. The church by its own actions becomes exiled from its holier possibility, the covenant community that it is called to be.

The faces of people with serious mental illness are many. Some in our congregations choose to keep their mental illness private and do not disclose it to anyone in their church. They are fully functional and participate in the life of the church without their mental illness ever becoming apparent. Others’ mental illnesses are more evident to the congregation.

Our disinclination to face reality tragically divides our covenant community. Our brokenness prevents us from experiencing the reality that the prophet Isaiah described, and which Christ incarnated: “Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken” (Isa. 40:5, NRSV).

Christ came to bring reconciliation and wholeness to the broken communities of this world. Realizing that we have exiled others and thereby alienated ourselves from the promised glory of God, the church acknowledges this mandate from the Lord: “Comfort, O comfort my people!”

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) hears this call and seeks to respond through the power of the Holy Spirit, by welcoming outcasts as Jesus did. The Spirit connects us to people wrongly exiled by the social stigma surrounding serious mental illness. That same Spirit that was in Christ calls us to realize that the redeemed covenant community that we cherish is bound together as one family by God’s compassion for all. By doing so, we can find healing as we disclose how we are wounded and pray for each other.

As the Church incarnates the love of God that was so evident in Jesus, we experience the joy of the reign of Christ. (cf. Gal. 6:2) The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through this policy acknowledges its complicity in the suffering of people living with serious mental illness, people often exiled from our congregations and our civic communities. Through this policy, we seek to address our ignorance, prejudice, and fears. We acknowledge our call from the Lord to bring comfort to those in exile. Through this policy we seek to be reconciled to one another so that we may become the blessed community celebrating God’s gifts to all. We acknowledge that our words must be accompanied by action. Therefore, through this policy we offer ways by which the healing touch of Christ may come upon our faith community, and also upon the more extensive communities in which we live.

The Prophet Isaiah received a call from the Lord to proclaim and to bring comfort to an exiled people. This is the same call to which we, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), must respond today. We walk in faith with the Christ who stepped over social and religious boundaries and dared to touch and heal the lepers of his day. Like the Prophet Isaiah, we are called to be faithful companions of the Lord by breaking down dividing walls that exile us from each other, and celebrating the gift of

community for all people. This policy is offered in expectant thanksgiving to God, trusting that by God's grace we shall all come to see the glory of God together.

### B. *Jesus' Ministry of Healing*

In Jesus' earthly ministry he healed many people: through Jesus' healing power the blind could see, and the lame could walk, "and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them" (Matt. 4:24 NRSV). Many of the people Jesus healed were not just physical cures, but they included restoring a person to ritual cleanliness and therefore full participation in community life (lepers). Some also included a healing of the soul through the gift of forgiveness (the paralytic). Still others included the gift of peace, shalom, and wholeness (the woman with the flow of blood).

In Scripture, it is clear that healing is not confined to physical cure. Therefore, we make a distinction between healing and cure. Cure refers to the elimination of a disease or a disorder. Healing, on the other hand, is something much broader, and may or may not include the elimination of disease or disorder. Healing includes reconciliation, restoration to right relationship, the gift of courage to live faithfully within limitations, internal peace, God's call to vocation, and living a life of prayer, mutually up building interpersonal relationships, committed church life, and self-giving service to the world. People can be healed even when they continue to live with a disease or disorder. Some have discovered that the relentless search for a cure for their disorder is a great burden, and therefore the appropriate hope is for healing, not cure. The challenge for the church is to be an instrument of healing when cure is not likely.

As sovereign over all, God is free to use any means to heal the sick. We may experience God's healing power through healing prayer, laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and the prayers of the church. We may experience God's healing power through participation in the love, nurture, and admonition of the church. We may experience God's healing power through medication and psychotherapy. As spiritual, social, and biological beings, God may extend healing power to us through all three of these means, as well as through surprising, wholly unexpected means.

### C. *Definitions*

Millions of people live with mental illness. It is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. and Canada for those between the ages of fifteen and forty-four.<sup>1</sup> Approximately one in four adult Americans has a diagnosable mental illness in any given year.<sup>2</sup> Although "mental disorders are widespread in the population, the main burden of illness is concentrated in a much smaller proportion."<sup>3</sup> According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), one in seventeen or 6 percent of Americans have what can be called a "serious" mental illness.<sup>4</sup> It is serious mental illness that is the subject of this policy statement. In its widespread wake, few families and congregations are left unaffected.

Definitions of "mental illness" and "serious mental illness" vary greatly. In fact, the standard diagnostic manual used by mental health professionals does not even make a distinction between serious mental illnesses and non-serious ones.<sup>5</sup> The task force's mandate, however, was to address serious mental illness. We, therefore, recommend the following definitions:

1. *Mental Illness* is a medical disorder characterized by disturbance in thought, mood, or behavior that causes distress or impairment of spiritual, interpersonal, behavioral and emotional functioning. If left untreated, all mental illnesses are impairing.

2. *Serious Mental Illnesses* are severe and persistent medical disorders characterized by impairment in mood or behavior that cause distress and/or impairment in spiritual, interpersonal, and behavioral functioning. Salient examples are the disorders known as schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, and major depression. Characteristic symptoms of serious mental illness include hallucinations, delusions, disorganized thinking, extreme mood changes, overwhelming hopelessness and sadness, severely impaired perception, judgment, or insight, and problems with concentration and attention. Serious mental illness is an enduring condition that affects one's ability to cope with everyday challenges. If left untreated all mental illnesses may impair one's ability to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships, practice one's faith, worship God, attend school, go to work, or live independently. All mental illnesses can be impairing.

## II. The Church Speaks Again on Serious Mental Illness

The call for justice, care, and hospitality for God's children with mental illness is not new in our denomination. The 200th General Assembly (1988) approved two policies that explicitly called the church to care for and advocate for people with serious mental illness. The first was the policy statement on *Life Abundant: Values, Choices and Health Care*, which affirmed: "Good health—physical, mental health and spiritual—is both a God given gift and a social good of special moral importance. ..." (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 524). The second was the resolution, *The Church and Serious Mental Illness*, which spoke clearly to the church in these words: "The need to address chronic mental illness is urgent" (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 444).

In the present report, as our church again examines issues of serious mental illness, we do so as a people moved by the suffering of many who live with serious mental illness; and many questions of faith arise from this examination. Perhaps first and foremost is the question of how a good and powerful God can allow such pain. Is not it contrary to the very nature of the God we know in Jesus Christ? To witness the pain among many individuals and families affected by serious mental illness is to press to the limit our faith in God's love and power.

We cannot discern why there is suffering in God's good and lovely creation. We do know, however, that we are created as one body in the image of God, in our shared fragility, shared sin, our need to share God's grace in Jesus Christ, and our call to proclaim God's Kingdom. Therefore, as a church we are called to turn from our sinful ways, to turn from our pattern of exclusion, and to embrace all who live with serious mental illness as sisters and brothers, as co-members of Christ's body endowed with gifts for the upbuilding of the church.

While the church cannot eliminate a person's mental illness, we can welcome people who struggle daily with mental illness and thereby help reduce their suffering by changing chaos into wholeness. The church can recognize that although we might be powerless over some aspects of mental illness, God is not. Through the extraordinary power to love, we can share the precious gift of belonging with persons who have often heard that they do not belong. We can carry the message that by their baptism they bear the indelible mark of belonging to God's family forever. We have the opportunity to participate in the administration of God's grace to those recovering from mental illness, to their families and to covenant communities.

#### *A Mental Health Professional's Story*

Having worked for thirty years in the mental health field, I have had the opportunity to follow some clients for a long time. I have watched and worked with them as they struggled to cope and lead meaningful lives, within daunting limitations.

One such client, whose story I have permission to share, has learned to manage his illness and lives independently with the help of a private mental health agency. Our first encounter was on the streets of Atlanta where he often walked back and forth in front of the hospital screaming fragments of scripture and "preaching" to the public.

He was one of our many clients whom the mental services staff referred to as being in a "revolving door," regularly in and out of the hospital without getting any better. He had a difficult time accepting that he had a mental illness. He wanted all of his money, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), at one time so he could buy himself a boat, car, and a chicken farm. Then he could also get a wife.

After several years of missed appointments, being off medications, being arrested then readmitted to the hospital, he was assigned to me for case management. One day during one of our sessions he shared that he grew up in South Georgia. He was born to a single mother but she eventually married and had other children. Her husband never accepted him in the family and thus he grew up living with his grandparents.

His grandparents worked on a tobacco farm where he shared in the work to increase (slightly) the families' take home pay. He was a very angry and bitter teen and one day he got into a fight with the son of the owner of the tobacco farm.

Several days later the police came to his grandparents' home and told them that they needed to send "that boy" away because he was a troublemaker. After weeks of trying to decide what to do, the grandparents gave their sixteen-year-old grandson \$45, put him on a bus, and sent him to Atlanta. The family had relatives who lived in Atlanta. Upon his arrival in Atlanta, however, there was no one to pick him up.

In this strange new city, he wandered the streets, ate what he could with the small amount of money he had, and slept in parks and stairwells. He was beaten and robbed. The police arrested him for panhandling. He was mistreated in jail; and when he was released, he said that he felt like he had "lost his mind."

It was very difficult to explain the appropriate approach to managing his life and how to accomplish his goals. Our outpatient case management sessions often ended with him leaving with no resolutions of any of his problems. Eventually I moved to another area in the mental health services and he was assigned a new case manager, but he would turn up in my area just to talk.

In my new support role for him, he asked me to read to him from the Bible. His favorite verses were "Gifts from the Holy Spirit." He enjoyed hearing that he had been given a special gift. He continued to have the same goals and the same problems but as he began to improve on his social skills he also began to improve with his compliance in treatment.

In January 2006, he came to my office neatly dressed saying: "These clothes came from Goodwill." From his coat pocket he proudly pulled out a worn church program, explaining that his sister (actually his stepsister) had given it to him. He added:

“She told me her father had died and gave me this program”. Look! This program says that I am his stepson! She told me she was sorry about how her daddy had treated me and wanted me to know that she, her sisters and brothers always told their daddy he had been wrong.” During this visit, he shared that he had a new job washing dishes at a local “fancy” restaurant in downtown Atlanta. He said: “The man knows I have a mental illness, but he said I am the best dish washer he has ever seen.” Then he smiled and put the worn program in his pants pocket.

### III. A Brief History of God’s People in Exile

#### A. *Varied Responses to People with Serious Mental Illness*

Mental illness has been present in every culture and age; and life in exile from community has been the fate of millions of God’s children who live with mental illness. At times they have been the victims of unspeakable cruelty. People with mental illness have been burned at the stake as witches, lobotomized, subjected to painful medical experiments, confined in prisons, tortured, and executed. Yet at other times people with mental illness have remained a part of the community, living at home within families where their symptoms were accepted. Responses to people with mental illness have varied widely, ranging from forbearance and kindness to abandonment and exile.

Some interpret Jesus’ casting out demons to be healing mental illness, and some also understand mental illness today as a form of demon possession. It is true that mental illness can cause great suffering for those who live with it and for their families—a suffering so great that it seems that something very evil must be causing it. We know from the New Testament gospels many reports that Jesus “cast out demons.” The personification of evil that is found in those accounts seems to refer to real influences that bring chaos into human life. For example, in the fifth chapter of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus is confronted by “a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit” (Mark 5:2, NRSV). The man’s life is full of disruptive chaos in his inner experience and his outward behavior. With divine power and authority, says the gospel, Jesus freed the man from disordering influences, restoring him to balance, self control, and appropriate behavior in his community. “And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed” (Mark 5:20, NRSV).

Whatever may be the ultimate nature of the disordering influence in this account (which remains to some degree mysterious to us), there seem to be very few instances in our modern experience of such miraculous deliverance. The Church today seems called to employ far less dramatic and more clinical means to assist those afflicted with serious mental disorders to gain some measure of healthy order, balance, self control, and appropriate behavior. Our role in healing and treatment follows the counsel of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:8, NRSV: “. . . whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” In that light, we turn both to the truth, honor, excellence, etc., of modern medical science and to the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ as they are embodied in the life and worship of the Church.

We recognize that schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, and major depression must be addressed medically. We also recognize the Church’s responsibility to welcome and care for those afflicted with these disorders and to employ the rich means of grace that are essential to the Church’s life to aid in their healing and restoration. We believe that it is therefore not useful or appropriate to attribute serious mental illness to “the work of demons,” though we recognize that there are powerful disordering forces at work in all of human life – many of which do not appear at all demonic but which do bring chaos with them.

As serious mental illness came to be treated more constructively and compassionately, a more general acceptance of counseling and psychotherapy developed in society. The Church contributed significantly to this process through the work of hospital chaplains, leading to the development of clinical pastoral education, and through the pastoral counseling movement, leading to the placement of counseling or “mental health” centers in many churches. These innovations added new dimensions to the traditional pastoral “cure of souls” and can be counted among the twentieth century achievements of the ministry and witness of the “mainline” church.

#### B. *From the Mental Hospital to the Prison*

In the early twentieth century in the United States (U.S.), the predominant response to mental illness was either voluntary or involuntary confinement to large state hospitals. Until the 1950s, hundreds of thousands of people were in such institutions. Several factors led to a new chapter in society’s response to people living with mental illness. First, new medications created the hope that people with a mental illness would be able to live outside institutions and participate in community life. Secondly, the public became aware of widespread cruelty and neglect in many state mental hospitals and began to call for closing them. Thirdly, the public became concerned for the civil rights of people involuntarily committed to mental hospitals.

Over the next few decades, thousands of residents of mental hospitals were released. The official plan was to create a nation-wide network of community-based mental health centers that would enable them to live on their own, supported by medical and social services. However, this network of centers never materialized, for lack of funding and community support. Though many of the former patients could have lived independently with adequate support, without it they could not main-

tain a safe and healthy life. Some stopped taking their medications, and their painful and debilitating symptoms returned. Some turned to alcohol and abuse of other substances as a way to control the symptoms. Many, unable to find or maintain housing and employment, became homeless.

Without social support, medication, housing, or treatment for their mental illness, some lived on the streets and engaged in bizarre public behavior. A small fraction threatened public safety. For mostly minor but sometimes major infractions, more and more people with mental illness ended up in prison. Today, more than half of the people in our prisons have some kind of mental health problem, and some of them are very serious: “an estimated 15 percent of State prisoners and 24 percent of jail inmates reported symptoms that met the criteria for a psychotic disorder.”<sup>6</sup>

Incarceration has become a widespread response to the mentally ill in the U.S. Over the course of several decades, we have witnessed a process of “trans-institutionalization,” that is, a shift from one institution to another: from large mental hospitals to prisons. In fifty years the number of people with mental illness living in hospitals dropped from 560,000 to 70,000, while the number of mentally ill people in prisons rose dramatically.<sup>7</sup> Prisons, of course, are not designed to provide the social support and attentive psychiatric care that many persons with serious mental illness require.

### C. *Still in Exile, Still Without Comfort*

Like the people of Israel in exile, many people with mental illness remain outsiders, excluded from the warmth of family, friends, and even the church. People with serious mental illness are excluded for many reasons. Some people believe that all people with mental illness are dangerous and violent, or fear that their illness might be contagious; others just fear their unconventional or inappropriate behavior. Our churches should educate their members about serious mental illness and build understanding among all the members of Christ’s body. We recognize God’s call to proclaim comfort to people in exile by welcoming them home into the covenantal community of the church. If the church answers this call faithfully, the rest of God’s church shall find its way out of exile too: our exile from the possibility of becoming the loving community which God calls us to be.

## IV. The Land of Exile

By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. ... How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land? (Ps. 137:1–2, 4, NRSV)

### A. *Lives in Exile*

The United States’ history of failure to provide adequate care for people with serious mental illness has been devastating. Our neglect has contributed to (1) homelessness, (2) addiction, (3) incarceration, and (4) suicide for many, as described below.

#### 1. *Homelessness*

Though only 6 percent of the U.S. population has a serious mental illness,<sup>8</sup> this portion constitutes 20 to 25 percent of the homeless population.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, they are “homeless more often and for longer periods than other homeless groups.”<sup>10</sup> Also, as many as two-thirds of all people with serious mental illness have experienced or been at risk for homelessness sometime in their lives, although only 5 percent of people with serious mental illness are homeless at any given time.<sup>11</sup>

There are many reasons why the homelessness of persons with mental illness is a very difficult problem to address. Independent living often requires supportive services, which society has failed to provide. Substance abuse, which plagues approximately half of the people with a serious mental illness, further complicates their maintaining permanent housing. In addition, many people with serious mental illness have not received the benefits to which they are entitled by law, and therefore cannot afford housing. Sometimes they stop seeking mental health services because of a history of unsuccessful attempts. They are often alienated from family members although they maintain lengthy relationships with other homeless people. They are twice as likely as other homeless people to be arrested or jailed, mostly for misdemeanors.<sup>12</sup>

#### 2. *Addiction*

Many people who live with serious mental illness struggle with both a mental disorder and an alcohol or drug addiction. These persons with a dual diagnosis represent about one half of patients seen in psychiatric emergency rooms. More than half of the people who abuse drugs and or alcohol have at least one co-occurring mental illness. Of the persons who use cocaine, three out of four have a co-occurring mental illness. For those who abuse alcohol, one-third has a mental disorder.<sup>13</sup>

It is estimated that between 32 to 41 percent of individuals with a mood disorder have a substance abuse disorder. Persons with a bipolar disorder have the highest rate, 56 to 71 percent. Approximately one-half of persons with a psychotic disorder, including schizophrenia, also have a substance abuse problem.<sup>14</sup>

Alcohol abuse and chemical dependence are complicated disorders that are impacted by multiple factors. When existing alone, they are thought of as biological, medical disorders, or diseases. A person with mental illness may seek relief from symptoms by using alcohol or drugs. For example, a person with bipolar illness who cannot sleep may use alcohol or sedating drugs in an attempt to sleep or slow down. This self-medication may provide temporary relief, but it tends to worsen mental illness symptoms in the long term. In addition, it may contribute to noncompliance with treatment and medication regimes and increase the risk for adverse interactions with prescribed medications.

Substance use disorders may also mask the symptoms of a mental illness. For instance, when someone with a mental illness feels an intensification of their symptoms approaching, they may try to convince themselves and others that their symptoms are due to the substance abuse and not from mental illness. When mental illness symptoms are attributed solely to the effects of substance abuse, both disorders become more difficult to diagnose and treat.

Although personal responsibility is important in addressing substance abuse problems, alcoholism and drug addiction are illnesses in their own right. These illnesses are not the result of character flaws or poor moral choices. Recognizing their own powerlessness to overcome their addictions, people in twelve step recovery programs do in fact make progress against old habits by turning their lives over to a higher power. Involvement in church life can help to support them by giving their lives a meaningful context.

### *A Story of Recovery*

I awoke from a nightmare of such extreme intensity that the commonplace became confusing and threatening. The familiar had become a bizarre blurring of the real and unreal, producing in me a gut-wrenching fear. My sense of time had disappeared. Even when I was awake, this “nightmare” continued through sleepless days and nights. I was bone tired, but my mind raced. When I felt a yawn coming on, I was unable to give into it before being carried away by a surge of frenzied energy. I was bereft of rest, and clarity of mind and perception. My thoughts were strewn with suspicions and delusions. I thought the Second Coming of Christ was imminent, but somehow that I alone was gifted with special powers to save the world. My sense perceptions seemed extraordinarily focused. Sometimes I thought I could see things that others could not. Stymied by the fact that other people were not validating my perceptions, I became isolated. My friends and family left me. I could no longer work. I lost my home, my freedom, and my sanity. My world came crashing down.

Although these experiences were the result of my addiction to prescription drugs (psychostimulants) and alcohol, there are many parallels between my mental disorder and those suffered by others who have a serious mental illness. While my story is of a person without a dual diagnosis, the symptoms induced by substance abuse are similar to symptoms associated with serious mental illness and worsened when there is a dual diagnosis condition. Unlike people with a serious mental illness, people with exclusively substance dependence can correct their brain chemistry once their substance abuse stops. Unfortunately, for those with a serious mental illness, this is not the case, for some will have to endure symptoms such as these throughout their lives.

This is how I began my recovery. Over time, my mind began to clear. Since I had been trained at Harvard Medical School, I was ashamed of my behavior. But my need for help outweighed my need to protect my pride. So, I got into treatment and began a lifelong discipline of recovery through the twelve-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous, and also through active involvement in a very supportive church, where my isolation was met with fellowship, my fears with compassion, and where my weaknesses were forgiven, and my service encouraged. I was able to return to work in my profession as a clinical psychologist. My personal experience is now being used to help others ravaged by mental illness.

I have discovered on my journey of recovery that chemical addictions and alcoholism are diseases, similar to physical disorders such as hypertension and diabetes. I have also come to realize that addictions are no respecter of persons. They can affect people who are highly educated and “ought to know better.” Fortunately, there are treatments available to persons with addictions and other types of mental disorders. The church plays an important role in recovery. In recovery, I have learned to more fully participate in life by appreciating my Creator’s daily gifts. I have reconciled with my wife, family, and community, and am keenly aware of my dependency on God’s grace; for without such grace, I would not be in the healthier place where I now am.

### *3. Criminal Justice System*

Three times the number of persons with mental illness are in our prisons as are in our psychiatric hospitals.<sup>15</sup> Yet inmates rarely receive the treatment to which they are legally entitled. In the report entitled “Mental Health Problems of Prisons and

Jails” published on the Department of Justice’s website, more than one-in-six jail inmates, one in three state prisoners, and one in four federal prisoners with a mental health problem received treatment for their condition since their admission.<sup>16</sup>

Life in prison for a person with serious mental illness is extremely difficult and prisons are ill-equipped to offer appropriate mental health services. “Few prisons offer adequate mental health care services, and the prison environment is dangerous and debilitating for prisoners who have mental illness. These prisoners are victimized by other inmates, punished by prison staff for behaviors associated with their illnesses, and often placed in highly restrictive cells that exacerbate their symptoms,” writes William Kanapaux in *Psychiatric Times*, summarizing a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW), released in October, 2003.<sup>17</sup> The President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health Final Report confirms the right to adequate mental health care for people in prison: “Providing adequate services in correctional facilities for people with serious mental illnesses who do need to be there is both prudent and required by law. The Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the right to treatment for acute medical problems, including psychiatric problems, for inmates and detainees in America’s prisons and jails.”<sup>18</sup> However, inmates are often not provided access to necessary medication or to the mental health providers they need.

Not only are people with serious mental illness over-represented among those serving prison terms, but also among those condemned to death by the state. Amnesty International (AI) reported that at least 10 percent of the first one thousand people executed in the United States since 1977 were severely mentally ill.<sup>19</sup> The Mental Health America (MHA) reports that 5–10 percent of the 3,400 people on death row in the U.S. are mentally ill.<sup>20</sup> These statistics are undoubtedly underestimated since in many cases there have been no psychiatric evaluations. Dr. Susan Lee, Amnesty International’s American programs director states: “Prejudice and ignorance give rise to fear, and for many people it is easier to sentence a mentally ill person to death than to find genuine treatment solutions.”<sup>21</sup> Our failure to care for people with serious mental illness has had deadly consequences for those on death row.

#### 4. *Suicide*

##### *Jonathan’s Story*

In 2005, Jonathan (age twenty-five) returned from military service. He was repeatedly shaken by flashbacks of sixteen men in his unit who died during two days of intense fighting. In addition to waking flashbacks of the events of this period, Jonathan was also troubled by terrifying nightmares which left him feeling guilty for not being able to protect his buddies, and guilty for surviving what they did not. At first Jonathan resisted seeking mental health treatment because that seemed to him a sure admission of weakness. However, when panic attacks became intolerable he finally sought help through the Veterans Administration. Help came too slowly. After weeks of outpatient processing and a lack of inpatient beds, Jonathan committed suicide.

Like Jonathan, some sufferers conclude that life in exile is unbearable and choose to end their lives. Globally it has been estimated that nearly a million people take their own lives each year. In the U.S., the annual suicide rate is approximately 12/100,000.<sup>22</sup> According to the National Co-morbidity Survey Replication, 3.3 percent of the general population thinks about committing suicide in the course of a year. Most suicide attempts involve an individual with a mental disorder, particularly mood disorders and/or substance abuse disorders. Suicide rates among bipolar persons have been estimated at between 15 to 20 percent, with attempts as high as 50 percent.<sup>23</sup> According to the National Institute of Mental Health, “Four times as many men as women die by suicide<sup>24</sup>; however, women attempt suicide two to three times as often as men.”<sup>25</sup>

Several risk factors have been correlated with suicide and suicidal behavior. These include:

- age (elderly and adolescent);
- gender (male);
- race (Caucasian);
- religious affiliation (Protestant);
- marital status (single);
- employment status (unemployed);
- economic status (lower annual per capital income);
- physical health (persons with serious physical illness);
- previous suicide attempts;
- those who have poor social support or have lost such support altogether (as when a friend, family, or church member moves away or dies);
  - those in personal crisis (such as recently divorced or bereaved persons);
  - those with a prognosis of terminal illness;
  - those having less access to mental health resources and federal aid;
  - those having a history of emotional or sexual abuse; and
  - those living within certain geographical areas (the reasons for this last factor are sometimes not well understood).<sup>26</sup>



In addition to these risk factors, certain childhood adversities have been associated with a risk for suicidal behavior. These include childhood maltreatment or victimization (psychological, physical, and sexual abuse), problematic parenting or family environment, (family history of suicidal behavior, chronic and severe conflicts with family members), difficult relationships with peers and socioeconomic hardship.<sup>27</sup> Suicidal behavior may be attributed to biologically inherited mental disorders as well as environmental stressors and traumas.

a. *Suicide Among Teens*

“Suicides among young people nationwide have increased dramatically in recent years” states the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP).<sup>28</sup> Suicide is so prevalent in youth that it is the third leading cause of death for those between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four, preceded by homicide and car accidents.<sup>29</sup> Each year, approximately five thousand people in this age range die from taking their own lives. Although staggering, this figure may actually be under-representative due to the stigma associated with suicide. One recent study indicated that one in four high school students seriously considered suicide. One in six made plans to attempt suicide and one in twelve tried to carry their plans out. Although Caucasian students were more likely than black students to consider suicide, there has been more than 100 percent increase in the rate of suicide among African American males.<sup>30</sup> Correspondingly high numbers of suicide attempts occur among Native American and Alaska Native youth. A dramatic elevation in suicide rate is also evident among gay and lesbian high school students. One study showed that gay and lesbian high school students were four times more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual students.<sup>31</sup>

Teens face multiple pressures. They need to adjust to bodies that are in flux. They face independence. They have high expectations of themselves and sometimes face strong pressures from parents. They have a strong need to be accepted by peers. When these developmental tasks are frustrated, they may become dejected and express their anger and despair through suicidal acts. For teens who are susceptible to a serious mental illness, stresses such as excessive and intense family arguments, worry over grades, or the breakup of a romantic relationship may trigger suicidal behavior. Warning signs of suicide risk include extreme personality changes, loss of interest in routine activities, withdrawal, increased irritability, prolonged sadness, substance abuse, and a preoccupation with death.<sup>32</sup>

b. *Suicide Among the Elderly*

Elderly people are disproportionately likely to commit suicide. In the year 2000, elders constituted 13 percent of the U.S. population. Disproportionately, individuals sixty-five years and older accounted for 18 percent of all suicides.<sup>33</sup> Risk factors for suicide among elders differ in some ways from those among younger people. The elderly show a higher prevalence for depression and other serious mental conditions. They experience poorer social support, lower economic status, and serious physical health conditions that diminish their quality of life. Elderly people also use more deadly means when they attempt suicide, so the probability that they will survive is less than that for younger persons.<sup>34</sup> Younger people sometimes make a weak suicide attempt to get attention. This is rare among the elderly.

Many elderly people who attempt suicide never seek professional care for mental anguish, though some research reports that almost half the patients who committed suicide had visited a physician in the preceding week.<sup>35</sup> So, detecting depression among the elderly is a crucially important role for primary care providers.

B. *Discrimination Against the Stranger in a Strange Land*

Many people with serious mental illness do not face such overt problems as homelessness, addiction, or imprisonment, as described above. Yet, solely on account of their illness they struggle with society’s sometimes subtle but nevertheless destructive attitudes toward persons with a serious mental illness. The stigma of having a serious mental illness may deprive them of employment or adequate health care; or they may face the possibility of inappropriate involuntary commitment.

1. *Stigma*

When a person is physically ill, it is expected that they will be supported and treated sympathetically in their quest for healing. When one has a long-standing, disabling illness or injury, it is expected that they will be given every assistance and consideration as they cope with their limitations and any ensuing hardships. Not so with mental illness. Not only must those who are diagnosed with a serious mental illness cope with the illness as such, but they, and their families, must also shoulder the additional burden of the nearly overwhelming presence of stigma.

Stigma is a mark of shame, disgrace, or disapproval; it is a sign that one is different from others and should be rejected because of that difference. “Stigmata” were literally cut or burned onto the bodies of “different” individuals in ancient Greece and they were shunned. Today stigma takes the form of negative, inaccurate stereotypes, ostracism, and cruel, ignorant humor. Stigma prevents ill persons from seeking treatment in a timely fashion. It diminishes public support for funding of necessary and appropriate services for the mentally ill. It prevents persons who are in recovery from finding meaningful and se-

cure employment and acceptable housing. Stigma enables the insurance industry to impose a life time limit on the number of days for inpatient treatment. It contributes to cruelty in our criminal justice system. Stigma precludes persons with mental illness from seeking and receiving the gift of community and, most importantly, it denies to those who live with mental illness God's gift of hope. Although its effect is much the same for the members of all groups, stigma can be particularly harmful to some racial/ethnics and immigrants with a mental illness because of the already existing burden of discrimination they bear.

To begin to redress the consequences of stigma one must recognize that its roots are to be found in our own fears. If we recognize that a person with mental illness is the same as any other person in every regard except that they have a particular illness, then we must recognize that we too could be subject to such an illness. As psychiatrist R. E. Kendell writes, "Our concept of ourselves as rational beings guided by reasons and intelligence is crucial to our self confidence and self esteem; and encountering a fellow human being who has lost his or her reason and whose behavior is no longer rational is profoundly disturbing because it implies that the same might happen to us. That is why the mentally ill are mocked as well as feared, for mockery reduces the implied threat they pose."<sup>36</sup>

Many mental health professionals and individuals living with mental illness believe that media sources are a major contributor to the long lasting negative attitudes toward mental illness held by the public. Media sources are held responsible particularly for promulgating the notion that there is an extraordinarily high correlation between mental illness and violence when, in fact, "... the overall contribution of mental disorders to the total level of violence in society is exceptionally small."<sup>37</sup> Some media sources do much to legitimate the notion that persons with mental illness are an appropriate subject of humor and derision. Much of the content of both television and film contains demeaning terminology and caricatures that are hurtful to individuals and perpetrate centuries-old stereotypes. The same is true of conversation in public life and in private among persons who have no intent to hurt, but who fall victim to habits of expression.

The authors of the landmark Surgeon General's report of 1999 state very explicitly, "Stigma must be overcome. Research that will continue to yield increasingly effective treatments for mental disorders promises to be an effective antidote. When people understand that mental disorders are not the result of moral failings or limited will power, but are legitimate illnesses that are responsive to specific treatments, much of the negative stereotyping may dissipate."<sup>38</sup> Our church can be a powerful force in overcoming stigma by modeling for the rest of society how those living with a mental illness must be regarded—with respect, as loved children of God, and with deep appreciation for the unique gifts they bring to the community where they, too, are recognized as members of the Body of Christ.

## 2. *Limited Employment Opportunities*

According to the results of a comprehensive federal commission on serious mental illness, "among adults with serious mental illness there is a 90 percent unemployment rate—the worst level of unemployment of any group of persons with disabilities."<sup>39</sup> At the same time, though, studies show that many persons with serious mental illness want to work and could do so with moderate assistance. The commission also finds unacceptable that our nation's largest "program" for people with mental illness is disability payments rather than assistance in finding meaningful employment with benefits, job transition, and vocational rehabilitation.

## 3. *General Health Care*

Numerous studies have consistently shown that persons with mental illness have a higher mortality rate than the general population. They also have extensive medical needs that go undetected and untreated such as diabetes, accidents, and heart disease. "People being treated for serious mental illness by public mental health systems die 25 years earlier, on average, than do members of the general population."<sup>40</sup>

Various obstacles prevent people with mental illness from getting the medical help they need. Individuals with severe mental illness can be unwelcome in medical offices because they appear disheveled, have poor hygiene, and display idiosyncratic mannerisms. Their mood and thinking disturbances may elicit negative reactions. As a consequence they may receive only a cursory examination. Also, mental illness can create distortions in physical sensation, pain perception, and accurate reporting. A clear and complete history, without corroborating information obtained from others, such as a family member or friend, is difficult to obtain.

Some people are denied appropriate physical care due to the prior diagnosis of mental illness. The medical staff might focus on the mental illness to the exclusion of the physical ailment. The primary diagnosis may become the only diagnosis.

Some people with mental illness choose to avoid medical treatment altogether because of a general fear of others, especially medical personnel who are perceived as untrustworthy. Simple things such as making appointments, observing waiting room protocol, filling out forms, compliance with treatment recommendations, getting prescriptions filled, and seeing specialists can be overwhelming.

#### 4. *Involuntary Commitment*

Decisions about the civil rights of persons with mental illness become particularly difficult when they are not a danger to themselves or others but their untreated illness leads them to live in inhumane conditions of deprivation and suffering. In this situation, does a loved one have a right to force them into treatment against their will? Some families have experienced the tragic cycle of their loved one going off medication, becoming unable to care adequately for themselves, being arrested and incarcerated, then released to the care of the family, only to go off their medications again and begin the cycle once more. In this case, should the family make treatment decisions on behalf of a loved one that might include committing him/her involuntarily to a hospital?

Decisions about civil rights for people with mental illness become difficult when untreated illness leads to inhumane conditions of deprivation and suffering. When a person's ability to assess her or his options has been gravely disordered by mental illness, does this responsibility fall rightly to loved ones? The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has adopted the following statement regarding involuntary commitment that allows for greater consideration of individual circumstances. Rather than opposing without exception all involuntary commitment outside danger to self or others, NAMI recommends that:

States should adopt broader, more flexible standards that provide for involuntary commitment and/or court ordered treatment when an individual is gravely disabled, which means that the person is substantially unable, except for reasons of indigence, to provide for any of his or her basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, health or safety; or is likely to substantially deteriorate if not provided with timely treatment; or lacks capacity, which means that as a result of the brain disorder the person is unable to fully understand; or lacks judgment to make an informed decision about his or her need for treatment, care, or supervision.<sup>41</sup>

On the other hand, does the person living with mental illness have a right to the final say over his or her medication and treatment? Does she or he finally know what is in her or his best interest? Individuals ought to be free to make decisions before God about how to respond to their illnesses. One way to protect the individual rights of a person with mental illness is through Psychiatric Advance Directives (PADs). (Refer to Appendix D for an example of a PAD) By stipulating in writing and in advance their decisions regarding their own care, people with a serious mental illness can provide very helpful guidance to their families and mental health providers, to be used in the event that their illness becomes acute. This practice ensures that the will of the person with the debilitating mental illness is respected.

#### C. *Comfort Withheld: Inadequate Mental Health Care*

Our understanding of comfort for people with mental illness includes hospitality, affection, and nurture, as well as advocating for their access to the goods of society, including timely and excellent mental health care. Tragically, government funding for these services has been cut again and again. The church faithful to both God and to God's children who live with mental illness will engage in the struggle to make quality mental health care available to any who need it.

##### 1. *Barriers to Mental Health Services*

According to a 2000 World Health Organization study, mental illness is the leading cause of disability worldwide. The study also concluded that mental illness is responsible for 25 percent of all disability in major industrialized countries.<sup>42</sup> Yet, "... only one out of two people with a serious form of mental illness seeks treatment for the disorder."<sup>43</sup> According to the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, nearly all the citizens who are not receiving care are in that predicament because access to care is impeded. Though there are instances of persons simply choosing not to seek treatment, untreated mental illness can usually be accounted for by multiple obstacles to treatment. Some of these obstacles are a lack of transportation, the unavailability of childcare, the inflexibility of employers, the stigma of mental illness, and cultural or language barriers. Persons who need treatment will often not seek it for fear of being labeled "lazy," "crazy," "dangerous," or worse. They fear the inability to obtain employment, ostracism, and, ultimately, abandonment by society.

Chief among the obstacles to getting treatment, however, is the real or perceived inability to pay for the needed services. Many persons with mental illness lack health insurance altogether. They are unemployed, homeless, and perhaps addicted, and have either not sought or qualified for any public assistance. Others are insured, but not sufficiently. Those who rely on third party payments to pay for their mental health care often find that there are limits upon the services and medications covered. The President's New Freedom Commission wrote in 2000, "The current system of mental health care must rely on many sources of financing. Too many of the funding streams are tightly restricted regarding how they may be used and for whom. Providing access to effective treatments and services that are easy to navigate and that use flexible funding streams is crucial to transforming mental health care in America."<sup>44</sup>

An additional obstacle is posed by the insufficiency of inpatient psychiatric beds, especially for children and adolescents and for those living in sparsely populated states or regions. It is not uncommon for patients, including children, in some areas of the U.S. to be hospitalized hundreds of miles from home and family because no hospital beds exist or no beds are available

in their home community. This possibility can often dissuade individuals from seeking and/or accepting treatment for themselves or family members.<sup>45</sup>

## 2. *Lack of Insurance Parity*

In the 1999 Surgeon General's report on mental illness cited earlier, it is noted that people who suffer from mental illness are least likely to receive the medical attention that they need. One of the major reasons for this failure is inadequate insurance coverage, which makes mental health care unaffordable.

Insurance coverage for mental illness has long been separate from and unequal to general health insurance. Mental illness coverage is much more restricted than coverage for other illnesses, such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Limits on hospital stays, restricted numbers of psychotherapy sessions, higher co-payments, monthly limits on prescription drug costs, and caps on lifetime benefits are ways that insurance companies try to contain the cost of mental health coverage. Furthermore, accessing this coverage is complicated and confusing because insurance companies have "carved out," or separated, plans of coverage for mental health care. These "carved out" plans are run by subcontracted companies whose only task is to manage mental health services. The separate but unequal insurance coverage for mental illnesses has been called a lack of "insurance parity."

Tight restrictions imposed by insurance companies pose major barriers to obtaining timely mental health care. This generally means that at some point a person with mental illness must either enter the public health care system or receive no care at all. Individuals affected by mental illness report managed care is an immediate barrier and is often one of the primary reasons for the delay of treatment, especially for individuals who experience their first symptoms/episode of mental illness. The longer the delay in treatment the more costly the treatment will be when one does enter the health care system. "Untreated mental illness costs American businesses, government and families at least seventy-nine billion dollars annually in lost productivity and unemployment, broken lives and broken families, emergency room visits, homelessness and unnecessary use of jails and prisons."<sup>46</sup>

Studies show that there is no financial justification for a lack of insurance parity. Advocates such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN) support efforts to stop discriminatory insurance practices against those with mental illness. In 2005, NAMI researched and published "Grading the States: A Report on America's Health Care System for Serious Mental Illness" which disputes the insurance industry's claim that caring for persons with mental illness costs more and requires stringent management. In addition, a study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* concluded that the implementation of parity, when coupled with management of care, could improve insurance protection without increasing total costs.<sup>47</sup>

## 3. *Managed Care*

Managed Care is a controversial issue when discussing insurance coverage for people with mental illness. Insurers' explanations for higher co-pays, limited life time coverage, and limited number of days in the hospital is confusing and complicated, especially to individuals and families affected by mental illness.

Individuals affected by mental illness report that managed care is an immediate barrier and is often one of the primary reasons for the delay of treatment, especially for individuals who experience their first symptoms/episode of mental illness. While managed care has made it possible for more people to receive treatment for mental illness, it has resulted in more delays and less comprehensive treatment, according to the Rand Corporation's division on health, Rand Health:

When unmet need is defined as *delays in receiving treatment or receiving less treatment than desired*, persons in managed care had unmet needs more often than those in unmanaged care. In contrast, when unmet need is defined as *no care*, those in managed care had unmet needs less often. Although managed care may make it easier to access some treatment, it may make it harder to get comprehensive care [emphasis in original].<sup>48</sup>

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has published a report which cites the failure of managed care plans in many areas, including, "easy hospital admission and flexible hospital length-of-stay ... immediate access to all effective medications, suicide attempt viewed as a medical emergency, [and]... consumer and family participation in their treatment planning and care."<sup>49</sup>

Despite the lobbying efforts of the largest advocacy group in this country, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and many other faith-based groups, Congress has failed to pass a bill requiring equal payments for mental health coverage. Such a bill would greatly enhance access to quality, timely, and affordable mental health care.

## 4. *Obstacles to Obtaining Available Federal and State Benefits*

Persons with mental illness commonly encounter obstacles when trying to obtain federal and state benefits and services. The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health wrote in 2003, "consumers (users of mental health services)

often feel overwhelmed and bewildered when they must access and integrate mental health care, support services, and disability benefits across multiple disconnected programs that span federal, state and local agencies. ...”<sup>50</sup> Initial obstacles encountered include: limited knowledge of what benefits are available, the criteria for qualification, and cumbersome, lengthy, and confusing application procedures. In addition applicants are often refused upon their first attempt and must apply again. Therefore most applicants need help through the application process.

Evidence shows that the more serious a person’s mental illness, the harder it becomes to receive the treatment and assistance required by law.<sup>51</sup> There is also strong evidence that due to delays in seeking and qualifying for benefits, many are forced into homelessness and commit petty crimes, such as panhandling and shoplifting, in order to survive.<sup>52</sup>

Discharge plans are often inadequate. Patients leave the hospital without housing, or the means to secure food and needed follow-up medical services. Lacking the necessary information and skills to obtain such basic resources, persons with serious mental illness will likely be hospitalized again. In a similar manner, thousands of persons with mental illness who are released from prison have no access to basic necessities. The President’s New Freedom Commission found that, “... one of the groups most isolated from society are consumers who attempt to return to the community after being incarcerated. Linking people with serious mental illness to community-based services ... is an important strategy to reintegrate [persons with mental illness] into their communities.”<sup>53</sup> Failure to do this for a population that is commonly “poor, uninsured, disproportionately members of minority groups, homeless, and living with co-occurring substance abuse and mental disorders”<sup>54</sup> makes it “likely that they will continually recycle through the mental health, substance abuse, and criminal justice systems.”<sup>55</sup>

In addition to the complicated process for obtaining assistance, there are also practical obstacles, such as getting transportation to and from medical appointments, securing child-care during those appointments, gathering necessary documents (e.g., birth certificate, driver’s license, and proof of legal residence), obtaining an address for receiving benefits, making banking arrangements, and finding interpreters for non-English speakers. “Overwhelm[ing]” is the word used by The President’s New Freedom Commission to describe this process.<sup>56</sup> When a brain disorder impedes a person’s concentration, memory, and ability to organize and plan, the application for government benefits is often close to impossible and requires much assistance from others, such as family, friends, and the church.

#### D. *Families in Exile*

Serious mental illness renders not only an individual in exile, but whole families as well. Below are the stories of two different, unrelated families. The first is the story told by the mother of an adult son who receives a diagnosis of a serious mental illness. The second story is told by the daughter of a woman with a serious mental illness but who never receives treatment.

##### *A Mother’s Story*

It had been a frantic spring and summer. In the space of a just a few weeks, our twenty-two year old daughter moved from our small town to a large metropolitan area three hundred miles away. Our younger son and his fiancé announced in March that they were getting married in May, instead of waiting a year as they had been planning. So my husband and I drove U-Hauls, hosted a wedding, served on our church’s session and on a pastor nominating committee, helped care for our own parents who were ninety-three and ninety-five respectively, and worked with our oldest son to help him purchase a first home. In other words, life was happening. And, then, one fall day ... the phone rings.

At the other end of the phone is our twenty-six year old, newly married son, now living twelve hundred miles away, who says, “Mom, I need to tell you something ... I’ve been feeling really strange lately and I’ve been hurting myself.” My mind had no idea what this meant, but my stomach did. I was instantly sick ... I wanted to throw up ... my skin crawled ... I knew I had entered a place I had never been before.

I tried to keep my voice light, “What do you mean, hurting yourself?”... “I’ve been hitting my head on the concrete blocks in the shower at the gym. I don’t have any skin left on my forehead.” ... “Why, why are you doing this?” ... “I don’t know, Mom, but I’m scared. Cary [his new wife of five months] says I need to see a doctor. Do you think I should? ... “Oh, yes, honey, I do. Do you want me to come out to go with you?”... “No, that’s okay, Cary will go with me. I’ll let you know what the doc says, okay?”... “Okay, I’ll be waiting to hear. Love you.”... “Love you too, Mom. Bye.”

In that way, in the space of five or six minutes, life changes—completely. My world was suddenly an unknown landscape where I anticipated assault at every turn. I got through the following day—a day filled with a sense of overwhelming grief; already, I knew my son’s life was irreversibly altered. I grieved his losses—and mine. Finally, in early evening the call came; the doctor had been seen. And I discovered inside this frightened young man a strength I had never suspected. “Mom,” he says, “the doctor thinks I should go into the hospital and I agree. I’m going to check in at 6:30 in the morning.” “What hospital?” I ask. “A psychiatric hospital,” he says. All of my worst imaginings are confirmed, but he is clearly relieved and, while the anxiety is there in his voice, he is purposeful. I say to him—as I would say a thousand times over in the coming

years—“You’ve made such a courageous decision; we couldn’t be more proud of you.” And then the practical emerges, “How will you cover the expense, will your insurance take care of it?” “I think so,” he says. “Well, don’t worry,” I say, “we’ll manage it and Dad [a stepfather who has been his Dad since the age of five] and I will get the earliest flight we can get in the morning.” “Okay, Mom, see you both when you get here and, Mom, I’m going to be okay.”

It suddenly hits me—with all that he is struggling with, he’s worried about me. And with that realization, the pain became unbearable and I sobbed. At this point his father and I felt we had two options—pull further and further into ourselves and become more and more overwhelmed by our fears or share this heartbreak with people we knew loved us and would want to be with us in a time such as this. We chose the latter. We made two phone calls. They were not to other family members but to our pastor and to two other church members and dear friends. The three of them were at our kitchen table within the hour. We talked, we cried, we prayed. Of course, the love and companionship of our pastor and friends did not allay all of our anxiety. Nor, did our firm belief that Christ was with us at that kitchen table take away all of our fears, but the communion at that table did make it possible for us to get through the evening and to take the necessary next steps to get to our son’s side.

I thought I had done things in my life that had required me to muster all the strength of will that I possessed. I was wrong; nothing had been required of me compared to finding the strength to open the door to that locked hospital unit, nor to seeing my six feet, 220-pound son looking dazed, in shorts and t-shirt, scabs covering his face and dozens of deep, self-inflicted cuts all over his forearms and thighs. As I held him in my arms I couldn’t breathe—thoughts swirled—how much pain must he be feeling to have done this to himself, how long had he been holding that pain in that it had to explode like this, what had I done to cause this, how could I have prevented it? Questions ... guilt ... helplessness ... pain. I felt destroyed ... I wanted to scream, to cry. I had entered a totally foreign world and I was terrified—and, worst of all, I knew my terror was nothing as compared to his.

Millions have entered the world of mental illness as I did that day and for far too many, I fear, it remains a strange and alien place that is consistently cold and hostile. That has not been my husband’s nor my experience. Our son had the good fortune to receive what we know in retrospect was reasonably good care. And, he had the courage to make the decision not to hide what he was experiencing from his sister and stepbrother or from his larger family, many of whom became sources of comfort and support. And he and his father and I were blessed with the never failing support of our pastor and our church.

Each Sunday, for months, our son was remembered in prayer and although our pastor, who was quite new to our church, had never met our son, he wrote him, he called him, he offered to accompany us on visits to him or to go himself. And because our son’s condition was known throughout our church family, one Sunday soon after his hospitalization, a member of our congregation told us about a local support group for families of persons living with mental illness. Later that day she called us with all the details so that we could soon attend a meeting. That support group was the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and we credit that group, along with the support we received from our church, with making the first few months after our son’s diagnosis bearable for us. It was through NAMI that we came to understand our son’s diagnosis—clinical depression so severe he was psychotic, borderline personality disorder, anxiety disorder, and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). The NAMI also equipped us with skills we could use in helping him get the treatment he needed and with helping us reclaim our own lives by learning that self-care is an important part of loving and being of help to someone who lives with a mental illness.

I fear, however, that our experiences may be the exception. Because our son was living more than a thousand miles away, it was not always possible for us to give him the kind of assistance he needed. Knowing we were worried about him having dependable transportation to his outpatient program, our pastor called a fellow pastor in a Presbyterian church near where our son was living and asked that he give our son any assistance possible. No contact was ever made. Likewise, when we were with our son we attended yet a different nearby Presbyterian church and I asked, in a written request, that the pastor visit our son. No visit ever occurred. This lack of response was very hurtful to us, because our son needed help and reassurance and we knew of few places to turn to. We had thought we could count on our church wherever it was located to attempt to help us in our time of need, but we were wrong. Fortunately, the compassion we found in our home church kept us believing in the capacity and mission of our church to help those who are hurting. And it has kept us praying that the understanding, the love and the support we found in what was our neediest hour will be present soon in all of our churches for all who live with mental illness and for their families.

The fear and great sadness that my husband and I experienced in the first few days and weeks of our son’s illness has abated. We continue to grieve the ways in which his illness limits his options and prevents him from taking full advantage of his many gifts. But this pain is more than offset by thankfulness that he is in recovery and that he has a full life. He has taken many steps forward and, yes, a few backward, but he continues on a path toward increasing wellness and he, his father, and I are filled with hope. Thanks be to God.

*A Daughter's Story*

I grew up with a mother who had a mental illness. It was never diagnosed. Rather, spiritual language was used to explain the condition. We would refer to her erratic behavior as “the dark night of the soul” or as a “demonic attack.” What was predictable was the unpredictable. Many times I went to bed crying because of the verbal attacks, and vindictive God language my mother used as weapons to keep us under wraps. God was not pleased with me. I was going to hell if I did not change my attitude. I was ungrateful and God would never bless me if I had evil thoughts about my mother in my head (which I did, so that sealed it!). I would try hard to please, but it never seemed good enough. If I looked forward to something, and let it matter, the rug would be pulled out from under me. I learned to neutralize events—NOT to let things matter. I said “whatever” a lot and meant it. For instance, we would be packed and ready to go on a vacation that I had been looking forward to for weeks. Then my mother would get a word “from the Lord.” It was not God’s will that we go on vacation after all. We would unpack and file back into the house, halfway convinced that we had been spared a terrible accident, or some other dreaded happening. I was never fully convinced however, that “mother” was the voice of God. At night when she woke me to cast demons out of me, mumbling incoherently, I wondered whether this is what other mothers did to their daughters. When we spent all Saturday casting evil spirits out of the house—going into every room of a huge four story dwelling—I would wonder whether other families spent their Saturdays doing this sort of thing as well. When she vomited to purge herself, or when she kept to herself for long hours up in her room with the door locked, I had the slim suspicion that perhaps things were not okay.

When I would awake (again in the middle of the night) and hear my parents screaming at each other, slamming doors, and my mother would disappear to an apartment in another city for a month or two at a time, I knew it wasn’t all about me. I might have been the most common target for her verbal lambasting but I came to realize that there was more to it all than just me. It was hard to get validation for this gnawing sense of unease and edginess because I was fairly isolated. I wasn’t really allowed to have friends. It was always OK at first, but then once they came over my mother became convinced that they brought with them a kind of heavy oppression, and I would have to cut the relationship off. It was easier to just not have any relationships at all.

My father was a kind man—a theologian at a well-known educational institution for higher learning. He kept telling me my mother would get better. After a blow up he would assure me that this was the last and final outrage. Yet, at times, when the chaos and anger got to a tipping point he would shake his head and say “Why does she have to be so cruel to you? She not only sticks the knife in, but then she turns it.” I am sure I didn’t know why she had to be so cruel, but at least it was validation for my sense that all was not as it should be, and I clung to his words.

Someday I thought to myself, I would show my parents and the world how life was meant to be lived. I would succeed, I would survive, I would be happy. Meanwhile, I tried to accommodate, ameliorate, and adjust my needs so that my mother’s needs could be met. All of us, my dad, my sister, and myself danced around the mental illness like marionettes pulled this way and that by erratic, unpredictable, strings of mood and temper, chaos and unpredictability. Jumping here, jerking there, we were caught in the web of dysfunction, and, never able to state the problem, were victimized by it.

Years of intensive psychotherapy later as I look back at the shattered landscape of my past, I am amazed that our spiritual language—instead of freeing us—kept us stuck. We were a Christian family. Mental illness doesn’t happen in Christian families! How on earth could we embrace the fact that we weren’t perfect, that somehow we were flawed, diseased, wrong headed? That reality was too threatening. Spiritual language glossed over the psychosis and distortion to create a situation where everything wrong, evil, and bizarre was projected out onto the world. It wasn’t us who had the problem. It was the world. It was “those people” out there who were tainted, wrongly motivated, unable to cope. We had the truth. It might have been a psychotic episode my mother had just experienced, or a lurking premonition that something “bad” was about to happen. Still, instead of naming it “the problem” we called it “truth” and believed that the lie was our salvation.

Today, I am alive because of the grace of God. I have experienced and know firsthand the love of Jesus, which is nothing like the image of God I was raised with. I have come to know myself, others, and the value of relationships that I long ago was denied. Life is full, God is good, and the freedom to love and be loved, a pure gift.

Each of the stories cited above gives its particular perspective on the devastating effects of serious mental illness on families. Below is further discussion of the experience of (a) parents of children with serious mental illness and (b) parents with mental illness raising children.

1. *Families of People with Serious Mental Illness*

The diagnosis of serious mental illness not only changes the life of the person who is affected, but also the lives of all those who surround him or her. Not only individuals with serious mental illness experience exile, but their families as well. One in four American families has a close relative affected by serious mental illness.<sup>57</sup> The sheer number of persons affected by serious mental illness is staggering and yet it remains “... far from the spotlight of public information.”<sup>58</sup>

The 216th General Assembly (2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirmed: “We envision a church and society that welcomes and nurtures all persons, regardless of their family circumstances. . . . We look toward a society in which all members of the family are valued equally, with special attention to children and others who are more vulnerable.”<sup>59</sup> Certainly, people with a serious mental illness should be included in that population which is particularly vulnerable. They and their families are rightful claimants to our “special attention.”

However, instead of special attention, many persons who are living with mental illness, and their families who live among us and are part of our congregations, receive no attention at all. This neglect may result from a lack of knowledge about mental illness within many churches and an unwillingness to become involved in complex and painful situations.<sup>60</sup> It also results from the reluctance of families, because of the severe stigma attached to mental illness, to admit that a family member has a mental illness. In a 1991 *Church & Society* issue, the Reverend John M. Cannon writes: “Mental illness is one of the least understood of all illnesses. The myths and misconceptions that surround it are numerous and generally prejudicial. . . . Families are well aware of this stigma and are apprehensive about exposing themselves or their loved ones to it. No one wants one of their family feared or ridiculed, so they are silent.”<sup>61</sup>

This forced silence, this inability to share and to talk openly about the illness of a loved one, compounds an abundance of other difficult circumstances and painful emotions. Having an ill family member—a son or daughter, a spouse, a sibling, a parent—is sometimes overwhelmingly painful and all-consuming regardless of whether the family member is in the home, living independently, in a hospital, living in community mental health accommodations or homeless.

For example, unlike parents who have a son or daughter diagnosed with a physical illness, those whose offspring have a mental illness are often overcome with guilt. For too long society placed responsibility for mental illness on parents and their ability to nurture. And even though these theories of poor parenting have been debunked, the stigma persists and adds a sense of blame and shame for parents to shoulder. Therefore, we must continue to work to eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness while at the same time also acknowledging that all forms of child abuse and neglect does affect the development of a child physically, mentally, and spiritually. We cannot condone any form of child abuse or neglect, especially parental child abuse or neglect.

Moreover, having a son or daughter, a spouse, a sibling, or a parent with a serious mental illness is similar to experiencing the death of that person, because in so many significant ways the illness takes away the person one has known. He or she is gone along with the dreams and aspirations for him or her. However, the person has not died, and grief lingers. For months, sometimes for years, families have to endure this grief, often without the love, understanding and support from others. Frequently, the grief is accompanied by a sense of rage and anger. Mental illness seems particularly random in nature; all of its causes are not fully understood; and therefore, any understanding as to why it has happened to a member of one’s own family is especially elusive. This combination of profound sadness and anger is a potent emotion, and can be crippling.

There is also a tremendous toll exacted on the entire family by the time and energy spent attempting to care for the person living with serious mental illness. This care requires working with an extremely complex mental health care system that few know about before it is needed, usually under conditions of crisis. Most persons do not know where to turn to get the information they need or the help they require. Many, if not most, families bounce from emergency rooms to physicians to specialists to hospitals to community mental health agencies; an experience that is incredibly time consuming and exhausting. Many times the justice system is involved; and thus additional complications arise. There is also, more often than not, constant worry about how to meet the cost of all the services needed when insurance is absent or inadequate, and how to plan for a time when there may be no one left in the family to care for the ill member.

Frequently, the ill person requires round-the-clock supervision and assistance with medications and accompanying side-effects, constant vigilance to recognize signs of impending problems and crises; and if the potential for violence is present, particularly careful vigilance. Nearly unbearable levels of stress can burden the family members of the person with mental illness. One can reasonably say that having a person with mental illness in one’s family and home can be totally consuming, leaving little if any time for the needs of any and all other family members. This demand on time and energy, coupled with the unpredictable course of the illness and the constant presence of stigma, make “normal” life—friends, social occasions, the activities of other family members, community concerns, congregational life—very difficult. These sacrifices are particularly burdensome to children and young adults who are sometimes required to be caregivers for parents with serious mental illness.

One father writes about his son’s illness in the following way: “I thought that I knew all about illnesses. After all, I had survived a life-threatening car accident, bleeding ulcers, our daughter’s juvenile diabetes, and a bout with cancer. But I knew nothing of illness until I confronted schizophrenia. It is like no other illness I have encountered.”<sup>62</sup> Likewise, a man describing his wife’s illness confesses, “. . . when it brings a loved one to visible alteration of thought processes and behavior, [it] is the most frightening thing I have experienced in a background that includes some of the experiences, like war, that are reckoned most stressful. To see the loved one out of control . . . to watch such behavior and be unable to help is desolation of a special kind for a life partner to endure.”<sup>63</sup> The Reverend John Cannon supports these statements, writing, “family life be-



comes unsettled ... needs of other family members and management of the usual tensions that arise in everyday living ... must be done in a climate filled with bewilderment, embarrassment, and secrecy. Living with a mentally ill loved one is exhausting emotionally to every member of the family. It can and in some cases does destroy a family.”<sup>64</sup>

A mentally ill person’s awareness of the impact of his or her illness on family members must not go unnoted. A person suffering from mental illness often acknowledges the adverse effects of the effect of his or her illness on parents, partners, siblings and, in some cases, an offspring. Their sense of responsibility for the perceived damage their illness does to the family increases the burden of the illness and further complicates the recovery process. Consequently, caring for the families of those with mental illness and helping to relieve their burdens not only strengthens them, but also helps to bring healing to the family member who is ill.

Through its approval of the *Resolution on the Church and Serious Mental Illness*, the 200th General Assembly (1988) recognized its vital role in lessening the pain and suffering of families of the mentally ill, saying, “Reclaiming health as a central dimension of the church’s faith and life is of particular importance as the church seeks to meet persons and families struggling to cope with mental illness.”<sup>65</sup>

## 2. *Parents with Mental Illness Raising Children*

Parents with serious mental illness are at risk of losing custody of their children if their symptoms are not well managed and affect their parenting skills. Although the diagnosis of a mental illness is not a sufficient reason to lose custody, mental illness can make it more difficult for parents to care for their children competently. Although the parents who have mental illness may be caring and loving, they may be forced to give up custody of their children when their condition worsens. During acute phases of their mental disorder, parents may have trouble caring adequately for their children and face forced intervention by child welfare authorities. While it is imperative to ensure the safety and welfare of each child, it is highly traumatic for both parents and children to face this possibility. The trauma of losing custody adds another layer of suffering, which complicates recovery. Loss of hope, guilt and shame, alienation from the social service system, and added stigma increase the burden of already troubled individuals. Parents now have to navigate the maze of child protective services and the courts. Supervised visitations are intrusive, regular visitations burdensome, and evaluations threatening. They can feel betrayed by mental health professionals who are required to report abusive situations, and they feel hurt when their children exhibit mixed loyalties between themselves and their court-appointed guardians. This is especially true when children are placed with family members, who may already be in conflict with the parent.

Unfortunately, due to fear of custody loss and these other complications, parents exhibiting an exacerbation of their symptoms may avoid contacting health care professionals. This avoidance can make matters worse, as delay can worsen an already deteriorating situation, making it more likely that they would indeed lose custody. Clergy and other church caregivers can be good avenues of help because parents may feel safer coming to them rather than mental health professionals. This first line of response may be adequate to help stabilize their condition. If it is not, the church caregiver may then have to notify child protective services. Although this may feel to be a gross breach of trust, the child’s welfare is primary. When handled well, a favorable outcome can be achieved. For example, the family may be placed in contact with much needed community services for both parents and children. To help sustain trust in the church caregiver, it is of utmost importance for the caregiver to provide close follow-up once a call to protective services is made. If legal matters arise, the help of an attorney who specializes in this area can be solicited.

In 1997, the federal government passed the Adoption and Safe Families Act to protect ill parents from losing their custody rights. When parents do lose custody, appropriate treatment and support must be given to the parent so that family reunification can take place. Churches can assist parents who lose custody of their children by becoming familiar with such protections and referring parents to good legal counsel.

Many families find themselves in a no-win cycle of loss. Mentally ill parents fear that seeking help will lead to their losing custody of their children. Therefore they do not seek the psychiatric services they need and their parenting ability is further diminished.

## E. *Twice Exiled: Serious Mental Illness and Disaster Response*

While natural disasters and warfare have always been with us, in the past decade we have experienced these events with greater awareness of the impact of these events on persons with serious mental illness and our national response patterns. With the major terrorist activity on U.S. soil on September 11, 2001, the effects of war in Vietnam and Iraq, and the aftermath of recent hard-hitting natural disasters, we have become more aware of weaknesses in our responses to and treatment of persons with serious mental illness. Emergency shelter settings are poorly equipped to recognize the difference between behaviors triggered by substance abuse and persons with serious mental illness. In the midst of the crisis response, there needs to be available interventions, both to those in crises and to the responders.

*Tom's Story*

During the disaster response of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Tom, a young man in his late twenties, showed up at a local shelter in Louisiana. Because of his bizarre behavior, he was turned away by security who assumed that he was on drugs. Since this shelter was in a local community recreation building, Tom wandered across the street to the curb in front of a neighboring home. The family found him sitting there and after talking with him brought him back to the shelter. Security called the mental health volunteer from Red Cross who discovered that Tom had been on medication, which he had lost in the storm. A trip to the local hospital got some emergency medication and confirmed the diagnosis of schizophrenia. However there were no available beds. The on-call physician claimed that the only resource was the local jail. Therefore, we returned Tom to the shelter.

Although it was nearly midnight, many folks were still up. A small circle of affirming individuals helped Tom to calm down and feel safe. Within the next few days, Tom felt safe to share with others his history of mental illness, his struggle with homelessness, several failed efforts at employment, brief hospitalizations, and even two incarcerations for petty theft done at the bidding of other people who took advantage of his vulnerability. A local pastor was contacted whose congregation took an interest in befriending Tom and helping him seek more appropriate alternatives to jail and homelessness.

God's call for compassion used a variety of persons who went beyond their usual comfort zone and responded to this opportunity for ministry. The culture of the emergency shelter and this congregation was dramatically altered as they focused their passion and compassion with one otherwise homeless person with a serious mental illness.

#### F. *Driven into Exile by Chronic, Extreme Stress: The Examples of Poverty and War*

When disaster strikes, people who already live with serious mental illness often suffer more than people without. In addition, there is also ample evidence that chronically stressful life circumstances can result in more people developing a mental illness. Considering all mental illnesses, not just serious ones, a large study of more than 100,000 people shows that the poor are more vulnerable. Socioeconomic status affects "the development of mental illness directly, as well as indirectly through its association with adverse, economically stressful conditions among lower income groups."<sup>66</sup> The extreme stress of war also has negative effects on mental health. *Time* magazine reports, "about one third of the 103,788 returning veterans seen at Veterans Administration facilities between September 30, 2001, and September 30, 2005, were diagnosed with mental illness or a psycho-social disorder—such as homelessness and marital problems, including domestic violence."<sup>67</sup> Of this group, 56 percent had two or more diagnosed mental illnesses.<sup>68</sup> The same study shows that 13 percent of those returning veterans were diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), approximately the same proportion as veterans returning from the Vietnam War. However, young soldiers who had been on active duty in Iraq were three times as likely to be diagnosed with PTSD as those over forty.<sup>69</sup> While PTSD falls outside the definition of serious mental illness as defined in this paper, these findings establish the link between a stressful context and mental illness.

Research that focuses on the relationship between serious mental illness and the stress of a lower socioeconomic status is more challenging. It is more difficult to determine whether poverty is the result or the cause of all serious mental illnesses. However, research does show clearly that depression and a lower socioeconomic status are clearly associated.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, the impact begins in the early years. "Low-childhood socio-economic status is associated with a higher lifetime risk of depression."<sup>71</sup> There is also a higher risk for schizophrenia when born into a poor family.<sup>72</sup> However, lower socioeconomic status and serious mental illness cannot always be correlated; there is also evidence that higher social class may be associated with increased risk for bipolar disorder.<sup>73</sup> Much research remains to be done to clarify the complex relationship between socio-economic status and serious mental illness.

#### G. *Violence In Exile*<sup>74</sup>

Perhaps the most damaging myth about people with serious mental illness is that they are dangerous, that their behavior can turn violent at any moment. Perhaps this widespread belief is chiefly responsible for their being exiled from the covenant community. Many people come to church seeking safety and comfort, and the presence of someone with a serious mental illness may threaten their sense of security. Yet, "the vast majority of people with mental illnesses are not violent," according to the National Mental Health Association (NMHA).<sup>75</sup> "In the cases when violence does occur, the NMHA continues, the incidence typically results from the same reasons as with the general public, such as when one feels threatened, or uses alcohol and/or drugs excessively."<sup>76</sup>

It is true that some persons suffering an acute episode of psychosis sometimes do become violent. In such cases churches are responsible for protecting those who might be vulnerable. Family members are at greatest risk for violence at the hand of someone with a serious mental illness.<sup>77</sup> Since the potential for violence may exist, it is important that churches develop and implement a plan for maintaining a safe environment. For congregations who are called to reach out to people whose psychotic symptoms may lead them to acts of violence, mental health professionals can provide advice for churches that wish to

create times and places where the possibility of violence is minimized. These churches can have safety plans in place should they be needed.

### *Bill's Story*

Bill is a forty-one year old male who appears in the church garden one day. He tells ladies working there that he has made and sold cakes before, and they invite him to worship. He soon becomes a regular attendee, and finally joins the congregation.

The pastor learns that Bill once served ten years in prison for robbery, petty crimes, and gang-related activity and is now on parole. He is known at the local outpatient mental hygiene clinic, where he has been diagnosed schizophrenic. He is being seen by a psychiatrist for medication, monitoring, and weekly psychotherapy. In addition to having schizophrenia, Bill is considered to have a character disorder, i.e., a psycho-pathology (personality problems which might prove harmful to other people). However, in the congregation Bill continues to be very polite, courteous, outgoing; and members seem to accept him. They encourage him in his cake baking and open the church to his family when an older brother dies. Later, the pastor encourages him to serve as a chaperone/bouncer for the Friday night teenage group.

During this time, however, Bill does not adhere to his medication regimen, and misses appointments with his therapist and parole officer. He gives out misinformation, uses illegal drugs, and becomes homeless when he can no longer live with his mother. Eventually his therapist and his case manager find a single room where he can lodge. The pastor learns of this turn of events from Bill, but most members of the congregation continue to have a completely different view of Bill. They consider him a "nice young man." For he is indeed charming, pleasant, congenial, and engaging.

After a while Bill returns to prison, and some church members learn the truth of Bill's life. The pastor and another church member are concerned about Bill, but he remains a model church member. Church involvement obviously was providing for Bill some of the love and affirmation that a family ordinarily would. Church had proven to be a stabilizing force in his life. The pastor and the personnel chairperson in whom the pastor confided remain concerned about the possibility that harmful aspects of Bill's personality might emerge in church.

How should Christians balance the moral duty to take some risks to help persons with mental illness over against the obligation to protect others whom they might harm?

Sometimes moral responsibility requires choosing not between a good thing and a bad thing, but between two goods that are in tension, as in this instance. How were the church leaders to balance the good of fully including persons with serious mental illness within the congregation over against the other good of protecting congregation members from possible harm? Sometimes achieving one good may require compromising, at least to some degree, another. The recent killings at one university are another case in point. The killer had a record of serious mental illness, but laws protecting the privacy of his medical information hindered it from being shared in a way that might have prevented the tragedy. In that instance, the values of communal security and individual privacy were in tension. When goods are in tension like this, we should strive to preserve as much of each as possible, instead of sacrificing one entirely to achieve the other.

Of course, the greater risk is that people with serious mental illness will be victims of violence themselves. Life in prison or on the streets makes them vulnerable to physical violence. Within families, they can also be victims of domestic violence, which includes both physical and emotional abuse. Not only are they at risk of being hit, punched, or kicked, but also being ridiculed, humiliated, and insulted. Some believe it is acceptable to sexually abuse people with serious mental illness. Again, congregations have a responsibility to protect people with serious mental illness from violence and abuse of any kind. This may require partnership with mental health providers, social services, lawyers, or the police.

## H. *Specific Peoples, Specific Exiles*

Serious mental illness is closely linked to particular contexts. The impact of age, race, ethnicity, gender, acculturation stressors, and place of residence all affect the shape of the experience of serious mental illness. For that reason, we can say there is no one landscape of the exilic experience.

### 1. *Children and Youth*

Just as adults suffer from serious mental illnesses such as depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia, so too do children. Children also have mental illnesses such as autism, Asperger's syndrome (AS), severe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and reactive attachment disorder that severely disrupt basic life functions of living in a family, community, and a school. Clergy and church staff are in a unique position to help identify children at risk for mental illness, because they are often the first responders to crises, and they become involved in the lives of families in ways that other professionals do not. Identifying children and adolescents who are at risk or who have a mental illness is difficult, as the boundaries be-

tween normal and abnormal behavior are less defined in children than in adults. Further, normal behavior for children is age dependent. For instance, what is appropriate for a six-year-old may be inappropriate for a twelve-year-old. Identifying children who are having difficulties is often perceived as helpful, but it could also be seen as intrusive and stigmatizing.

When identifying children at risk, one needs to consider the circumstances of their development. For instance, children who experience disruptions in the family system, such as a death, exposure to trauma, a marital break-up, domestic violence, or acculturation stresses, are psychologically at risk. Behaviors that are associated with mental illness include isolation, excessive fears or worrying, physical complaints, school avoidance, changes in academic performance, and persistent sadness or rapid changes in mood. They also include oppositional behavior, inattention, impulsivity, difficulties with language, stereotypical or repetitive behavior, having a lack of social cues, literal thinking or confused thinking, and changes in one's peer group.

Because federal law requires that all students receive equal access to a public education, special attention must be given to children with educational disabilities. Schools are required to provide services to help each child compensate for disability so that each has a fair footing with other children. Such fairness is mandated by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its recent revisions.<sup>78</sup> Special education requirements pertain not only to children with learning disabilities, but also to those with mental conditions that impede their education. Major psychiatric illnesses such as major depression or bipolar disorder are covered, as well as less severe conditions.

The IDEA requires that treatment services be provided free to all families without regard to the level of their income. Such services can be delivered both in the school and at home. Services may include individual and family therapy, receiving guidance from an in-home behavioral specialist, respite care, and residential placement.

Unfortunately, many children eligible for such services are often overlooked or underserved. Sometimes eligible children are shortchanged because of governmental budget restraints. Although the IDEA requires schools to search out children in need, parents already have to advocate vigorously to get their children the help they need.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has generally made life harder for children with special educational needs. This is so because the No Child Left Behind legislation evaluates schools by how well all of their students do on standardized tests. Children in special education, children who speak English as a second language, and children from low-income families tend to bring down these scores.

Parents whose children have mental illness sometimes must contend with school staff and other parents who are ill-informed, resistant, and hostile. They may hold parents responsible for their children's odd or disruptive behaviors because they assume these ensue from poor parenting, not brain-based physiological diseases. Parents whose children suffer from mental illness often worry too that they will lose custody of them, or that they will lose their legal right to superintend their education. Ironically, special education programs guard against parents losing this right by putting them in charge of mandated educational teams. Custody of their children may have to be relinquished occasionally for parents to obtain residential health care for their children in some states. There is a critical shortage of child and adolescent psychiatric care and in-patient beds throughout the country.

## 2. Rural Populations

"Urban culture and its approach to delivering mental health services dominate mental health services. ... Rural America is shrinking in size and political influence. ... As a consequence, rural mental health services do not figure prominently in mental health policy," according to *Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General* (1999).<sup>79</sup>

This failure to understand and address the needs unique to rural populations has led to a vast number of persons with mental illness going untreated. Even when rural residents are able to procure treatment, they "enter care later in the course of their disease than their urban peers, enter care with more serious, persistent, and disabling symptoms, and require more expensive and intensive treatment response. For rural racial and ethnic minorities these problems are compounded by their minority status and the dearth of culturally competent or bilingual providers in medically under served areas."<sup>80</sup> Succinctly put, many rural Americans have inadequate access to care, and they face a shortage of highly trained care providers—85 percent of the 1,669 federally designated mental health professional shortage areas are in rural America. They must cope with lower incomes, and they are surrounded by a culture where the stigma associated with mental illness is entrenched and pervasive.<sup>81</sup> Fewer rural people have health insurance that covers mental illness than do urban residents. They also spend longer periods without insurance coverage, and they are far more reluctant than their urban counterparts to incur medical bills, including those for prescription drugs.<sup>82</sup>

Seeking help is a difficult step for many rural residents to take and it is nearly impossible to do so confidentially in small, rural communities. Stigma is particularly strong in rural settings. When it is coupled with a long tradition of self-sufficiency,

it is difficult to bring issues surrounding mental illness into the public arena. In addition, this fear of stigma and desire for privacy adds to the isolation of those who are ill and their families and, in part, may explain why the suicide rate among rural men is significantly higher than in urban areas and why the suicide rate among rural women is approaching that of rural men.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, the suicide rate for farmers and ranchers is usually twice the national population average. Given this pattern and the magnitude of the farm crisis in the past three or so decades, it is easy to understand why some call suicide “the most devastating mental health issue found in rural communities.”<sup>84</sup>

Because 45 percent of Presbyterian congregations are in rural areas, the mental health needs of rural communities and the scarcity of mental health resources in those communities should be a concern of all Presbyterians.<sup>85</sup> In the policy statement adopted by the 200th General Assembly (1988), *Life Abundant: Values, Choices and Health Care*, all members of the church are called to remember that, “Health and healing are central dimensions of the faith we profess. We must reclaim the power and promise of God’s gifts of wholeness for our life ... Our understanding of ourselves and God is mirrored by the way we do or do not seek health and wholeness for ourselves, our communities and the world.”<sup>86</sup>

### 3. *Veterans and Serious Mental Illness*

In most congregations, there will be a percentage of veterans or families of veterans. This places the church in an optimal position to identify veterans with severe mental illness and the opportunity to make appropriate referral. This population group transcends race, ethnicity, gender, and age.

Veterans have a high incident rate of PTSD, paranoid schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder, which may contribute to substance abuse and homelessness. In addition, the suicide rate is three times the general population. According to NAMI, “nearly one third of homeless persons are veterans ... approximately 43% of homeless veterans have a diagnosis of severe and persistent mental illness, and 69% have a substance abuse disorder.”<sup>87</sup> Some have estimated that 15,000 (or more) Vietnam veterans have committed suicide since returning home.<sup>88</sup> After being released from jail or prison, “67 % of Vietnam veterans diagnosed with PTSD received their diagnosis.”<sup>89</sup>

Seeking help is difficult for veterans. They have been instilled with a “can do” attitude and fear the stigma of appearing weak to their peers. Fortunately, there are many resources to assist veterans. Unfortunately, many churches are unaware of them. Veteran Administration Hospitals can channel veterans into the proper area for treatment. When there are financial concerns, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) office can assist in explaining what benefits are available. In addition, such volunteer service organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), will advocate for the veteran individually and politically.

### 4. *Genders and Serious Mental Illness*

Gender matters in mental illness. For example, there are twice as many women diagnosed with depression than there are men.<sup>90</sup> Men experience the onset of schizophrenia earlier in life than women.<sup>91</sup> Men with bipolar disorder abuse drugs and alcohol at greater rates than women. Researchers believe that a complicated interaction between biological and psychosocial factors determines such differences.

It is clear that the disparity in access to social power renders women more vulnerable to some mental illnesses. “Gender is a critical determinant of mental health and mental illness,”<sup>92</sup> states the World Health Organization. “Gender determines the differential power and control men and women have over the socioeconomic determinants of their mental health and lives, their social position, status and treatment in society and their susceptibility and exposure to specific mental health risks.”<sup>93</sup> For example, the physical, mental, and sexual abuse of women and girls render them more vulnerable to depression, one study showing that over half of depressed women are survivors of domestic violence.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, advocacy for the rights of women and girls is a step toward improving their mental health.

While some claim issues related to women’s reproductive capacity are related to differences in mental illness incidence, it remains unclear how physiological differences between men and women affect the disparities between their vulnerability to and experience of serious mental illness. Regardless of how mental illness is manifest in males and females, the church should strive to give comfort and support as wisely and ably as possible, to both women and men, girls and boys.

### 5. *Race and Serious Mental Illness*

Concerted and continued efforts to promote greater access and culturally responsive mental health services are critical for racial and ethnic groups. Race and ethnicity in addition to other cultural diversity considerations like language, gender, geographic location, and physical ability affect mental health and care. Addressing mental health challenges is influenced by how individuals from various groups understand and make sense of their social world.<sup>95</sup> In addition, individuals classified in the lowest socioeconomic income level, education, and occupation categories are about two to three times more likely than those in the highest stratum to have a mental disorder.<sup>96</sup> Many of these individuals identify as racial and ethnic people. Cul-

turally proficient delivery of mental health services takes into account social risk and cultural factors, incorporating these considerations in assessment, diagnosis, and analyses of the mental health of racial and ethnic group members.<sup>97</sup> More research is necessary in order to clarify the role that social and cultural factors have had and continue to have in the mental health of racial and ethnic populations in the United States. The following paragraphs contain data about specific racial and ethnic populations.

a. *Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders*

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders are one of the fastest growing racial and ethnic groups in the United States. The Asian American population alone was about 3 percent of the total population in the United States in 2000.<sup>98</sup> Understanding the cultural differences that exists within this growing population is important for the purposes of planning appropriate mental health care services.<sup>99</sup> However, research studies conducted with Asian refugees and immigrant populations have revealed that the portion of this population most acculturated to the U.S. culture more frequently shows western types of disorders.<sup>100</sup>

b. *Black/African Americans*

According to the 2000 United States Census Bureau, 12.9 percent of the total United States population identified themselves as Black/African Americans.<sup>101</sup> This group of Americans is ethnically diverse; and its size and ethnic diversity is increasing as more immigrants arrive from the continent of Africa and Caribbean Islands.<sup>102</sup>

From a historical point of view, living in the United States has been particularly stressful for most Black/African Americans, who have experienced egregious social prejudice and segregation perpetuated by negative attitudes and beliefs related to racial and ethnic group membership. Today, many Black/African Americans still experience a variety of health challenges, and bear a disproportionate burden of mental health problems related to historical and present day life experiences. In addition, some research has revealed gender differences in rates of mental illness for Black/African Americans. For example, the prevalence rates of depression, phobias, and anxiety disorders are higher among Black/African American women than Black/African American men. Black/African American women reported higher incidents of medical, psychiatric, family-social, and employment problems than did Black/African American men. Black/African American men reported higher incidents of legal and alcohol-related problems than did Black/African American women.<sup>103</sup> However, the higher incidents reported by Black/African American men may be attributed in some cases to self-destructive mental disorder behaviors such as alcoholism, drug abuse, and criminal activities that increase the probability of their encounter with law enforcement and the judicial system.<sup>104</sup>

c. *Hispanic/Latino/a Americans*

Hispanic/Latino/a Americans represented about 12.5 percent of the total United States population in the year 2000.<sup>105</sup> Like most of the other racial and ethnic groups living in the United States, Hispanic/Latino/a Americans do not always receive the quality health care services they need. Language barriers often limit this group's ability to utilize major mental health services. In addition, increasing evidence suggests that Hispanic/Latino/a Americans are less likely to receive evidence-based care in accordance with professional treatment guidelines in clinical settings in the United States.<sup>106</sup> However, there are social and cultural patterns that can promote mental health within the Hispanic/Latino/a community (i.e., the value of families, which provide support and act as a preventive factor for serious mental illness).

d. *Native Americans/Alaskan Natives*

Comprising 0.9 percent of the U.S. population, many Native Americans/Alaskan Natives suffer an unequal burden of mental health problems as compared to white Americans.<sup>107</sup> In addition, some Native Americans/Alaskan Natives suffer from considerable health disparities as compared with the general United States population, including drastically higher incidence and prevalence of preventable diseases such as diabetes, substance abuse disorders, particularly alcoholism, and complications. The under funding of health-care programs, such as the Indian Health Service, and socioeconomic factors have contributed to the health disparities cited above among Native Americans/Alaskan Natives.<sup>108</sup> There is an extreme demand for culturally sensitive health-care programs and providers that can address this group's physical and mental health care needs.

In summary, Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, Hispanic/Latino/a Americans, Black/African Americans, Asian American/ Pacific Islanders, and Middle Eastern Americans are more likely to experience inadequate mental health services due to social, cultural, and economic issues. Not only do biological, spiritual/religious and psychological factors affect the incidence and prevalence of one's mental illness, social conditions such as poverty, unemployment, and racial and ethnic oppression and discrimination inform whether individuals will seek mental health services and the availability and quality of services received.

6. *Pastors and Seminarians*

Through the committee on preparation for ministry (CPM), the *Book of Order* directs presbyteries to become acquainted with candidates for ministry specifically (G-14.0305). In order to fulfill this mandate, presbyteries should offer education for sessions, congregations, and ministers about serious mental illness, and support when necessary. This mandate to maintain these “ongoing relationships takes seriously the unique background, experience, and personal attributes of each candidate for pastoral ministry.”<sup>109</sup>

For ministers just beginning their pastoral work, their first call is a time both of challenge and stress, “a time when one can benefit greatly from the continuing, planned support of one’s congregation and presbytery.”<sup>110</sup> For pastors with a serious mental illness, stress can reveal needs that are not always apparent at first, nor well understood. Presbytery staff who are well-equipped to pastor to pastors are crucial for the health of every minister, but particularly for pastors who have a mental illness. Pastors who face mental illness should be encouraged that such illness, when adequately addressed, can enhance their ministerial effectiveness. The 2006 *Presbyterian Panel Survey on Mental Illness* revealed that 50 percent of pastors who reported having mental illness indicated that they were more empathic and compassionate to those with burdens, and more knowledgeable about mental illness and treatment options. This was in contrast to only a small portion (7 percent) who responded that having mental illness negatively affected their ministry.<sup>111</sup>

The 200th General Assembly (1988) noted: “All the people and structures of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are called to ministry and mission with those afflicted with serious mental illness. ... In fulfilling this ministry and mission, the church at all levels should ... support increased understanding and the development and training of leadership ... through education and training in seminaries, consultations and network-building at national and regional levels, through workshops and continuing education events, and through intentional use of church periodicals and both regular and special educational resources.”<sup>112</sup> Pastors and seminarians should be included in the church’s care for people with mental illness.

Although the church calls pastors to minister to persons with serious mental illness, results from the 2006 *Presbyterian Panel Survey on Mental Illness* indicate that seminaries do not adequately equip pastors in this respect.<sup>113</sup> For example, a large majority of pastors responded that their seminary training equipped them “not too well” or “not well at all” in:

- developing church programs for people with mental illness (92 percent of respondents);
- providing therapy (77 percent of respondents);
- understanding mental illness (67 percent of respondents);
- relating to those with a mental illness (61 percent of respondents); and
- recognizing and making an appropriate referral (53 percent of respondents).

The survey also shows that seminaries often do not adequately train future pastors to handle crisis situations. This finding is a serious concern because pastors are often first responders in crises. Slightly more than 60 percent of clergy respondents indicated that their seminary training prepared them poorly to respond to trauma, child abuse, and domestic violence. Almost half indicated they were not well-equipped to respond appropriately to suicidal or homicidal persons.

One way for church members’ needs to be addressed is for seminaries to require that students study mental health, and in their fieldwork interact with people with mental illness, and their families. Seminaries have already been encouraged “to consider expanding opportunities for such learning in M.Div., D.Min., and continuing education programs.”<sup>114</sup> These programs would greatly benefit not only seminarians but pastors as well.

It is important for pastors to identify a referral network when first arriving at a new call. Referring a church member to a mental health professional is not a substitute for rendering good pastoral care; rather it may be the most effective way to do so. Ongoing relationships and ongoing education between the pastor-seminarian and presbyteries, committees and schools to which they relate, is an essential component in addressing the issue of serious mental illness in the church.

## V. God’s Call to Comfort

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Matt.11:28, NRSV)

For many who live with serious mental illness, life in exile can include homelessness, addiction, suicidal thoughts, discrimination, families in pain, violence, and barriers to employment and mental health services, as outlined above. These aspects of exile are shaped by gender, race, and age, and are especially challenging for people seeking ordination or who are already ordained. Yet God does not abandon us, God is with us still. We can proclaim to people living with serious mental illness the words of the prophet Isaiah, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land

of deep darkness—on them light has shined” (Isa. 9:2, NRSV). Many congregations have found fruitful and faithful ways to respond in ministry to people with serious mental illness.

#### A. *Many Congregational Responses*

When the church welcomes individuals who have been in exile, the church itself moves closer to the covenant community we are called to be. As we offer comfort, we ourselves move closer to God. By the grace of God, churches have responded to God’s call to comfort the exiles in many different ways. In so doing, they are extending Jesus’ invitation to the weary and heavily laden to come to him for comfort and rest.

Results from the 2006 *Presbyterian Panel Survey on Mental Illness* indicate that about half of lay respondents and most ministers would like their congregations to do more to welcome people with mental illness.<sup>115</sup> Approximately 80 percent responded that people with serious mental illness “have gifts to bring to the church.” Yet, although there is clearly an interest in ministering to and with people with serious mental illness within the church, this interest is not acted upon very often. For example, only 16 percent of elders stated that their congregation provided space for a support group for people living with mental illness. Even less, 7 percent of elders, report that their churches are providing space for support groups for family members or caregivers of people with mental illness. Furthermore, 7 percent or less stated that they had heard a sermon about mental illness; 10 percent had held a prayer or healing service for people with mental illness; and 5 percent had a class on the topic. Even more disconcerting, only 4 percent stated that their congregations advocated for public policy on behalf of those with mental illness.<sup>116</sup> In contrast, there is a keen interest, especially voiced by pastors and family members of people with mental illness, to obtaining resources to help them minister in this area. Such resources include guides for ministry with people who have a mental illness, for conducting Bible studies on mental illness, and for setting up support groups.<sup>117</sup>

Although services currently provided by congregations to persons with serious mental illness are insufficient, the members of the Task Force on Serious Mental Illness met with members of several PC(USA) churches that are ministering in exemplary ways. The following paragraphs describe these ways.

##### 1. *Hospitality*

In many instances, churches said that they did not have a program in mind when they first got involved in ministry with persons with serious mental illness. They simply wanted to be hospitable. They felt compassion for people who were hungering for acceptance and fellowship; and so, they began to eat with them, go to a movie with them, or bowling. Camaraderie paved the way for these new friends to attend church. As more and more people with serious mental illness attended, the next step in hospitality was for a congregation to change some of the ways that it worshiped, in order to make the newcomers more welcome

Some congregations expressed hospitality with no particular emphasis on the uniqueness of people with serious mental illness—they were simply folded into the life of the congregation without special attention to their illness. Other churches articulated their special commitment to hospitality for people with serious mental illness. Still others created specific programs such as support groups or special classes for people living with serious mental illness and their families. All of these have been found to be equally faithful ways to show hospitality.

##### 2. *Prayer-based Support Groups*

One notable form of hospitality is providing spiritual support groups based on prayer. Such groups recognize the genetic, biological, and social aspects of mental illness, yet keep their focus on the redemptive and restorative work of Christ to help people heal from life’s wounds. While many different kinds of groups can help people with mental illness, prayer groups offer a spiritual balm that others cannot provide. Prayer groups include a time for sharing in confidence and a time for praying for each other. Through these gatherings many have found healing for body, soul, and spirit. Prayer groups enable the church to proclaim hope for the despondent, clarity for the confused, and a peace that passes understanding, all through the power of the living God.

##### *Fred’s Story*

Twenty-three years ago our son, Andy, was well into his college training to be a missionary aviator. At age twenty-one he had his first major episode of bipolar disorder. It was very traumatic for our whole family. He quite quickly became very paranoid, delusional, and hallucinatory. We went to our pastor for support. He said, “Well, that’s the end of his missionary career” and didn’t even offer to pray with us. We badly needed support and understanding, but we did not find it then in our church.



This ultimately led Jane and me to a different church where we became involved with its mental illness support ministry, which was just beginning. In the past six years that ministry has grown and developed in unbelievable ways. We feel that this growth has been the result of much prayer.

For the first two and a half years the support group consisted of just persons in caregiving roles. However, when two of these caregivers disclosed that they had a mental illness themselves, we decided to invite those coping with a mental illness, “copers,” to become members of our group. With the addition of “copers,” our support group took off, both in vitality and numbers! The sharing and prayer times became a real blessing to both copers and supporters. More than an hour of each meeting was devoted to prayer with a person who had shared. We continue to have both Christians and non-Christians in our group. In times of great need people are most open to the gospel message that the love of Jesus saves.

Our blessing comes from having a large number of wonderful copers in our fellowship. We found that a large percentage of our copers maintain control over their behavior with medication. They are sensitive and articulate.

We also learned quite early that a copers’ biggest need is to have a friend, and then, to have a fellowship that is understanding, caring, loving, and supportive, and one where it is safe to be honest, and where one feels valued, and accepted as a first class member.

We were led to meet every Thursday night, and to provide our own simple dinner, which adds additional time of relaxed fellowship. Our worship time includes a short devotional led by a copers. A guitarist leads us in singing a couple hymns or praise songs. Our current attendance runs about twenty-five.

One of the reasons that our meetings run smoothly is that we read our guidelines in unison. Those guidelines commit us to confidentiality, not dominating in the sharing time, not interrupting, and not giving advice. Also, we commit to being available to each other for praying.

We call our group H.E.L.P., which stands for Hope, Encouragement, Love, and Prayer. People affected by mental illness can be helped in their recovery by: developing faith in a loving God; hoping for improvement; praying for guidance; living in a community of acceptance, love, and encouragement; and knowing that others care, that we all count and have a purpose in life to carry out.

### 3. *Education*

Some churches have been inspired to be involved in ministry with persons with serious mental illness through sermons, Bible studies, or Sunday school discussions. Their pastors and teachers have informed them of various kinds of mental illness, and related this psychological information to biblical mandates for compassion, tolerance, and justice. This education encouraged many people to share stories of their own experience of mental illness, or that of loved ones or friends. Education sometimes moved church members to become activists, reformers in the field of mental health, because it awakened them to how widespread mental illness is. They began to see that they would have allies in this ministry, and experienced new enthusiasm for it.

In this sense, education is a transforming experience. It involves the transformation of the stranger with serious mental illness into a neighbor, a friend, a sister, a brother, a member of the Body of Christ. Education is much more than the transfer of information; it is rather an invitation to a relationship with someone with a serious mental illness. It is an experience of the scales falling from our eyes so that we see the full humanity of all who live with serious mental illness. (Acts 9:18) In fact, according to an analysis of the *2006 Presbyterian Panel Survey on Mental Illness* results, those who were educated regarding serious mental illness were more willing to personally relate to them.

### 4. *Providing Services*

Some congregations have been engaged in direct delivery of basic services for people with mental illness. Churches serve meals to the hungry, provide shelter for the homeless, house clinics for health-care delivery, and offer church-based counseling services staffed by mental health clinicians. Some provide space in their buildings for support groups or recreational activities for people with mental illness. Such direct services are a vital link to God’s comfort for many who live with mental illness every day. Not only do they provide specific forms of care, but they do so in the name of Christ, and thus offer a sign of his resurrection power to those in pain.

### 5. *Collaboration and Advocacy*

Many Christians find that the more deeply they are involved in relationships with the dispossessed, the outcasts, the invisibles of any locale, the more they realize that there are systemic reasons for their plight. People with serious mental illness struggle not only with their various symptoms; they also struggle with judicial, criminal justice, social service, and health-

care systems that make it much more difficult to get their needs met. Church members who persist in ministry with persons with serious mental illness are likely therefore to act in the role of advocate, and do so in collaboration with citizens outside their circle of faith who are trying to move social systems toward more effective caring. Hospitality the deeper it goes leads to solidarity with those who are advocating for badly needed reform.

Churches can collaborate with other advocacy and service delivery groups in at least two ways. First, churches can make sure that people with serious mental illness receive what the law entitles them to, such as Social Security checks, and low-income housing. Secondly, churches can work with groups advocating changes in public policy in such areas as insurance parity and alternatives to incarceration. Several groups who met with the Task Force on Serious Mental Illness emphasized the importance of forming coalitions with them in their advocacy work. (Refer to Appendix C for Models of Ministry.)

## B. *A Ministry Both Challenging and Rewarding*

### 1. *Patience and Perseverance*

Many people with serious mental illness who attend church elect not to disclose their illness. They participate in church life without any church members knowing of their illness. When a church welcomes persons who struggle more openly with a serious mental illness and whose symptoms may be more apparent, there will be both blessings and difficulties. Persons with cognitive and emotional problems can be trying. For example, a Bible class that feels held back by a member who almost continually complains about his inadequacies must learn to consider their relationship with him or her just as important as the chapter they are attempting to cover. At the same time, some people with mental illness can benefit from loving and constructive feedback regarding appropriate group behavior. Churches have often found that the gospel of Jesus Christ becomes less doctrinal and more incarnational as they persevere in the deeply compassionate way of their Lord.

### 2. *Mixed Feelings*

While church members often have positive feelings when they get involved in ministry with people with serious mental illness, they may have negative ones too; and sometimes they deny the negative ones. Denial is likely to weaken ministries for people living with serious mental illness. Tasks first undertaken with alacrity and enthusiasm can devolve into laborious obligations. Then energy flags and ministries and people suffer.

Mixed feelings are a normal part of many human experiences. Ministry with people with serious mental illness is no exception, especially when one chooses deeper levels of involvement. When these mixed feelings are acknowledged and carefully examined, they enhance both the personal growth of the person providing the ministry as well as the one receiving it. For instance, ministering with a person with severe depression can evoke awareness of one's own grief, or ministering with a person with severe panic attacks may bring up one's hidden anxieties. Recognition and deeper understanding of these feelings can bring healing and wholeness to both the one ministering and to the one receiving care. The following are typical feelings that can hamper ministry.

#### a. *Fear*

Some church members find that they must deal with their fear of persons with mental illness. Such fear often decreases with greater understanding of mental illness. The fear can also be addressed by remembering that persons with mental illness rarely physically harm others. Also, churches can assuage this fear by making sure that experienced staff is present when support groups for people living with mental illness are meeting in church buildings. Often people do not know what to say to a person with mental illness. To treat persons who have a mental illness with kindness and compassion will help, but hearing their life stories will greatly reduce one's anxiety. The more familiar people are with each other the more comfortable they will be.

#### b. *Discomfort*

Discomfort is a common response to persons with mental illness. It may lead to feelings of repulsion that result in rejection. People with mental illness may act differently, speak differently, dress differently, appear disheveled and have poor personal hygiene. They may also have unusual mannerisms, idiosyncratic behaviors, and unconventional habits. While many people cannot be expected to just overlook these marked differences, seeing people as individuals can lead to an acceptance of some differences and create greater openness to a fuller range of human experience.

#### c. *Anger*

Anger is another common response. Those who perceive people with mental illness as lazy and "just looking for a hand out" will often respond with frustration or even anger. It is important to separate the person from the illness, by getting frustrated with the illness and not the person. Setting firm and appropriate interpersonal boundaries can also help to reduce frus-

tration and anger, because boundaries give caregivers personal space. Healthy boundaries also train people with mental illness to gauge how their behavior affects others, so that they can develop more positive habits.

d. *Powerlessness*

In an ongoing relation with a person who suffers with serious mental illness, a common impulse is to try to “fix” the problem, to make the suffering go away. However, because it is not possible for human beings to eliminate the problem of serious mental illness, caregivers often feel powerless and helpless in the face of such suffering. This feeling of powerlessness can be very painful. The challenge, then, is to learn to tolerate these feelings in order to be able to stay present and to offer the gift of friendship. When one’s powerlessness is accepted, and the pain of it is tolerated, then the caregiver may find a source of power that is beyond the realm of the human and from the realm of the divine. The paradox of powerlessness is such that only in recognizing one’s powerlessness does one embrace the Source of all Power.

e. *Joy*

In *Faith & Mental Illness*, Harold Koenig, M.D. writes, “Persons with mental illness challenge faith communities by providing members of those communities with an *opportunity* to live out their faith in a meaningful way. . . . If the faith community responds by loving, supporting, and including the mentally ill, then it can say with pride that it is carrying out the great commandment.”<sup>118</sup> Faith can become dry and dreary, theology can become abstract, and expressions of faith can become mere routine. But in demanding and sometimes difficult service to others, faith is made vividly alive and particularly relevant. Through active service to those with serious mental illness the lives of both the giver and receiver of that service are enriched and both draw closer to God. Ministering to others can fill life with love and joy, even with excitement. When a brother or sister with a serious mental illness is recognized and greeted by name, the joy of that simple act is equally experienced by both. Kindness is contagious. Individuals, families, and faith communities all grow when the stranger becomes friend.

C. *The Church and the Concept of Recovery*

One way to understand the church’s role regarding serious mental illness is in terms of “recovery.” For centuries serious mental illness was considered to be relentless and lifelong by both the medical community and the general public. It was believed that serious mental illness, particularly schizophrenia, was an illness from which one never recovered. This perception greatly influenced plans of treatment for persons with serious mental illness, the community’s regard for these individuals, and the public and private systems designed to treat and care for them. However, with new drug therapies and the organized voices of people with mental illness, their families, and members of the medical community, there emerged a challenge to the notion of permanent incapacity. The focus turned to recovery.<sup>119</sup>

To understand the concept of recovery it is important not to confuse it with the concept of cure. Illnesses can be cured, but one can be in recovery without achieving a cure. Dr. Mark Ragins, a pioneer in the field of integrated services for the mentally ill, writes, “My present conceptualization is that recovery has four components: (1) hope, or a positive vision for the future, (2) empowerment, (3) self-management, and (4) a meaningful role or niche in life.”<sup>120</sup> According to Ragins, these four steps are the way we recover from all of life’s traumas and they are the same four steps that can be utilized in recovery from mental illness. The recovery concept was also fully embraced by the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. In their 2003 report they proclaimed recovery, which they defined as “. . . a process in which people are able to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities . . .”<sup>121</sup> as the goal of a transformed mental health care system. It is also important to note that the commission emphasized, in particular, the role of hope in the recovery process.<sup>122</sup>

Churches enable recovery when we welcome people with serious mental illness into our fellowship. While churches cannot cure mental illness, they can work with a person with mental illness toward his or her unique recovery goals. One such way of walking with individuals who have mental illness is to offer a service for wholeness and healing that is in accordance with the Scriptures, such as James 5:13–16, and the Directory for Worship, *Book of Order*, W-3.5400. In addition, the Pastoral Liturgies section of the *Book of Common Worship* describes services for wholeness that may be provided within community and to individuals in conjunction with appropriate (medical and psychological) clinical treatment. One advocacy group states, “While serious mental illness impacts individuals in many challenging ways, the concept that all individuals can move towards wellness is paramount.”<sup>123</sup>

Grasping the concept of recovery is fundamental to understanding the role of Christian communities in welcoming those with mental illness and working to meet their needs. Well prior to the current emphasis on recovery, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s 1988 policy, *Life Abundant: Values, Choices and Health Care*,” proclaimed: “Health and wholeness . . . are not dependent on the absence of impairment or on physical perfection. One can be injured, possessed of a disabling condition, malformed of body, and yet be ‘healthy,’ quite able to function well if given assistance and opportunity by the community” (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 536). The Christian community is clearly called to provide that assistance and opportunity to those with mental illness and we are a unique source for that critical component in recovery—hope.

## VI. Conclusion

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing!  
For the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones. (Isa. 49:13, NRSV).

Though millions still live in the exile of mental illness, God's call to comfort still stands. God goes before us to bring nurture, companionship, healing, and justice in the lives of all people who cry out for comfort. Like all of human life, there are many aspects of serious mental illness that are beyond our control. Together we pray for the courage, patience, and grace to forbear what we cannot change.

There are also arenas where God's people can exercise the extraordinary power of love, compassion, and hospitality. We can do the work of justice where there is discrimination, inhumane treatment, and callous disregard for the humanity of people with serious mental illness. We can trust the power of God to do more than we can ask for or conceive as we wait and watch for signs of God's Reign. We can proclaim the good news that neither pain of body or mind, nor social stigma and discrimination, nor confinement in prison or life on the streets, nor rejection by family and friends, nor any aspect of serious mental illness can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We offer our gratitude to God for the gifts that people with serious mental illness bring to the church and to the world. We are grateful for ministries with people with serious mental illness, for medications and psychotherapies that offer a healing balm, for the skill and compassion of mental health care professionals, for advocates in the areas of the law, health-care benefits, and public policy, and for the love of families for their members with serious mental illness. We are grateful for the wonders of God's love for all people, especially for God's children with serious mental illness. We give thanks for God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ, whose reach is without bounds.

Out of gratitude for all that God has done, we call the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through this policy, "Comfort My People," to go into the diverse places of exile to find God's children with a mental illness or a serious mental illness. We welcome them home to the love and care of full participation, and representation in this branch of the Body of Christ as described in G-4.0403 of the *Book of Order*:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church. (G-9.0104a)

## Appendix A

## The Journey of the Task Force on Serious Mental Illness

The Coordinating Committee and staff of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) reviewed more than one hundred names and resumes submitted by presbyteries, synods, agencies, and individuals in order to select members for the task force wisely. We, the members of the task force, felt, though, that the Holy Spirit selected us and prepared us for this work long before ACSWP appointed us. We approached our labors with varied backgrounds and perspectives, which helped us to work in complimentary ways. We are pastors, clinicians, family members of persons with mental illness, persons who have suffered from mental illness ourselves, and—all save one who is Roman Catholic—Presbyterians. We all advocate for individuals and families affected by serious mental illness, so we were very grateful for this opportunity to serve.

The ACSWP instructed us to draft a serious mental illness report that we would present to the committee, which would take ownership of the report and consider its readiness for submission to the 218th General Assembly (2008). We convened for the first time in Louisville, Kentucky, in May 2005. We learned about our accountability to ACSWP and the process of getting a proposed policy before the General Assembly. Brenda Gales was elected moderator. Tom Davis agreed to record minutes and moderate the list serve to facilitate our online collaboration.

We heard from representatives from the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA) and the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN). We organized to complete several early writing assignments: a panel survey, a study guide to educate churches and solicit their feedback; and finally—a rather small project that seemed simple at first, but proved more difficult than we had supposed—a working definition of "serious mental illness." The task force then set its calendar and agenda for the remaining five meetings.

In November 2005, the task force met in Rosemont, Illinois. Lee Butler, associate professor of Theology and Psychology, Chicago Theological Seminary, led us in a Bible study. Joan Blundall, director of the Community Based Initiatives: The Higher Plain, Inc., West Branch, Iowa, informed the task force about issues which rural Americans face who have serious mental illness. The task force heard reports from several Presbyterian congregations engaged in ministry with persons living with serious mental illness: Edgewater Presbyterian Church, Chicago; Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago; and, North Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Patricia Gleich, associate for National Health Ministries of the PC(USA) described the work of this office. The task force received reports regarding the panel survey

used by the Research Service Office of the PC(USA), and also the study and feedback booklet that was sent to every presbytery and distributed to their member churches.

In February 2006, we convened in Washington, D.C. Some of our sessions were held in the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO). A paper, "Korean American Perspective on Mental Illness," was presented by task force member, Dr. Kum Ock Kim. The work of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) was outlined, especially the issues of legislative and governmental concern. The executive director of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) discussed issues with us, as did the director of Communications and Public Affairs of the American Psychiatric Association (APA). We met with a legislative aid to Senator Barbara Boxer about proposed legislation, particularly regarding medical insurance parity for mental illnesses. We learned that Senator Boxer had introduced legislation regarding mental health care for returning Iraq veterans.

The task force heard from representatives of the Mennonite Central Committee Washington who informed us of resources produced and available through their offices. We viewed a moving video entitled *Shadow Voices*.

Michael Stoops, director of the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH), and David Harris, a formerly homeless person with serious mental illness, spoke to us about the interrelatedness of homelessness and mental illness. Carolyn Race, former associate for Domestic Poverty and Environmental Issues in the Presbyterian Washington Office, discussed some of the current pertinent legislative issues and anticipated federal budget allocations.

Cynthia Abrams, director of the Alcohol, Other Addictions and Health Care Program of the General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church, addressed the group as a Native American. She spoke about addictions and mental illnesses in various tribes, and how the availability of resources for alleviating these problems varies from tribe to tribe. She spoke of the impact of gaming upon some reservations, and the high rate of suicide among young Native American men.

The task force also heard from L. William Yolton, a retired PC(USA) minister and chair of the local Human Rights Committee in Virginia. He had been a member of PSMIN. The task force then began a lengthy task of writing and rewriting. Assignments were made for our next meeting.

In August 2006, the task force met in San Francisco. A report from Jack Marcum, then the associate for survey research of the General Assembly Council, regarding the results from the *Mental Illness: The Report of the February 2006 Presbyterian Panel Survey* indicated that the returned response was better than usual. The task force heard from representatives of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, who are members of Hope, Encouragement, Love and Prayer (H.E.L.P.); also from a representative from FaithNet; and a retired National Health Ministries associate of the PC(USA).

We continued to edit drafts of the policy statement. We settled on a unifying theme for the report: "Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness." An outline of the proposed policy was developed. A schedule for materials to be submitted was established and writing assignments made.

In November 2006, the task force gathered in Decatur, Georgia. We met with doctors, nurses, and chaplains in the psychiatric unit of Grady Hospital and discussed spiritual concerns of people living with serious mental illness. We also discussed some cultural dimensions of serious mental illness experienced by racial and ethnic minorities. Finally, we began to consider recommendations to follow from our proposed policy statement, recommendations for various entities with our church and society.

In late February/early March 2007, the task force gathered in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Representatives from the Synod of Puerto Rico and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico served as hosts for this major review of the proposed policy paper.

Members of the task force shared in a presentation of their work to ACSWP at its summer meeting in 2007 in Louisville, Kentucky. The ACSWP received it with gratitude and commendation, but also recommended suggestions for strengthening the report. In addition, members of the task force shared in presentations of their work to the Synod Consultation on Comfort My People in the fall of 2007 in Louisville, Kentucky, and to the commissioners to the 218th General Assembly (2008) in San Jose, California.

The members of the task force are most grateful to God, the PC(USA), ACSWP, and each other for the opportunity to serve our neighbors in this way. We pray that our work may provide greater comfort, community, and celebration for all God's people.

The members of the Task Force on Serious Mental Illness included:

Robert Butziger, clergy, Presbytery of San Jose; certified pastoral counselor; president, California Counseling Association;

Ethel Charles, elder, Presbytery of New York City; director, Police Athletic League Senior Center;

Mary Helen Davis, M.D., Roman Catholic, Diocese of Louisville; associate clinical professor, University of Louisville School of Medicine; private practice psychiatrist, Integrative Psychiatry;

Thomas C. Davis, Ph.D., retired pastor, New Castle Presbytery; former pastoral psychotherapist and professor of Ethics and Pastoral Care and Counseling, Florida Center for Theological Studies;

B. Gordon Edwards, pastor, Presbytery of Cimarron; ACSWP chair and liaison to the task force;

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Timothy Engelmann, Ph.D., layperson, Presbytery of San Francisco; licensed psychologist (Calif.), private practice, First Presbyterian Church, Burlingame, California;

Brenda Gales, elder, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta; retired coordinator, Activity Therapy, Grady Hospital, Atlanta, Georgia, volunteer, health clinic coordinator, Clifton Sanctuary Ministries, Atlanta, Georgia;

Leslie Klingensmith, clergy, Presbytery of National Capital; ACSWP liaison to the task force, resigned from ACSWP and the task force early in the process due to family and professional responsibilities;

Kum Ock Kim, M.D. and pastor, Presbytery of New York City; practicing psychiatrist;

Matt Morse, pastor, Presbytery of Detroit;

José R Rodríguez-Gómez M.D., M.P.H., Ph.D., elder, Presbytery of San Juan, Puerto Rico; professor of Socio-Transcultural Psychology, Carlos Albizu University; professor of Statistics and Research Methods, University of Puerto Rico;

Alyce Woodall, elder, Presbytery of Northern New England, retired university vice president, instructor of the National Alliance on Mental Illness “Family to Family” course.

Consultant: Susan J. Dunlap, Ph.D., clergy, Presbytery of New Hope; assistant adjunct professor of Pastoral Theology, Duke Divinity School.

Staff resource person: Belinda M. Curry, clergy, Presbytery of St. Andrew, associate, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

### Appendix B

#### Suggested Resources

This list of resources includes materials that the Task Force on Serious Mental Illness gathered through its speakers’ presentations, referrals received from individuals and groups, and from the members’ research on this subject.

#### *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Resources:*

*Book of Common Worship.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993. This resource provides guidelines for preparation for public worship, which include a service for wholeness. Copies of this publication are available through The Presbyterian Marketplace at <http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace/item.list.jsp>, or by calling the Presbyterian Distribution Service (PDS), 1-800-524-2612. Specify Item # 219918 when placing your orders.

*Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities.* Louisville: Office of the General Assembly (OGA), 2006. This policy approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) encourages ongoing advocacy with and on behalf of people with disabilities in local, national, and international contexts. It provides a substantial theological understanding of living with disabilities. A PDF copy of this report can be downloaded from the PC(USA)’s website at <http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications/living-into-the-body-of-christ.pdf>. Hard copies are available through The Presbyterian Marketplace at <http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace/item.list.jsp> or by calling the Presbyterian Distribution Service (PDS), 1-800-524-2612. Specify PDS #OGA-06-091.

The National Health Ministries Office’s Serious Mental Illness webpage—<http://www.pcusa.org/health/usa/programs/seriousmentalillness.htm>. This website contains information on resources that can be used as worship aids, in group discussions, for the observation of “Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Awareness Sunday” and all other activities where mental illness is a topic.

The Presbyterian, Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA)—<http://www.pcusa.org/phewa>. This website contains information about the Presbyterians for Addiction Action (PAA), the Presbyterian Association of Specialized Pastoral Ministries (PASPM), and the Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN).

*Honest Talk About Serious Mental Illness*, a video for youth and leaders of youth. This resource is designed to facilitate discussions and understanding about the facts and challenges of individual and families living with a mental illness. Promoted as a resource for youth, it is also an excellent resource as an introduction on mental illness for all ages. This resource is available for purchase online with a credit card from The Presbyterian Marketplace at <http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace/index.jsp> or by calling (800) 524-2612. Please specify PDS order # 095301.

*The Congregation: A Community of Care and Healing.* This booklet is designed for study sessions, special interest groups, and Sunday school groups. It provides information that will raise awareness on mental illness and how the faith communities can be a support to individuals and families living with a mental illness. This resource is available for purchase online with a credit card from The Presbyterian Marketplace at <http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace/index.jsp> or by calling (800) 524-2612. Please specify PDS order #25790002.

*Report and Resolution on the Church and Serious Mental Illness* approved by the 200th General Assembly (1988). The booklet offers recommendations to all entities of the church on how to be in ministries with individuals and families living with a serious mental illness. Included are personal stories from individuals, resources for clergy, congregations, seminaries and other Presbyterian groups. To order a

copy, go to the National Health Ministries Office's webpage <http://www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/resources/mental-illness.htm#communityofcare>, or call (888) 728-7228, ext. 8011.

#### Ecumenical Resources:

*Light for All: Worship Resources for Including People with Mental Illness and Disabilities.* Mennonite Central Committee Canada, 2001. This collection of worship materials, including sermons, litanies, dramatic readings, calls to worship, and prayers furthers the inclusion of people with mental illness or disabilities in worship life of the congregation. To order: contact the Mental Health and Disabilities Program, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, R3T 5K9, Phone: 204-261-6381.

Pathways to Promise: Ministry and Mental Illness—<http://www.pathways2promise.org/>. Pathways to Promise is an interfaith technical assistance and resource center which offers a variety of liturgical and educational materials, program models, and networking information to promote a caring ministry with people living with a mental illness and their families.

*Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness* Video and DVD, Mennonite Media, 2005. This 94 minute video/DVD has a collection of personal stories from individuals living with a mental illness and help for congregation on understanding mental illness. To order: contact 1251 Virginia Avenue, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, 800-999-3534 or online at <http://store.mennomedia.org/>. Also refer to <http://shadowvoices.com>.

“Mental Health as a Key Issue in the Future of Global Health Developments,” Tharyan, Prathap, Deepa Braganza, and Prasanna Jebaraj, presented at the Breklum ecumenical consultation on “The Global Health Situation and the Mission of the Church in the 21st Century” held in September 2005 in Breklum Germany. This paper provides an elaboration of a presentation on ways in which churches could play a significant role in partnering with the World Health Organization and the mental health Global Action Programme in bridging the gap between resources and needs in mental health. To download a copy of the paper, go to <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/justice-diakonia-and-responsibility-for-creation/health-and-healing/09-05-mental-health.html>.

#### Books and Manuals:

Beyond Depression: Toolkit for Medical Providers. The Higher Plain, Inc., 2005. This multi-volume resource was written by individuals who suffer from depression and contains practical and useful information on risk factors, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, relationships and how to get help. To order: contact The Higher Plain, Inc., 680 Garfield Road, West Branch, IA 52358; Phone: 319-643-5628 or <http://www.beyonddepression.info>.

Breakey, William. *Mentally Ill and Homeless: Special Programs for Special Needs (Chronic Mental Illness)* New York: Psychology Press, 1998. This practical guide is for practitioners on how to work with the growing population of individual who are living with a mental illness and are homeless. Recommendations and suggestions were derived from six research projects. The guide also provides a discussion on the overall success and/or failure of the projects, preliminary quantitative findings, and the implications for the future of such programs.

Capps, Donald. *Men, Religion, and Melancholia: James, Otto, Jung, and Erikson.* New Haven: Yale, 1997. Capps' approach to the psychology of religion integrates the experiences of chronic depression (‘melancholy’) of leaders in the field into the analysis of their creative work.

Carter, Roselyn, Michael T. Compton, Raymond J. Kotwicki, *Responding To Individuals with Mental Illnesses*, Jones & Bartlett Publishers; 1st edition (December 5, 2006). This practical guide aims to enhance the knowledge and skills for non-mental health professionals who interact with individuals living with a mental illness. Included is information about specific categories of mental illnesses and provide basic skills to enhance interactions by understanding some of the stresses they may be facing.

Dunlap, Susan, *Counseling Depressed Women.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997. This book for pastors and pastoral counselors provides a analysis of women's depression from a feminist theological perspective. It also includes suggestions for effective treatment of women who are depressed.

Gonzalez-Ramos, Gladys, and Manny J. Gonzalez. *Mental Health Care for New Hispanic Immigrants: Innovative Approaches in Contemporary Clinical Practice.* New York: Haworth Social Work, 2005. This resource provides information about the need for culturally effective mental health prevention and treatment models. Designed primarily to be used in secondary and higher educational institutions by professional schools of social work, nursing, psychiatry, and psychology.

Lips, Hilary M. *A New Psychology of Women: Gender, Culture, and Ethnicity.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. An in-depth introduction to the diversity of women in cross-cultural perspective that focuses on various issues including women's mental health, illness, and treatment.

May, Rollo. *My Quest for Beauty.* Dallas: Saybrook 1985. This autobiography of the noted psychologist begins with his experience of a “nervous breakdown” at 21 and emphasizes the role of beauty and art in the re-ordering process.

Stone, Howard. *Depression and Hope: New Insights for Pastoral Counseling.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. A resource to use in pastoral counseling placing depression in the larger context of family and society and shows how proper handling of depression by clergy can increase the likelihood not only of a person's strong recovery, but also of a strengthened faith.

Storr, Anthony. *Churchill's Black Dog and Other Phenomena of the Human Mind.* New York: HarperCollins, 1997. The “Black Dog” of depression and other psychic stresses are resisted and utilized in various ways by the figures Storr discusses.

Styron, William. *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness*. New York: Vintage Press, 1992. This book is a personal story by the author about his journey into depression and his recovery from the illness. The author describes his illness as having a tortuous progression and shares in detail his road to recovery.

Torrey, E. Fuller. *Surviving Schizophrenia: A Manual for Families, Patients, and Providers*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006. This book explores the nature, causes, symptoms and treatment in a way that is understandable to the lay reader. It provides lots of useful information for people living with schizophrenia and their family members.

Ulanov, Ann and Barry. *The Healing Imagination: The Meeting of Psyche and Soul*. Zurich: Daimon, 1999 (1991). The Ulanovs explore the centrality of imagination in spiritual life, including experiences of being overwhelmed by imagery and of being healed through God's creative presence.

Whitaker, Robert. *Mad in America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine, and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill*. Jackson, TN: Perseus Publishing, Reprint edition (Paperback), 2003. This book is a discussion on the history of the psychiatric treatment of individuals living with a mental illness. It addresses the question of why should living in a country with such rich resources and advanced medical treatments for disorders of every kind be so toxic to those who are living with serious mental illness.

Swinton, John. *Resurrecting the Person: Friendship and the Care of People with Mental Health Problems*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000. The author of this publication presents a discussion on why he feels the church should be a role model in welcoming individual who are living with a mental illness. He shares his experiences in a mental health service facility where patients participated in weekly prayer service and pointed the common ingredients of their prayers. Included in the patients' prayers was the elimination of prejudice toward the mentally ill, understanding of individuals living with a mental illness, and asking forgiveness of other and self-forgiveness. This book is recommended for spiritual directors, chaplains, pastor/minister, and Steven's ministers.

#### *Online Resources:*

American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC)—<http://www.aapc.org/>. The AAPC is a professional agency designed and dedicated to promoting the practice of Pastoral counseling.

American Hospital Association (AHA)—<http://www.aha.org/aha/about/index.html>. The AHA represents and serves hospitals, health care networks, and their patients and communities. The website for this organization states that this national organization, through its representation and advocacy activities, ensures that the needs and perspectives of its members are heard and addressed in national health policy development, legislative and regulatory debates, and in judicial matters.

American Nurses Association (ANA)—<http://www.nursingworld.org/>. The ANA represents the nation's registered nurses (RNs). It is the only full-service professional organization representing the RNs.

American Psychiatric Association (APA)—<http://www.psych.org/>. This medical specialty association is the voice and conscience of modern psychiatry. APA is recognized world-wide. Its member physicians work together to ensure all persons living with a mental disorder receive humane care and effective treatment.

American Psychological Association (APA)—<http://www.apa.org/about>. APA's mission is to advance psychology as a science and profession and as a means of promoting human welfare, health and education.

Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA)—<http://www.aapaonline.org/>. The AAPA is the oldest national psychological organization dedicated to advancing the welfare of Asian Americans through the development of Asian American psychology.

Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE)—<http://www.acpe.edu/>. The mission of this multifaith and multicultural organization is twofold. The ACPE is devoted to (1) providing education and (2) improving the quality care of ministry and pastoral care offered by spiritual caregivers of all faiths through the clinical educational methods of Clinical Pastoral Education.

Association of Black Psychologists (ABP)—<http://www.abpsi.org/>. This website explains the work of the Black Psychologist Association whose goals are to have a positive impact upon the mental health of the national Black community by means of planning, programs, services, training, and advocacy.

Center for Mental Health Services' National GAINS Center—<http://www.gainscenter.samhsa.gov/html/>. The National GAINS Center is an agency in the Justice System committed to transforming the nations fragmented mental health system and developing a recovery-oriented, consumer-driven system of care. The Center describes its work in its acronym: G - gathering information, A - assessing what works, I - interpreting/integrating the facts, N - networking and S - stimulating change.

Congregational Resources Guide: Mental Health Ministry Resources—<http://www.congregationalresources.org/mentalhealth.asp>. This website was developed by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Indianapolis Faith Communities Education Project. It is a collection of Mental Health Ministry resources printed, audio-visual, and web-based media for faith communities (congregations and clergy).

Davis, L. Laura. *Adolescent Sexual Health and the Dynamics of Oppression: A Call for Cultural Competency*. Washington, D.C: Advocates for Youth, 2006— <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/iag/oppression.pdf>. This article is located on the website of Advocates for Youth: Rights, Respect, and Responsibility. The paper is designed to encourage individuals who work with youth to understand the impact of prejudice and discrimination on vulnerable adolescents.



Disabled American Veterans (DAV)—<http://www.dav.org/>. This organization represents the interests of disabled veterans and their families. Through its National Legislative Program, DAV is working to ensure that lawmakers are aware of their ongoing concerns.

FRONTLINE: The New Asylums (2005) DVD—<http://www.shoppbs.org/product/index.jsp?productId=2000133>. Through an in-depth review of the Ohio's prison system, this DVD addresses the alarming number of people with a mental illness incarcerated in America's jails and prisons. There are nearly half a million people living with a mental illness inside these institutions.

Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives Campaign: A program of the American Psychiatric Association— <http://www.healthyminds.org/>. Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives is designed to provide information that will help college students maintain good mental health.

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)—<http://www.qmsonline.com/jcaho.htm>. The JCAHO is a not-for-profit organization. It evaluates and accredits about 20,000 U.S. health care organizations and programs; it is the world's leading accrediting and standards-setting body.

Mental Health America (MHA)—<http://www.nmha.org/>. Mental Health America (formerly known as the National Mental Health Association) provides advocacy, research and statistical data for individuals, agencies and professionals on mental illness.

*Mental Health: Culture, Race and Ethnicity—A Supplemental to Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General, 2001.* To download a copy, go to [www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/cre](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/cre). This report addresses relevance of culture, race and ethnicity in the incidence and treatment of mental illness.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)—<http://www.nami.org/>. The official website for the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals living with serious mental illness and their families.

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)—<http://www.socialworkers.org/nasw/default.asp>. With 15,000 members, NASW is the world's largest membership organization of professional social workers. This organization works to create and maintain professional standards, to advance sound social policies, and to enhance the professional growth and development of its members.

National Center for American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research (NCAIANMHR)—[http://www2.uchsc.edu/ai/ncaianmhr/journal\\_home.asp](http://www2.uchsc.edu/ai/ncaianmhr/journal_home.asp). This is a resource for health care professionals and students in psychology, psychiatry, nursing, sociology and other areas that address mental health and mental illness.

National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH)—[www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org). This website is design to provide information on the advocacy and service on numerous organizations dedicated to eliminating homelessness.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)—<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/> . The NIMH's website states that its "mission is to reduce the burden of mental illness and behavioral disorders through research on mind, brain, and behavior."

National Latina/o Psychological Association (NLPA)—<http://www.nlpa.ws/>. The National Latina/o Psychological Association generates and promotes psychological knowledge for the benefit of the Hispanic/Latino population.

National Resource Center on Psychiatric Advance Directives (Refer to Appendix D for an example of an Advance Directive)—<http://www.nrc-pad.org/>. Psychiatric advance directives are legal instruments that may be used to document a competent person's specific instructions or preferences regarding future mental health treatment. Psychiatric advance directives can be used to plan for the possibility that someone may lose capacity to give or withhold informed consent to treatment during acute episodes of psychiatric illness.

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center (NRPC). *Teen Suicide*— <http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/index.asp> . This website provides practical advice to teens who may be thinking about suicide and to their families and friends who are concerned about a teen who may be suicidal.

Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) of the American Psychological Association—<http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/homepage.html>. This office seeks to recruit and retain psychologists from ethnic minorities and to promote multicultural competence among all psychologists.

Pathways to Promise: Ministry and Mental Illness— <http://www.pathways2promise.org/>. Pathways to Promise is an interfaith technical assistance and resource center which offers a variety of liturgical and educational materials, program models, and networking information to promote a caring ministry with people living with a mental illness and their families

Partnership for Workplace Mental Health (PWMH): A program of the American Psychiatric Foundation—<http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/> . This website describes the work of a partnership between The American Psychiatric Association and employers to further the mental health of employees.

Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers—<http://rci.gsw.edu/> . This website is the home of the Rosalynn Carter Institute dedicated to building partnerships with local, state and national agencies that are committed to building effective long-term care systems for caregivers, both family and professional.

*The State of Depression in America*. Chicago, IL: Depression and Bipolar Alliance, February 2006. The State of Depression in America Report examines the economic, social and individual burdens of depression. The report also explores the opportunities to improve the availability and quality of care of individuals living with this illness. To download a copy, go to <http://www.dbsalliance.org/pdfs/execsumlo.pdf>.

University of Pennsylvania Collaborative on Community Integration, a Rehabilitation Research and Training Center—<http://www.upennrrtc.org/>. This website provides information on the University of Pennsylvania collaborative on Community Integration promoting community integration for individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

The American Legion—<http://www.legion.org/>. Congress chartered The American Legion in 1919 to serve as a patriotic, mutual-help, war-time organization for veterans. Nine decades later, this organization is still going strong. There are nearly 15,000 American Legions Posts worldwide.

The Wayne E. Oates Institute (Integrating Spirituality, Ethics, and Healing)—<http://www.oates.org/>. The website for the Wayne E. Oates Institute defines their work as a learning community of professional and lay caregivers--chaplains, counselors, congregational leaders, nurses, physicians, social workers, and others-- seeking to advance care for the whole person. This work is done through education, publication, and research.

*The World Health Report 2001— Mental Health: New Understanding, New Hope*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization—<http://www.who.int/whr/2001/en/>. This is the official site for the World Health Organization (WHO), a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for directing and coordinating international health projects.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)—<http://www.vfw.org/>. The VFW was founded in 1899. This organization was formerly known as the American Veterans of Foreign Service (AVFS). The VFW supports veterans, service members in the U.S. armed forces and their families.

#### *Films:*

*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975)—Jack Nicholson plays a defiant patient (Randle Patrick McMurphy) in a mental hospital. He has to deal with the cool, cruel Nurse Ratched who rules her domain with an iron hand.

*The Fisher King* (1991)—Robin Williams plays a mentally ill homeless man (Parry) on a search for the holy grail. The movie tells the story of his relationship with a troubled former DJ, played by Jeff Bridges.

*Benny and Joon* (1993)—Benny (Aiden Quinn) takes care of his sister, Joon (Mary Stuart Masterson), a talented artist who lives with schizophrenia. Their relationship changes when Joon meets Sam (Johnny Depp).

*Mr. Jones* (1993)—Mr. Jones (Richard Gere) is a story about a man living with a bipolar disorder. This film explores the manic and depressive side of this mental illness.

*A Beautiful Mind* (2001)—This movie tells the story of John Nash (Russell Crowe), a brilliant Princeton mathematician, who develops schizophrenia.

*Antwone Fisher* (2002)—The story of a young man in the navy (Derek Luke) who confronts his painful past with the help of his psychiatrist Jerome Davenport, played by Denzel Washington.

*Sylvia* (2003)—This movie tells the story of the relationship between poets Sylvia Plath (Gwyneth Paltrow) and Ted Hughes. Plath, who is best known for her semi-autobiographical novel, *The Bell Jar*, lived with debilitating bouts of depression.

### Appendix C Models of Ministry

Capitol Heights Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado—<http://chpc.denverpresbytery.org>

Celebration of Life Presbyterian Church, Mesa, Arizona—<http://www.celebration-of-life.org/>

Edgewater Presbyterian Church, Chicago, Illinois (no website-telephone: (773) 561-4748)

First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Michigan—<http://www.fpcbirmingham.org/default.htm>

Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, Illinois—[www.fourthchurch.org](http://www.fourthchurch.org)

Hillsboro Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee—[www.hillsboropresbyterian.org](http://www.hillsboropresbyterian.org)

Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Menlo Park, California—[www.mppcfamily.org](http://www.mppcfamily.org)

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Virginia—[www.mvpconline.org](http://www.mvpconline.org)

10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH ISSUES

North Presbyterian Church; Kalamazoo, Michigan—www.northchurchpcusakalamazoo.org

Plymouth Congregational Church, Seattle, Washington—www.plymouth.org

St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, New Port Beach, California—www.standrewspres.org

San Clemente Presbyterian Church, San Clemente, California—http://zsc.firstmediaworks.com/default.asp

Trinity United Presbyterian Church, Santa Ana, California—www.trinityunitedpres.org

Visit the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA)’s website to download a free Models of Ministry booklet. Go to: <http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/networks/psmin/psmin-models.pdf>.

Appendix D

Example of Advance Directives for Mental Health Treatment<sup>124</sup>

Below is an example of material that may be included in an Advance Directive for Mental Health Treatment. Each state has its own format. Go to <http://www.nrc-pad.org/>, the website for the National Resource Center on Psychiatric Advance Directives, for state-by-state information.

1. Symptom(s) I might experience during a period of crisis: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Medication instructions:
  - A. I agree to administration of the following medication(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. I do not agree to administration of the following medication(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Other information about medications (allergies, side effects): \_\_\_\_\_
3. Facility Preferences.
  - A. I agree to admission to the following hospital(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. I do not agree to admission to the following hospital(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Other information about hospitalization: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Emergency Contacts in case of mental health crisis:
 

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Psychiatrist: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Case Manager/Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Crisis Precipitants. The following may cause me to experience a mental health crisis: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Protective Factors. The following may help me avoid a mental health crisis: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Response to Hospital. I usually respond to the hospital as follows: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Preferences for Staff Interactions. Staff of the hospital or crisis unit can help me by doing the following: \_\_\_\_\_
9. I give permission for the following people to visit me in the hospital: \_\_\_\_\_
10. The following are my preferences about ECT: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Other Instructions.
  - A. If I am hospitalized, I want the following to be taken care of at my home: \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. I understand that the information in this document may be shared by my mental health treatment provider with any other mental health treatment provider who may serve me when necessary to provide treatment in accordance with this advance instruction. Other instructions about sharing of information are as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 10-05. "Comfort My People," a policy statement on serious mental illness.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 10-05 be approved.

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**COGA AND GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 10-05**

*Comment on Item 10-05—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

In order to be good stewards of our resources, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council urge the 218th General Assembly (2008) not to make exceptions to Standing Rule H.2.a.(12).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council remind commissioners and advisory delegates of Standing Rule H.2.a.(12), which reads: "(12) As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly's proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk."

This rule was added to *Manual of the General Assembly* several years ago to help control expenses and maximize distribution of documents.

If the General Assembly decides to make an exception to the rule, it will be necessary for the assembly to suspend the Standing Rules, which requires a 2/3 affirmative vote of the total enrollment of commissioners.

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**Item 10-06**

**[The assembly approved Item 10-06 with amendment. See pp. 58, 59.]**

*On Supporting Single Payer Universal Healthcare Reform—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.*

**The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

1. ~~[Advocate for, educate about, and work toward]~~ [Endorse in principle the provision of] single-payer universal health care reform [in which health care services are privately provided and publicly financed.] ~~[through national health insurance that is privately provided (improved Medicare for all in principle) and publicly financed.]~~

2. Direct the General Assembly Council, through appropriate offices including the National Health Ministries, the Washington Office, and the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), to ~~[actively]~~ [advocate for, educate about, and otherwise] pursue the goal of obtaining legislation that enacts single-payer, universal national health insurance as the program that best responds to the moral imperative of the gospel; ~~[and that the General Assembly Council monitor]~~ [monitoring] progress toward this goal ~~[without regard to political party]~~ and ~~[report]~~ [reporting] back to the ~~[church on an annual basis]~~ [next two General Assemblies (2010 and 2012)].

**3. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to send a copy of this resolution to the appropriate committee chairs of the U.S. Congress and to the Washington and United Nations offices of the PC(USA).**

**4. Direct that \$25,000 from the Mission budget of the PC(USA) be sent to the PACT Network of PHEWA for the purpose of holding ten regional, one-day seminars supporting single payer universal healthcare reform, moneys to be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.**

**[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009) \$25,000; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]**

*Rationale*

Jesus Christ, who has reconciled us to God, healed all kinds of sickness (Mt. 4:23, par) as a sign of God's rule.

Isaiah speaks God's word to say "No more shall there be ... an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime" (Isa. 65:20a).

We, as Reformed Christians, bear witness to Jesus Christ in word, but also in deed.

As followers of our Great Physician Jesus, we have a moral imperative to work to assure that everyone has full access to health care.

Our nation is in a crisis in health care, which presents an unprecedented opportunity for our nation to provide healthcare affordable for all.

In this country there is a baby born every fifty-one seconds to a family with no health insurance.<sup>1</sup>

In this, the wealthiest nation in the world, our infant mortality rate is second highest in the industrialized world.<sup>2</sup>

Forty-seven million Americans are uninsured<sup>3</sup> (50 percent employed; 25 percent children; 20 percent out of labor force as students, disabled, et.al.; 5 percent unemployed).<sup>4</sup>

The U.S. spends nearly twice as much per capita as than any other country on health care, but we rank poorly in the thirty-seven categories of health status measured by the World Health Organization.<sup>5</sup>

The rise in childhood obesity, asthma, diabetes, and other chronic diseases indicates that the overall health status of people of this country is declining.<sup>6</sup>

We are warned by the prophets not to heal the wounds of God's people lightly; yet in 2006 the aggregate profits of the health insurance companies in the United States were \$68 billion. During that same year more than 15,000 families were forced into bankruptcy because of medical expenses.<sup>7</sup>

Our business employers operate at a competitive disadvantage internationally because health care costs are assumed by the governments of other industrialized nations.

The General Assemblies of the PC(USA) and its predecessors since 1971 have called for reform of health delivery systems in the United States to make them accessible to the entire population.<sup>8</sup>

Our federal government already operates efficiently and with low overhead<sup>9</sup> the health delivery programs of Medicare and Medicaid; and yet at the same time insurance companies spend nearly one third of every premium dollar on marketing and other administrative costs and in fact, several such companies spend less than 60 percent of premium dollars they receive on health-care services.

The American College of Physicians, the nation's second largest physician group, has endorsed a single payer healthcare system.<sup>10</sup>

Only a single-payer system of national healthcare coverage (privately provided; publicly financed; not socialized medicine) can save what is estimated to be \$350 billion wasted annually on medical bureaucracy and redirect those funds to expanded coverage.<sup>11</sup>

And single-payer universal healthcare reform would increase coverage from the 60 percent of Americans already covered by Medicare (over 65) or Medicaid (severely limited wealth) to 100 percent of Americans, a net increase of only 40 percent.

## Endnotes

1. Healthcare Now Conference, Chicago, Illinois, November 10, 2007, Elder Hal Sanders.
2. Chuck Pennachio, PhD, Executive Director, Health Care for All Pennsylvania.
3. “The Uninsured, A Primer: Key Facts about Americans Without Health Insurance,” Kaiser Family Foundation, October 2007.
4. Himmelfarb & Woolhandler tabulation, p. 13 “Medicare for All! A Guide to Single Payer National Health Insurance, B.S. Rosen, Chicago, Illinois.
5. Healthcare Now Conference, Chicago, Illinois, November 10, 2007, Elder Hal Sanders.
6. Elder Hal Sanders, presbytery meeting, September 2007 at Camp Crestfield.
7. Ibid.
8. 1971 General Assembly of the UPCUSA called for a national health insurance “single payer” plan; and the 200th General Assembly (1988) challenged the church by adopting “Life Abundant: Values, Choices, and Health Care—the Responsibility and Role of the Presbyterian Church (USA)” in which the church was called to act upon “the basic values of compassion, caring love, community wholeness and well-being, and justice that we hold to be fundamental in understanding and addressing the health issues and crises that confront the church and the nation.” Health E-News, National Health Ministries, December 21, 2007.
9. Report of The National Bipartisan Commission on the future of Medicare, 2002, cites Medicare administrative costs at 3 percent of payments to providers for services to Medicare beneficiaries.
10. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 5, 2007.
11. *New York Times*, December 15, 2007.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-06**
*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the overture be approved as amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“1. ~~Advocate for, educate about, and work toward~~ [Endorse in principle the provision of] single-payer universal health care reform through national health insurance that is privately provided (improved Medicare for all in principle) and publicly financed.

“2. ~~Direct the General Assembly Council~~, through appropriate offices including the National Health Ministries, the Washington Office, and the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), ~~to~~ [actively] ~~advocate for, educate about, and otherwise~~ pursue the goal of obtaining legislation that enacts single-payer, universal national health insurance as the program that best responds to the moral imperative of the gospel; ~~and that the General Assembly Council monitor~~ [monitoring] progress toward this goal ~~[without regard to political party]~~ and ~~report~~ [reporting] back to the ~~church on an annual basis~~ [next two General Assemblies (2010 and 2012)].”

[No changes to Recommendations 3 and 4.]

*Rationale*

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh’s overture documents the tragedies and inefficiencies of our current medical system, the most expensive in the world and one that leaves out approximately one sixth of the population of the United States. On the basis of cost efficiency as well as inclusion, national medical plans are the preferred method of healthcare provision throughout the developed and much of the developing world. The proponent presbytery grounds its concerns strongly in the biblical witness and notes other calls for reform, including calls from several organizations of medical professionals. Current political proposals chart several economically credible ways to fund universal health insurance, and corporations burdened by high medical costs are shifting to support such national medical solutions. If enacted, universal health insurance would affect the nature of private plans, including the Medical Plan related to the Board of Pensions.

The General Assembly has spoken in favor of universal access to healthcare since 1946, including statements in 1960, 1969, 1971, 1988, 1991, and 1999, yet not with the focus and forcefulness of this overture. Commissioners may wish to reflect on whether the highest ever numbers of uninsured Americans (not including undocumented immigrants) and the data on increasing differences in life expectancy among Americans confirm the need for forthright new advocacy by the church. The

allocation of moneys recommended for a decentralized advocacy initiative by the Presbyterian Association for Community Transformation (PACT) (point four) has not been analyzed by ACSWP, but would clearly magnify the impact of the assembly's statement. In addition, concern for universal health insurance is widespread within other churches, as can be seen in its inclusion in the Social Creed as a goal for the whole society.

The theological and ethical links between salvation and health are explored most substantially in the book-length collection of papers by Presbyterian medical professionals, ethicists, and economists done in preparation for the 1988 General Assembly policy, *Life Abundant: Values, Choices, and Health Care*. That book, *Health Care and Its Costs: A Challenge for the Church*, edited by Walter E. Wiest (1988), was followed in 1990 with an emerging issue paper, *Universal Access to Health Care*, adopted by the General Assembly, which in turn led to the 1991 *Resolution on Christian Responsibility and a National Medical Plan*. All expenditures of funds include economic trade-offs; these previous assembly resources also underline the faith-value that adequate healthcare provides.

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## Item 10-A

[The Assembly Committee on Health Issues approved Item 10-A as amended. See pp. 58, 59.]

~~[The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008), Assembly Committee on Health Issues, receive a presentation from the Cameron House Healing Task Force on therapeutic activities for sexual abuse victims/survivors.] [That the Cameron House Healing Task Force DVD be shown as a part of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues report to the entire 218th General Assembly (2008).]~~

### *Rationale*

At the request of the Cameron House Task Force, the GAC approved \$187,500 for therapy for survivors and \$62,500 for retreats for victims of sexual abuse at the Cameron House in San Francisco. The report will update the church on the effect of these therapy sessions.

## Item 11-01

[In response to Item 11-01, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 45, 46.]

*On Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.*

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, having held dialogues with members of the Atlanta Israeli, Palestinian, Islamic, and Jewish communities and with representatives of Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations, and having an ongoing concern for peace and justice in Palestine/Israel, respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Produce a video and study guide—including participants from the Jewish, Islamic, Palestinian, Israeli, and human rights communities (both Israeli and Palestinian)—addressing the questions: “What is your vision for a just peace in Israel/Palestine and how do we achieve it?” and “What can the PC(USA) do to make that vision a reality?”
2. Request Peace and Justice, through the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI), to produce a guide for congregations and individuals to reflect on their investments in light of biblical and theological principles and to suggest possible actions persons might take in light of those reflections. Such a guide would include the careful process of principled corporate engagement that MRTI has undertaken with regard to peace and justice in Israel/Palestine (the Sept./Oct. 2002 issue of *Church & Society*’s article, “The Presbyterian Church as Investor,” is a helpful starting point).
3. Request World Mission, through its Office for Interfaith Relations and its Office of the Middle East to produce a guide to help Presbyterian congregations and members seek out and live into intentional friendships with Jews, Muslims, and Middle Eastern Christians who reside in their communities.
4. Continue to lift up the plight of the dwindling Christian community throughout the Middle East, recognizing that there are various reasons for the churches’ difficult circumstances, and expressing special concern for those in areas of active military violence. Thus, we will continue to seek ways to support and pray for the Church in the lands of its birth.
5. Urge the president of the United States to appoint a special envoy for Israel/Palestine, based in Jerusalem, to begin immediately as a sign of active, principled U.S. engagement toward solving Israeli-Palestinian abuses and conflicts.

### Alternate Resolution Approved

#### The 218th General Assembly (2008):

1. **Affirms the obligation of the church to speak to the governments of the United States and all other nations where it sees those governments violating the commandments of God. In the words of The Theological Declaration of Barmen, which speaks to the dependence of the Church on the Word of God and its independence from any state or ideology, “we reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords ... . The state has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace ... [The church] calls to mind the Kingdom of God, God’s commandment and righteousness, and thereby the responsibility both of rulers and of the ruled. ...”** (*The Book of Confessions*, 8.15, 8.22). The sovereignty of God thus judges all claims of sovereign nationhood, all boundaries, all exercises of force, and all uses of resources by human beings. The Church is thus called to help discern where the Spirit is working in the world, guided by Scripture and its confessions.
2. **Endorses the “Amman Call” regarding Arab-Israeli peace, issued by the World Council of Churches’ conference, “Churches Together for Peace and Justice in the Middle East,” at Amman, Jordan, June 18–20, 2007, including its affirmation of the UN resolutions that are the basis of a projected “two-state” solution, a shared Jerusalem, and the human rights of refugees and occupied peoples, its call to resist extremism and push for reconciliation, and its commitment to imperatives of ecumenical solidarity in action for Just Peace, directing that the Amman Call be printed in the *Minutes* of the General Assembly and considered in any study processes of the church.**
3. **Directs appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council to provide video, cyber, and print resources on the church’s historic concern for justice and peace in Israel and Palestine, such as those proposed by the Presbytery of Atlanta, using existing materials whenever possible, including back issues of *Church & Society* as suggested, to interpret such matters as Mission Responsibility Through Investment, the status of Jerusalem, the impact of the security barrier (or “wall”), etc.**

4. Commends the nonviolent witness of the Christians in Palestine and Israel with whom we share membership in the one Body of Christ, joining them in prayer and mutual remembrance, advocating for fair treatment for them and their neighbors.

5. Encourages Presbyterian individuals, congregations, and councils to take pilgrimages and trips to Israel and Palestine that are in harmony with our principles, specifically that include: significant time visiting local Christians and church leaders, significant time in the Occupied Territories (witnessing conditions, helping sustain isolated and impoverished local economies), opportunities to meet Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers, and opportunities to engage in interfaith discussion of a range of perspectives; such travel to be assisted and resourced as feasible by the General Assembly Council, mission personnel, the Israel/Palestine Network, and our ecumenical partners in the region, as outlined by the Presbytery of East Iowa, all with the goals of helping the church grow in solidarity, mercy, and peacemaking.

6. In continuing the process of corporate engagement with companies supporting or profiting from the occupation of Palestine and/or other violence in the region, instructs the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to report regularly to the General Assembly Council on its communication and the compliance, or lack thereof, by Caterpillar, Motorola, and other corporations involved with regard to General Assembly guidelines and concerns for justice and human rights.

7. Requests that the full texts of all overtures submitted on the Middle East be considered in the report on the Middle East recommended by the General Assembly Council to be prepared for 2010.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-01.

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-01 be answered by approving the following alternate resolution:

“The 218th General Assembly (2008):

“1. Affirms the obligation of the church to speak to the governments of the United States and all other nations where it sees those governments violating the commandments of God. In the words of The Theological Declaration of Barmen, which speaks to the dependence of the Church on the Word of God and its independence from any state or ideology, ‘we reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords . . . . The state has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace . . . [The church] calls to mind the Kingdom of God, God’s commandments and righteousness, and thereby the responsibility both of rulers and of the ruled. . . .’ (*The Book of Confessions*, 8.15, 8.22). The sovereignty of God thus judges all claims of sovereign nationhood, all boundaries, all exercises of force, and all uses of resources by human beings. The Church is thus called to help discern where the Spirit is working in the world, guided by Scripture and its confessions.

“2. Endorses the ‘Amman Call’ regarding Arab-Israeli peace, issued by the World Council of Churches’ conference, ‘Churches Together for Peace and Justice in the Middle East,’ at Amman, Jordan, June 18–20, 2007, including its affirmation of the UN resolutions that are the basis of a projected ‘two-state’ solution, a shared Jerusalem, and the human rights of refugees and occupied peoples, its call to resist extremism and push for reconciliation, and its commitment to imperatives of ecumenical solidarity in action for Just Peace, directing that the Amman Call be printed in the *Minutes* of the General Assembly and considered in any study processes of the church.

“3. Directs appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council to provide video, cyber and print resources on the church’s historic concern for justice and peace in Israel and Palestine, such as those proposed by the Presbytery of Atlanta, using existing materials whenever possible, including back issues of *Church & Society* as suggested, to interpret such matters as Mission Responsibility Through Investment, the status of Jerusalem, the impact of the security barrier (or ‘wall’), etc.

“4. Commends the nonviolent witness of the Christians in Palestine and Israel with whom we share membership in the one Body of Christ, joining them in prayer and mutual remembrance, advocating for fair treatment for them and their neighbors.

“5. Encourages Presbyterian individuals, congregations, and councils to take pilgrimages and trips to Israel and Palestine that are in harmony with our principles, specifically that include: significant time visiting local Christians and church leaders, significant time in the Occupied Territories (witnessing conditions, helping sustain isolated and impoverished local economies . . .), opportunities to meet Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers, and opportunities to engage in interfaith discussion

of a range of perspectives; such travel to be assisted and resourced as feasible by the General Assembly Council, mission personnel, the Israel/Palestine Network, and our ecumenical partners in the region, as outlined by the Presbytery of East Iowa, all with the goals of helping the church grow in solidarity, mercy, and peacemaking.

“6. In continuing the process of corporate engagement with companies supporting or profiting from the occupation of Palestine and/or other violence in the region, instructs the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to report regularly to the General Assembly Council on its communication and the compliance, or lack thereof, by Caterpillar, Motorola, and other corporations involved with regard to General Assembly guidelines and concerns for justice and human rights. In accordance with resolutions approved by the General Assembly in 2004 and 2006, the General Assembly Council is authorized and encouraged to act on this information, and as it deems appropriate and timely, to implement divestment procedures.

“7. Requests that the full texts of all overtures submitted on the Middle East be considered in the report on the Middle East recommended by the General Assembly Council to be prepared for 2010.”

#### *Rationale*

The presbyteries involved, including those concurring, have provided the church valuable service that we believe could be consolidated for effective action by commissioners. These actions are all consistent with existing General Assembly policy and program, much of which is noted in the helpful comments of the General Assembly Council. Other concerns are noted in Advice and Counsel on Items 11-02, 11-06, and 11-07.

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### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-01

*Comment on Item 11-01—From the General Assembly Council.*

Several of our partner Christian and interfaith organizations and institutions in the Middle East have produced statements, resources, and other materials that have been helpful in their own efforts to promote mutual understanding and to build healthy and cooperative relations between Christians and other faith communities in the Middle East. Such materials could be exceedingly helpful to our own congregations and members in reaching out in friendship to Jewish and Muslim neighbors, as they model both intentionality and commitment to build communities that seek justice and pursue peace.

The Office for the Middle East (World Mission) works collaboratively with various other GAC offices, along with constituency entities such as Mission Networks (for Egypt, Israel/Palestine, Iraq, etc.) and task groups to raise awareness of the Christian presence and witness in the Middle East, paying particular attention to the crisis of dwindling numbers of Christians and the increasing difficulties our partner churches are facing, due to a variety of causes. It is noteworthy that this alarming reality pervades the consciousness of our partners in the region as a primary challenge not only for themselves but also for many of their non-Christian neighbors, and certainly for the world’s Christian community.

As one example of our church’s response to this crisis, this office—in cooperation with colleagues offices of the General Assembly Council—worked closely with the Israel/Palestine Network for the production of the widely circulated illustrated booklet, *The Cradle of Our Faith: The Enduring Witness of the Christians of the Middle East*. Now in its second printing, this resource was produced in partial response to an action overwhelmingly passed by the 217th General Assembly (2007) inviting all of our 11,000 congregations to join in “a Week of Prayer and Witness with Christians in the Middle East” during the season between Easter and Pentecost 2007. Many congregations did.

The Middle East Office, together with others, plans to continue to lift up and facilitate awareness of this issue through all available means (e.g., the church’s Website, mission to the U.S.A. opportunities, missionary itineration, etc.), and within the limitations of staff time and financial resources.

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## Item 11-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 11-02. See pp. 45, 46.]

*On Pursuing a Culture of a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine—From the Presbytery of Chicago.*

The Presbytery of Chicago respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2006) to do the following:

1. Call for a culture of a just peace in the Holy Land for Israeli Jews and Arabs, and for residents of the West Bank and Gaza. Such a peace was described on December 10, 1948, by the United Nations General Assembly in the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” and subsequently in the Fourth Geneva Convention 1949, and includes provision for:

- equal access to a violence-free life,
- rights of citizenship,
- honoring of property rights,
- freedom of movement,
- preservation of homes and granting of building permits,
- maintaining family relationships,
- equitable benefits of natural resources,
- access to health care and education and economic livelihood,
- free flow of information,
- due process under law, and
- freedom of worship.

2. Call upon the president of the United States, the Congress, and all elected officials, to support actions in Israel and Palestine that are in accordance with these internationally agreed-upon principles.

3. Approve a two-year period of study of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and encourage study with appropriate study guides for the churches, colleges and universities, women’s and men’s associations, and youth ministries during 2008–2010.

4. Call on our fellow Presbyterians to work together towards pursuing a culture of a just peace in 2008 and beyond in several ways:

a. Call for end to occupation and its conditions in accordance with international law to

(1) stop home demolitions and other forms of collective punishment against civilian populations;

(2) end the expansion of illegal settlements and withdraw from those established throughout the occupied territories;

(3) relocate the wall/separation barrier on the 1967 green line;

(4) End the violence by all parties.

b. Talk honestly about and encourage an open and honest discussion of the two-state solution with a shared Jerusalem, the right of return of Palestinian refugees and related issues, oppose military solutions to what is essentially a political problem, and encourage diplomacy and other nonviolent methods.

c. Inform and mobilize leaders at all PC(USA) judicatory levels to support actions in Israel/Palestine that are in accordance with these internationally agreed upon principles and make them known to U.S. elected officials.

d. Support the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Committee recommendations to the General Assembly, as established through previous General Assembly resolutions (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 976).

***Rationale***

“... [And] they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken” (Mic. 4:3–4).

In the face of the abiding need for a faithful response to Jesus’ call that we be peacemakers, following the vision of God’s shalom/just peace, and aware of the changes that constantly occur in Israel-Palestine, the Presbytery of Chicago made the above recommendations.



Consideration of Israel-Palestine through the lens of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is appropriate because the principles were adopted shortly after the creation of the state of Israel; in fact, Israel's creation provided the impetus for the Universal Principles. The PC(USA) has supported the Fourth Geneva Conventions and the applicability of human rights and international law to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since its initial resolutions on the Middle East in 1948.

Further, the *Book of Order*, Chapter III, "The Church and Its Mission," directs the Church to be Christ's faithful evangelist" in G-3.0300c(3):

- (3) participating in God's activity in the world through its life for others by
  - (a) healing and reconciling and binding up wounds,
  - (b) ministering to the needs of the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the powerless,
  - (c) engaging in the struggle to free people from sin, fear, oppression, hunger and injustice,
  - (d) giving itself and its substance to the service of those who suffer,
  - (e) sharing with Christ in the establishing of his just, peaceable, and loving rule in the world.

and G-3.0400

The Church is called to undertake this mission even at the risk of losing its life, trusting in God alone as the author and giver of life, sharing the gospel, and doing those deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in Christ.

Within the body of international and human rights law<sup>1</sup> that have been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly are the following:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his/her property; [Article 17, 2].

- UN General Assembly Resolution 194 (December 11, 1948): Proposes that refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property.

- Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (1949): *Note: Both Israel and the U.S. are High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention.*

—"Protected persons...shall at all times be humanely treated, and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence." (Article 27)

—"No physical or moral coercion shall be exercised against protected persons, in particular to obtain information from them or from third parties." (Article 31)

—"No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited." (Article 33)

—"Protected persons who are in occupied territory shall not be deprived, in any case or in any manner whatsoever, of the benefits of the present Convention by any change introduced, as the result of the occupation of a territory, into the institutions or government of the said territory. (Article 47)

—"Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive...The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." (Article 49)

—"The Occupying Power shall, with the cooperation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children." (Article 50)

—"Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the state, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited." (Article 53)

—"To the fullest extent of the means available to it, the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring and maintaining...the medical and hospital establishments and services, public health and hygiene in the occupied territory. ... Medical personnel of all categories shall be allowed to carry out their duties." (Article 56)

—“The Occupying Power shall permit ministers of religion to give spiritual assistance to the members of their religious communities.” (Article 58)

—“Accused persons who are prosecuted by the Occupying Power shall be promptly informed in writing, in a language which they understand, of the particulars of the charges preferred against them, and shall be brought to trial as rapidly as possible. (Article 71)

—“High Contracting Parties undertake to enact any legislation necessary to provide effective penal sanctions for persons committing, or ordering to be committed, any of the grave breaches of the present Convention as defined in the following Article.” (Article 146)

—“Grave breaches ... shall be those involving any of the following acts, if committed against persons or property protected by the present Convention: willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body and health, unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement of a protected person, compelling a protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile Power, or willfully depriving a protected person of the rights of fair and regular trial prescribed in the present Convention, taking of hostages an extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly.” (Article 147)

—“No High Contracting Party shall be allowed to absolve itself or any other High Contracting Party of any liability incurred by itself or by another High Contracting Party in respect of breaches referred to in the preceding Article.” (Article 148)

- Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 ‘Protocol 1’: “Journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians.”(Article 79)

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966

—“Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence.” (Article 12:1)

—“Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own.” (Article 12:2)

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966

—“All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of this right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.” (Article 1:1)

—“All Peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic cooperation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.” (Article 1:2)

—“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely choose or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.” (Article 6)

—“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.” (Article 12)

—“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.” (Article 13)

- UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967,

—Emphasizes “the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security.”

—Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles: (i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict; (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowl-

edgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within security and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force...

—Affirms further the necessity...”For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem.”

- UN Security Council Resolution 267 of July 3, 1969: “The Security Council... reaffirming the established principle that acquisition of territory by military conquest is inadmissible...censures in the strongest terms all measures taken to change the status of the city of Jerusalem; confirms that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel which purport to alter the status of Jerusalem, including expropriation of land and properties thereon, are invalid and cannot change that status.”

- UN Security Council Resolution 338 of October 22, 1973

—Calls upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts; (Item 2)

—Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations shall start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East. (Item 3)

- Applicability to Israel-Palestine:

—UN Security Council Resolution 465 of March 1, 1980:

- Affirms once more that the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War, of August 12, 1949, is applicable to the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem,

- Deplores the decision of the Government of Israel official (to) support Israeli settlements in Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967,

- Takes into account the need to consider measures for the impartial protection of private and public land, property, and water resources,

- Bears in mind the specific status of Jerusalem and, in particular, the need for protection and preservation of the unique spiritual and religious dimension of the Holy Places in the city,

- Draws attention to the grave consequences which the settlement(s) policy is bound to have on any attempt to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East,

- Strongly deplores the continuation and persistence of Israel in pursuing those policies and practices and calls upon the Government and people of Israel to rescind those measures, to dismantle the existing settlements and in particular to cease, on an urgent basis, the establishment, construction and planning of settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.

- Calls upon all States not to provide Israel with any assistance to be used specifically in connection with settlements in the Occupied Territories.

—UN Security Council Resolution 681 of December 20, 1990<sup>2</sup>

- Expresses grave concern at the dangerous deterioration of the situation in all the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and at the violence and rising tension in Israel...

- Calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to ensure respect by Israel, the occupying Power, for its obligations under the (Fourth Geneva) Convention.

#### Endnotes

1. The information explaining the import of each Resolution or Document of the United Nations was provided by the Rev. Alex Awad, Dean of Students at Bethlehem Bible College, in Bethlehem, Occupied Territories. Rev. Awad is a Palestinian Christian.

2. UN Security Council Resolutions also presented, but vetoed by the U.S.A.:

UN Security Council draft Resolutions vetoed by U.S.A. pertaining to Israeli settlements and land confiscation. From 1976 to 2001 there were seven Resolutions; the U.S.A. veto was the only “no” vote.

UN Security Council draft Resolutions vetoed by U.S.A. pertaining to implementation of Fourth Geneva Convention (protection of civilians in time of war, where settlements are illegal). From 1982 to 2001, there were twelve resolutions, all vetoed by the U.S.A. and no other country.

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**Concurrence to Item 11-02 from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the overture be approved as amended below:

1. Amend Recommendation 3. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“3. [~~Approve a two year period of study of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and encourage study with appropriate study guides for the churches, colleges and universities, women’s and men’s associations, and youth ministries during 2008–2010.~~] [Encourage the inclusion of the UN Declaration of Human Rights in study materials produced by the General Assembly Council (GAC) related to human rights, Israel/Palestine, and other countries where rights are being denied, and direct the GAC’s own study process, if approved, to include consideration of this historic statement, the 60th anniversary of which is celebrated this year (2008)..]”

2. Add new Recommendations 4.e. and 5. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[e. Support measures to ensure academic freedom within colleges, universities and seminaries to allow professors and students to examine justice issues related to Israel and Palestine.”

“[5. Commend the presbytery for assembling relevant humanitarian law and direct that it be printed with the overture in the Minutes and considered in any GAC study process.]”

*Rationale*

The Presbytery of Chicago, in forwarding this overture, appends documents that in a way parallel the testimony and social policy of the church over the past sixty years. The church’s witness has been based in the message of Jesus of Nazareth, expressed in solidarity with Christians in the Middle East, in great sympathy for the Jewish community so often victimized in history, and in an insistence on the full humanity of Muslims as well as Christians and Jews. At the same time, our faith is a universal faith and sees points of contact with the universal elements of human rights law and its search for application in every country where human beings are treated on a differential basis.

The amendments recommended relate to the overture’s realistic Recommendation 4.b., “talk honestly about and encourage an open and honest discussion of the two-state solution with a shared Jerusalem . . .” Talking honestly is difficult when there is fear of retaliation or political pressure, from any angle. Most Presbyterians are undoubtedly aware of the role of organized pressure groups of varying strengths on all sides of issues in the Middle East, including support or opposition to the Iraq war. A recent case, out of a number that could be listed, is that of anthropologist Nadia Abu El-Haj having her tenure at Barnard contested on the basis of her Palestinian background and misrepresentations of her work. She was in fact awarded tenure in a rigorous process, but faced large-scale, organized opposition from nonacademic sources, as detailed in these two articles: [www.nytimes.com/2007/11/03/nyregion/03barnard.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/03/nyregion/03barnard.html), and [www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/04/14/080414fa\\_fact\\_kramer](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/04/14/080414fa_fact_kramer).

Challenging powerful interests is always controversial, but voices inside and outside the church have been increasingly raised to wonder whether the “two-state” solution is still viable at all. In the most recent period, the U.S. government has begun to recognize the destructive role played by the continued “impasse” between Israel and Palestine, an impasse hardened by the cut off of Hamas-run Gaza and the continued construction of settlements and the “wall,” or security barrier that largely follows their footprint. This economic stranglehold has led to shocking levels of malnutrition among Palestinians in the fragmented West Bank as well as in Gaza, which is still affected by a cycle of rocket-firing, assassinations, food and power cut-offs, and incursions. Putting these matters in the context of international law does not answer all questions about how the church itself should proceed, especially when the interfaith nature of the conflict most requires informed Christian voices, persons seeking God’s presence even in places of suffering and hatred.

**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-02**

*Comment on Item 11-02—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council affirms the concern shown by the Presbytery of Chicago for the people of Israel and Palestine. The overture brings together two significant themes within General Assembly statements on Israel and Palestine.

General Assemblies have consistently affirmed the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign state within secure, internationally recognized borders and the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, including the right to the establishment of a neighboring independent, sovereign state, toward the end of establishing a just and durable peace in the region.

General Assemblies have also consistently expressed concern for the human rights of Palestinians and Israelis, affirming the role of the United Nations and international community as well as international documents and United Nations declarations, conventions, and resolutions in achieving that just peace.

In response to referral Item 11-01, Recommendation #5, by the 217th General Assembly (2006), the General Assembly Council is forwarding to the 218th General Assembly (2008) a report that includes a recommendation for a study that would address matters raised by this overture.

**Item 11-03**

**[The assembly answered Item 11-03 by the action taken on Item 11-01. See pp. 45, 46.]**

*On Endorsing the “Amman Call” Regarding Arab-Israeli Peace—From the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley.*

The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008), as a constituent member church of the World Council of Churches, to endorse the World Council of Churches’ “Amman Call,” regarding Arab-Israeli peace, issued at the World Council of Churches’ International Peace Conference, entitled “Churches Together for Peace and Justice in the Middle East,” at Amman, Jordan, 18–20 June 2007, and keep other actions consistent with the Amman Call’s recommendations.

***Rationale***

[The complete statement is found below.]

This document contains ideas that are basic to the Church’s efforts to be faithful to the Gospel call that we be peacemakers, with specific interest in that region where the events central to our faith took place. For instance, it begins with the following statement of “imperatives.”

1. Almost sixty years have passed since the Christian churches first spoke with one voice about Arab-Israeli peace. For the last forty years the Christian churches have called for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In the very place where Jesus Christ walked upon the earth, walls now separate families and the children of God—Christian, Muslim and Jew—are imprisoned in a deepening cycle of violence, humiliation and despair. The Palestinian Christians from Gaza to Jerusalem and to Nazareth, have called out to their brothers and sisters in Christ with this urgent plea: “Enough is enough. No more words without deeds. It is time for action.”
2. We welcome the timely and prophetic statement of the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem. We affirm that “the Churches are part of the conflict, because the Churches cannot remain silent while there is still suffering. The role of the Churches is to heal and to bring all sides to reconciliation.” Our belief in God reminds us “that all God’s children of all religions and political parties are to be respected.” We assure the Churches of Palestine and Israel of our prayers, collaboration and resources.
3. Thus, in Amman, Jordan 18–20 June 2007, days that have witnessed a deepening of the crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories, and also includes the United Nations World Refugee Day, we representatives of Christian churches and church-related organizations from every corner of the earth, affirm the decision of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and launch the “Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum” as an instrument to “catalyze and co-ordinate new and existing church advocacy for peace, aimed at ending the illegal occupation in accordance with UN resolutions, and demonstrate its commitment to inter-religious action for peace and justice that serves all the peoples of the region.”
4. This action has been taken in response to three fundamental imperatives that call us to action:
  - The ethical and theological imperative for a Just Peace
  - The ecumenical imperative for unity in action
  - The Gospel imperative for costly solidarity

Among the “challenges” that come from the Churches of Palestine and Israel and to which the statement calls us to respond are these:

9.1 Act with us to liberate all peoples of this land from the logic of hatred, mutual rejection and death, so that they see in the other the face and dignity of God.

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9.6. Add your hope to ours in the knowledge that evil and despair have been overcome through the death of our Lord on the Cross and through His Resurrection.

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9.8. Partner with us as we seek peace and pursue it. Peace is possible. Christians and Muslims and Jews have, can and will understand one another and live together as neighbors.

The General Assembly would do well to endorse this statement as furthering the long-standing efforts of the PC(USA) for a just peace in the Middle East, and to be informed especially of activities of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum, and about any other ecumenical or interfaith initiatives that would complement the goal of a just and lasting peace.

### **The Amman Call**

Issued at WCC International Peace Conference “Churches together for  
Peace and Justice in the Middle East”  
Amman, Jordan, 18–20 June 2007

#### **Amman imperatives:**

1. Almost sixty years have passed since the Christian churches first spoke with one voice about Arab-Israeli peace. For the last forty years the Christian churches have called for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In the very place where Jesus Christ walked upon the earth, walls now separate families and the children of God—Christian, Muslim and Jew—are imprisoned in a deepening cycle of violence, humiliation and despair. The Palestinian Christians from Gaza to Jerusalem and to Nazareth, have called out to their brothers and sisters in Christ with this urgent plea: “Enough is enough. No more words without deeds. It is time for action.”

2. We welcome the timely and prophetic statement of the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem. We affirm that “the Churches are part of the conflict, because the Churches cannot remain silent while there is still suffering. The role of the Churches is to heal and to bring all sides to reconciliation.” Our belief in God reminds us “that all God’s children of all religions and political parties are to be respected.” We assure the Churches of Palestine and Israel of our prayers, collaboration and resources.

3. Thus, in Amman, Jordan 18–20 June 2007, days that have witnessed a deepening of the crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories, and also includes the United Nations World Refugee Day, we representatives of Christian churches and church-related organizations from every corner of the earth, affirm the decision of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and launch the “Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum” as an instrument to “catalyze and co-ordinate new and existing church advocacy for peace, aimed at ending the illegal occupation in accordance with UN resolutions, and demonstrate its commitment to inter-religious action for peace and justice that serves all the peoples of the region.”

4. This action has been taken in response to three fundamental imperatives that call us to action:

- The ethical and theological imperative for a Just Peace
- The ecumenical imperative for unity in action
- The Gospel imperative for costly solidarity

5. The premises of this action are the following:

5.1. That UN resolutions are the basis for peace and the Geneva conventions are applicable to the rights and responsibilities of the affected people.

5.2. That Palestinians have the right of self-determination and the right of return.

5.3. That a two-state solution must be viable politically, geographically economically and socially.

5.4 That Jerusalem must be an open, accessible, inclusive and shared city for the two peoples and three religions.

5.5 That both Palestine and Israel have legitimate security needs.

- 5.6. That the Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories are illegal, and constitute an obstacle to peace.
  - 5.7. That the “Separation Barrier” constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories is a grave breach of international law and must be removed from the occupied territory.
  - 5.8. That there is no military solution for this conflict. Violence in all its forms cannot be justified whether perpetrated by Israelis or Palestinians.
  - 5.9. That comprehensive regional peace is indivisible from a just peace in Israel and Palestine.
  - 5.10. That the life and witness of local churches is at the center of worldwide church advocacy for a just peace.
6. We understand the mandate of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum to be a space where we will develop comprehensive strategic approaches to the two processes of peace making and peace building. An inclusive core group convened urgently by the WCC should be mandated to facilitate this and also ensure improved coordination between all actors. The core group will be informed by the reports of the working groups of the Amman conference, and that its composition and mechanism be designed and announced by the WCC.
7. Peace building will include the following:
- 7.1. Furthering theological and biblical perspectives and Christian education resources around those issues central to the conflict.
  - 7.2. Developing strategies that will support the processes of justice and reconciliation, including inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.
  - 7.3. Strengthening the churches’ responses to the occupation.
  - 7.4. Recognizing, encouraging and cooperating with all efforts of Israeli and Palestinian civil society that are in accord with the vision and goals of the PIEF.
8. Peace making will include the following:
- 8.1. Defining and promoting measures, including economic ones, that could help end the occupation and enhance sustainable growth and development.
  - 8.2. Strengthening existing efforts and identifying new models of church solidarity in action. Supporting local churches and church related organizations not only to survive and continue their powerful ministries, including educational, health, cultural and social services, but also to thrive and be witnesses of hope.
  - 8.3. Developing a long-term advocacy strategy in order to mobilize all of our constituencies and influence change.

Amman challenges:

9. We have heard the voices of the Christian churches of Palestine and Israel challenging and saying to us:
- 9.1. Act with us to liberate all peoples of this land from the logic of hatred, mutual rejection and death, so that they see in the other the face and dignity of God.
  - 9.2. Pray with us in our efforts to resist evil in all of its guises.
  - 9.3. Raise your voices along with ours as we speak “truth to power” and name with courage the injustices we see and experience. The illegal occupation has stolen two generations of lives in this tortured place, and threatens the next with hopelessness and rage.
  - 9.4. Risk the curses and abuse that will be aimed at you and stand in solidarity with us and with our Palestinian brothers and sisters of all faiths as we defiantly reject the possibility that occupation will continue.
  - 9.5. Help us to tear down walls and build and rebuild bridges among all peoples in the region. Extremism on all sides produces chaos. It threatens to divide us and to destroy bridges among peoples that would lead to reconciliation and peace.
  - 9.6. Add your hope to ours in the knowledge that evil and despair have been overcome through the death of our Lord on the Cross and through His Resurrection.
  - 9.7. Insist with us that all dispossessed peoples, all refugees, have the right to return.

9.8. Partner with us as we seek peace and pursue it. Peace is possible. Christians and Muslims and Jews have, can and will understand one another and live together as neighbors.

10. And we representatives of Christian churches and church-related organizations from every corner of the earth, we respond:

11. Yes, we will. Together we will act and pray and speak and work and risk reputations and lives to build with you bridges for an enduring peace among the peoples of this tortured and beautiful place—Palestine and Israel—to end these decades of injustice, humiliation and insecurity, to end the decades of living as refugees and under occupation. We will work with you to seek peace and pursue it. We have allowed too much time to pass. Time has not served the cause of peace but has served the cause of extremism. This is our urgent cause that cannot wait.

[Text was found on July 9, 2007, at <http://www.oikoumene.org/index.php?id=3748>.]

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-03.

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-03 be answered by the action taken on Item 11-01.

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## Item 11-04

**[The assembly answered Item 11-04 by the action taken on Item 11-01. See pp. 45, 46.]**

*On Travel to Israel and Palestine—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.*

Now it is as important as it has ever been for Christians to make an intentional faithful pilgrimage to Israel and Palestine, therefore, the Presbytery of East Iowa overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to renew and elaborate the call made by the 215th General Assembly (2003), namely:

1. To exhort Presbyterians to take trips that are in harmony with our principles, specifically trips that include
  - a. Significant time visiting local Christians and church leaders. As a connectional church, we do mission in partnership. Our Christian partners in Israel and Palestine are asking us to deepen our commitment and involvement by visiting them. The PC(USA) mission workers assigned to Israel and Palestine can assist in this effort.
  - b. Significant time in the Occupied Territories (West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza) as well as Israel. In addition to being a request of our partners, visits into the Occupied Territories also address poverty, another grave concern of our denomination. Time spent in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza should translate to financial benefits accruing to an impoverished economy through hotels, restaurants, tour guides, taxis and buses, and souvenir shops.
  - c. Opportunities to meet Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers.
  - d. Opportunities to hear a variety of perspectives from Israelis and Palestinians—including Jews, Muslims, and Christians. The PC(USA) is committed to just peacemaking and interfaith dialogue throughout the world, including Israel and Palestine. Dialogue and intentional listening are essential to true peacemaking.

[Presbyterians should not necessarily be discouraged from taking trips that do not fulfill every one of these points, but they should be aware that they are missing out on important aspects of faithful visits.]

2. To direct appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council to develop more trips to Israel and Palestine, in particular, to investigate sending presbytery teams in regionally organized trips. For example, presbytery teams from four synods might go every other year, over a period of eight years. In addition, they should plan for continued communication with the teams after their return.

3. To make Presbyterians aware of denominational networks and resources available to them for planning local group trips of their own—(these networks include the Israel/Palestine Network Pilgrimage Team and PC(USA) mission workers



serving Israel/Palestine, part of whose function is to link travelers with our partners there)—and of the many ecumenical trips that do follow the guidelines.

### *Rationale*

Conditions under Israel's occupation to which past General Assemblies (1988, 1990, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2004) have objected have worsened in the intervening years. Walled enclosures and military checkpoints on Palestinian land arbitrarily cut off Palestinians from employment, agricultural lands, education, and medical care on which their lives depend.

Citizens are imprisoned without due process. Laws are imposed denying Palestinians the right to build homes on their own land, justifying the bulldozing of thousands of homes. The confiscation of Palestinian land for Israeli settlers has continued unabated during ceasefires and diplomatic overtures. Palestinian communities are vulnerable to cut-offs of water and electricity, and control of their aquifers has been diverted to Israel. Thousands of their olive trees have been destroyed, and the environment degraded. Inequitable enforcement of law permits violence by settlers. Palestinian travel and export vital to the economy is severely restricted by complete control of Palestinian borders.\*

As Presbyterian policy makes clear, in addition to remedying Palestinian suffering, our concern is also to assist Israelis to enjoy a future of peace and security, and, in pursuit of that, to hear their hopes and fears. In that cause, we deplore violence perpetrated against the Israeli people by elements of Palestinian society.

The hope and direction offered by Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers, our Christian partners among them, too often go unheeded. Presbyterians can help with their loving presence and their faithful witness when they return.

We recommend trips that not only inspire by historical associations, but also help the church grow in mercy and peace-making. We recommend the continued organization of trips for regional teams because our 2006 Israel/Palestine denominational trip showed that the most effective witness and agent for change is a community working together.

\*For documentation of current human rights abuses under the Occupation, see *Amnesty International Report 2007: the State of the World's Human Rights*.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-04.**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-04 be answered by the action taken on Item 11-01.

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### **GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-04**

*Comment on Item 11-04—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly has often encouraged Presbyterians to travel to the Middle East, and especially to Israel/Palestine. The 215th General Assembly (2003) asked pastors, lay leaders, sessions, and individual members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

Travel to the region, as may be feasible and opportune, to visit with Christian partners and others, to gain firsthand experience in understanding of the issues and dynamics behind the conflict, as well as possibilities for peace and good will, making sure to take advantage of the contacts and travel resources produced by the PC(USA) and its partners, as well as PC(USA) mission workers and others in the region, who are able to introduce visitors to a wide spectrum of perspectives and opinions within the communities of people in the Holy Land. (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 636)

The 209th General Assembly (1997) had also adopted a recommendation that “urge[d] all Presbyterians who visit the region, whether for pilgrimage, business, or pleasure, to seek out the Christian communities, join with them in worship, and become acquainted with their human-rights struggles, and to seek ways to express Christian love, peace and justice” (*Minutes*, 1997, Part I, p. 562)

The 216th General Assembly (2004) urged conducting a feasibility study for compassionate economic development for the Palestinian people. That study's recommendations, which were presented to and approved by the General Assembly Council, encouraged more travel by Presbyterians to Israel/Palestine on the premise that tourism (and, in this case, intentional travel and responsible tourism) is a major source of livelihood for Palestinians who work in travel agencies, hotels, restaurants, transport, art and craft production, and merchandising, etc.

The GAC's Middle East Office, Interfaith Relations Office, and the Peacemaking Program have in the past offered annual travel seminar opportunities that helped Presbyterians gain insights into the area. Due to reductions in staff capabilities and budgets, such opportunities are now greatly diminished and would require staff time and financial allocations to be resumed. However, these offices, with the assistance of the Israel/Palestine Mission network, are now studying possibilities of offering training opportunities for would-be travel seminar leaders who can resource ways to fulfill the intent of the General Assembly's urging.

## Item 11-05

*On Temporary Suspension of Military Aid to the State of Israel—From the Presbytery of Detroit.*

[WITHDRAWN]

## Item 11-06

[The assembly approved Item 11-06. See pp. 45, 46.]

*On the 218th General Assembly (2008) Being a Voice for the Victims of Violence in Israel and Palestine—From the Presbytery of National Capital.*

**The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

- 1. Be a voice for the victims of violence in both Israel and Palestine. We ask PC(USA) members, congregations, committees, and other entities to become nonpartisan advocates for peace. As such, we will not over-identify with the realities of the Israelis or Palestinians. Instead we will identify with the need for peacemaking voices in the midst of horrific acts of violence and terror.**
- 2. Focus our energy on the United States government, demanding that it assume an intensive and unrelenting role as a peacemaker, bringing together the opposing parties in forums where reasonable people can reach reasonable compromises about highly complex issues.**
- 3. Condemn all acts of violence against innocent civilians. We will avoid taking broad stands that simplify a very complex situation into a caricature of reality where one side clearly is at fault and the other side is clearly the victim.**

### *Rationale*

This overture represents a humble confession of the very limited role the PC(USA) can play in solving the problems in the Middle East. Seeking to be part of the solution rather than inflaming the problems, we will join with and support any and all others in the world who seek a solution that creates two states, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and justice. We will call on all who, clinging to narrow self-interests, stand in the way of such a solution to consider the interest of all God's children in the region.

**Concurrence to Item 11-06 from the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca.**

### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) agrees with the concerns of Item 11-06 calling for fairness and for concern for victims.

The ACSWP advises that Item 11-06 be answered by approving the following alternate resolution:

“The 218th General Assembly (2008)

“1. Expresses its concern for the victims of violence in Israel and Palestine by affirming that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does have a prophetic role to be the voice of the voiceless and all victims.

“2. Observes that in the current dynamics of the Palestinian/Israeli situation, the voices of our Arab brothers and sisters, both Christian and Muslim, are muted, thus creating distorted perceptions of the reality on the ground.

“3. Calls for the United States government, in increasing its role as a peacemaker, to examine its policies and agreements with the Israeli government, the elected leaders of the Palestinians, and other regional nations and actors in light of justice and human rights for all people.

“4. Calls upon the United States government to be respectful of international policies and decisions and to seek to dialogue with all parties within the political dynamics of Israel, Palestine, and other regional nations and actors. Similarly, representatives of the church are also called to seek to establish lines of communication and understanding across all barriers, remembering Jesus’ words that we should ‘love your enemies,’ even if we do not agree with them.

“5. Lifts up the example of President Jimmy Carter, as a person of faith, for his efforts to promote peace in the Middle East by opening channels of communication, and recalls that The Confession of 1967 challenges the church as it seeks to embody the reconciliation obtained in Christ: ‘This search requires that the nations pursue fresh and responsible relations across every line of conflict, even at the risk of national security, to reduce areas of strife and to broaden international understanding’ (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.45). A dialogue in which all voices are heard is essential for justice to become reality and human dignity to be restored and reconciliation to be achieved among all peoples.”

#### *Rationale*

The ACSWP makes several observations regarding language within the overture:

1. “non-partisan advocates for peace” (Recommendation 1.)—When issues of justice and human rights are the concerns being addressed, Christians must be advocates for the Gospel, for the victims of injustice, and for those denied human rights.

2. “the very limited role the PCUSA can play” (paragraph in the *Rationale* section)—We believe that the prophetic role calling for justice is not to be regarded in the diminished way the overture seems to imply. Despite dismissals and limited voices, the prophets of the Old Testament confronted the powers of injustice and inequality in the name of God.

3. The Christian Gospel calls us and compels us to be *attached* to “the least among us,” to be the incarnation of God’s transforming redemptive grace and love, and to be partners of God in the creation of a new world in prophetic promise and hope. Christ sends us into the world, as he had been sent, to be advocates for the oppressed, the victims of injustice and those denied human rights, in service to the “abundant life” he promises.

The ACSWP is concerned about establishing a balance in the understanding of the relationship between Palestine and Israel. In order to develop this balance, ACSWP encourages the 218th General Assembly (2008) to urge all entities within the PC(USA) to study the relative conditions present in Palestine and Israel in these areas:

- economic levels of people;
- access to medical, water, food, and other essential life-resources;
- extent of suffering of innocents and deaths within each population;
- funding from the United States government;
- security resources for independence within Palestine and Israel; and,
- mobility and access to Jerusalem, an international city with religious significance for three major faith communities.

## **Item 11-07**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 11-07. See pp. 45, 46.]**

*On Supporting Israel’s Right to Exist, But Calling for Temporary Suspension of Military Aid to the State of Israel—From the Presbytery of Newark.*

The Presbytery of Newark respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Reaffirm the right of Israel to exist.
2. Deplore suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks.
3. Urge the Arab nations and the United States to do all possible to prevent arms smuggling into the Palestinian occupied territories.
4. Call for the U.S. government to temporarily suspend military aid to the State of Israel until the Israeli government complies with the requirements of
  - a. the U.S. Arms Export Control Act, which prohibits using U.S. weapons against civilians or civilian infrastructure, and
  - b. the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act, which prohibits giving assistance to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.
5. Direct that the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) communicate these recommendations to all members of the U. S. Congress and to all of the appropriate members of the U. S. Administration, including the president, vice president, secretary of state, and the secretary of defense.

### *Rationale*

The Church is called to heed the voices of the prophets and of Jesus:

- “He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:4).
- “But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. ... They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity ... . The wolf and the lamb shall feed together ... . They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain” (Isa. 65:18–25)
- “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you’ ” (Mt. 5:43–44).
- “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Mt. 5:9).

“The Church is called to be Christ’s faithful evangelist ... participating in God’s activity in the world through its life for others by

- “(a) healing and reconciling and binding up wounds,
- “(b) ministering to the needs of the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the powerless,
- “(c) engaging in the struggle to free people from sin, fear, oppression, hunger, and injustice,
- “(d) giving itself and its substance to those who suffer,
- “(e) sharing with Christ in the establishing of his just, peaceable, and loving rule in the world.” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0300 c (3))

General Assemblies since 1948 have expressed their concern for peace and justice for Israelis and Palestinians and all who live in the Holy Land. A summary of General Assembly statements and actions about the State of Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and the Middle East since 1948 are available from the PC(USA)’s Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. Annually, the General Assembly also publishes Human Rights Updates for the Middle East generally and Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories specifically. Over the years, General Assembly statements have specifically addressed U.S. military aid to Israel:

- “denying all forms of aid to Israel” (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 796);

- “make continuation of U.S. aid to State of Israel contingent upon an end to further settlements ... and an end to human rights violations” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp. 105–6)
- “renew efforts to make U.S. aid to Israel conditional upon cessation of appropriation of Palestinian land” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, pp. 688–89)
- “make continued aid and military assistance to Israel contingent on its fulfilling the terms of the Oslo Accords” (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, pp. 655–56). [Source: A Brief Summary of General Assembly Statements Resource Sheet 17 of 27 Feb. 2005 Updated March 2006. <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/israelpalestine/resources/17gastatements.pdf> ]

Since 1948, Israeli government policy has caused enormous pain and suffering to the Palestinians in their own land by continual, unrelenting human rights violations. Examples of these include:

- driving Palestinians from their homes, lands and towns;
- confining them to life in refugee camps for sixty years;
- destroying their commerce and economy with blockades and checkpoints;
- building the separation wall that separates family members from each other, children from their schools, and people in need of medical care from hospitals;
- demolishing homes of civilians;
- arresting and imprisoning adults and youth without trial;
- creating fear and loss of life and limb through the continued presence of armored tanks, armed soldiers, and random attacks on civilians.

These policies are also eliminating the Christian communities in the Holy Land. <http://www.openbethlehem.org>.

Israeli, U.S., Palestinian, and international human rights organizations as well as the U.S. government and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have all documented these gross violations of internationally recognized human rights by Israel against Palestinians living under Israel’s illegal military occupation. <http://www.btselem.org/English/Publications/Index.asp>

The U.S. provides Israel with more than 10 million dollars a day in military aid; Israel relies almost exclusively on this U.S. military aid to continue these human rights violations in East Jerusalem and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. <http://www.ifamericansknew.org>

The State of Israel has also used U.S.-provided banned weapons, i.e. cluster bombs, against civilians in Lebanon during the 2006 war there. The remains of these weapons continue to kill children and other civilians. In January 2007, the State Department sent a report to Senator Joe Biden, chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, claiming that Israel violated the U.S. Arms Export Control Act by indiscriminately dropping cluster munitions in civilian areas in Lebanon during last year’s war.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2006-10-22-israel-lebanonx.htm>

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=SHA20061024&articleID=3595>

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2007/79467.htm>

Notable calls for suspension or conditionality of aid to Israel have been made from several organizations. Among these are:

Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP): “U.S. military aid to Israel has a dramatic effect on Israel’s policies towards the Palestinians. It has increasingly been used not to pay for defense but to finance the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands. It keeps Israel from facing the difficult but necessary challenges of building a more democratic society, and encourages solving deep-rooted problems by military rather than peaceful and more effective means” ([http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/publish/article\\_17.shtml](http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/publish/article_17.shtml)).

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA): “to encourage Congress to help stop Israel’s settlement building by placing conditions on Israel’s request for loan guarantees, and new military aid” (<http://www.elca.org/middleeast/archived.html> March 2003).

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP): “Israel’s military siege of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem should not be rewarded by praise or additional military aid” (<http://cmep.org/Alerts/2002May3.htm>); and “The United States should condition special funds—grants, loans and loan guarantees—on Israel’s compliance with its Road Map obligations, such as removal of outposts” (<http://cmep.org/Alerts/2005Sept7.htm>).

The U.S. Arms Export Control Act prohibits foreign countries from using U.S. supplied weapons against civilians or civilian infrastructure and limits their use to “legitimate self-defense.”

The U.S. Foreign Assistance Act states that “No assistance may be provided under this part of the law to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.”

The Presbyterian church has repeatedly affirmed the right of Israel to exist.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) declared that “any suicide bombing, no matter who is the perpetrator or the target, constitutes a crime against humanity” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 891).

We deplore all violence, including suicide bombings and other terrorist acts, as well as violence perpetrated by an occupying army. From September 2000 to February 2008, 1,031 Israelis and at least 4,528 Palestinians have been killed, including 119 Israeli children and 982 Palestinian children. All human life is precious. The cycle of violence must stop.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-07

*Advice & Counsel on Item 11-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises the approval of Item 11-07 as amended below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Newark respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

“1. ~~[Reaffirm the right of Israel to exist.]~~ [Express its enduring commitment to the security of Israelis, an equal commitment to justice for Palestinians, and to an enduring peace between Israel and a viable, contiguous Palestinian state. This entails an end to the cycle of violence and the shifting of funds away from military occupation and to negotiation and normalization of relations in accordance with international law, guaranteeing a State of Israel within internationally recognized borders and an end to further militarization and subsidy to all agents of violence, including targeted assassinations, suicide bombings, and measures that violate the human rights and potential for livelihood for Palestinians and Israelis.]

“2. ~~[Deplore suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks.]~~ [Encourage the United States and all parties to the current ‘Annapolis’ Peace Talks to negotiate in good faith, mindful of the enormous disparities in power and economic capacity between Israel and the Palestinians and the injustice, despair, and violence that has followed sidelining of previous peace agreements.]

“3. Urge the Arab nations and the United States to do all possible to prevent arms smuggling into the [occupied] Palestinian ~~[occupied]~~ territories.”

[Recommendations 4. and 5. remain unchanged.]

#### *Rationale*

The concerns and actions proposed in this overture are not new, although worsening humanitarian conditions in the occupied territories may add weight to its argument for a conditional suspension of our country’s proportionately massive military subsidies to Israel. Clearly there are other forms of subsidy to Israel not addressed in these recommendations.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) notes that the 209th General Assembly (1997) specifically called on the government of the United States “to adhere to U. S. law concerning the denial of foreign assistance to any country engaged in a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights,” (*Resolution on the Middle East*, Chapter “Concerning Human Rights,” Recommendation [4]). It also notes that, in a number of recommendations, the 215th General Assembly (2003) addressed related issues of United States economic assistance to the Middle East. It urged taking “steps to restructure and reallocate its present annual aid ... to enable and support strategies for development of the region as a whole,” assuring that U.S. policies, strategies, and economic assistance would result in human advancement, a more equitable distribution of resources, economic growth, and contribute to the improvement of the quality of life, and ensuring that sufficient resources

and economic aid are made available to the Palestinian people in order to help build and modernize Palestinian schools, create effective vocational training programs, resuscitate the Palestinian economy, ... etc.”

In approving this overture—urging temporary suspension of military aid to Israel until the United States government is satisfied and can demonstrate that Israel adheres to both international law and to laws the U.S. Congress has passed with regard to terms and conditions for military assistance or the sale of arms—the General Assembly would be faithful to the vision of an Israel at peace with its neighbors and consistent with historic Presbyterian commitment to international law. So far, the United Nations and various human rights organizations, including those of Israel itself, give clear evidence that the government of Israel continues to disregard international laws and UN resolutions, and violates international norms of human rights, as detailed in the overture’s rationale.

When applied to Israel, the measure of temporary suspension of military aid would not be a “punishment” to Israel, already one of the strongest nuclear-equipped militaries in the world. On the contrary, we owe it to Israel to be concerned about its long-term security and peace. Furthermore, the Presbyterian church has advocated for similar limitations on military or security assistance in relation to other countries, particularly in relation to human rights, and has used its own investment policies to reflect its moral concerns.

Above all, it is for the sake of the security of Israel, as a sovereign state and as citizens, that such suspension of military aid would arguably be beneficial. If indeed Israel is “our best ally in the region,” and if it is the “strongest democracy in the area,” then we should first expect compliance from our allies, the most democratic of states in the region, in order to be able to challenge those who may be less committed to us or to democracy.

Finally, the issue ultimately confronts our own government with the question of whether it is upholding its own laws, or is in fact violating them. For many nations in the world, particularly Muslim nations, there is a pervasive belief that the U.S. is not consistent in its human rights practice.

## Item 11-08

[The assembly answered Item 11-08 by the action taken on Item 11-10. See p. 46.]

*On the Withdrawal of U.S. Troops From Iraq—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.*

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 218th General Assembly to do the following:

1. Call upon individual Presbyterians, member congregations, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels urgently to raise their voices for peace in the nation of Iraq and an end to the United States military presence there.
2. Commend to the church the call of the 216th General Assembly (2004) for the church to express its pastoral concern for and offer pastoral care to members of the United States armed forces serving their country in the war in Iraq and their families as well as for veterans of the war who have returned home (Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future, *Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 864ff).
3. Direct the General Assembly Council to continue and expand the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to relief efforts in Iraq in cooperation with our ecumenical partners, to ministries that address human needs in Iraq caused by the war, and to long-term development efforts to assist in the rebuilding of the country.
4. Call upon the United States government to develop and implement a specific timetable for the withdrawal of United States military forces, and reaffirms the call of the 216th General Assembly (2004) for the United States government to engage with the international community through the United Nations and other international agencies to cooperate with the government of Iraq in providing security, peacekeeping forces, and funding for the rebuilding of the country (Ibid).
5. Direct the appropriate offices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to advocate, and to assist Presbyterians to advocate with the United States government for the complete withdrawal of United States military forces and for engagement with the international community to support the government of Iraq, providing resources for peacekeeping and long-term development needs.

### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through its General Assembly and many of its member congregations, has affirmed a commitment to peacemaking<sup>1</sup> as an essential and faithful way to witness to the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Psalmist calls us to seek peace and pursue it<sup>2</sup>; the prophet Isaiah calls the faithful community to beat swords into plowshares, spears into pruning hooks, and study war no more<sup>3</sup>; our Lord Jesus blesses the peacemakers<sup>4</sup>; and the apostle Paul calls the church to a ministry of reconciliation as the body of Christ in the world<sup>5</sup>.

The war in Iraq and the United States' military involvement in it challenges the church of Jesus Christ and individual followers of our Lord to engage in a ministry of reconciliation<sup>6</sup> with the goal of bringing violence and military conflict in that nation to an end.

The 216th General Assembly (2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) declared that the Iraq war was “unwise, immoral, and illegal” in its statement “Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future”<sup>7</sup> and urged that the United States take steps to cooperate with the international community, especially the United Nations, in an effort to rebuild Iraq.

There is a preponderance of evidence that the principal justifications made by the government of the United States to its people for unilaterally initiating war in Iraq were based on erroneous assumptions.

The presence of United States military forces in Iraq has itself become the impetus for violent resistance by many of the groups engaging in the war of attrition against the United States military, as well as the government and people of Iraq.

#### Endnotes

1. *Peacemaking: The Believers Calling*, a resolution adopted by the 192nd General Assembly (1980) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.
2. Psalm 34:14.
3. Isaiah 2:4.
4. Matthew 5:9.
5. Ephesians 2:13–22 and 2 Corinthians 5:16–21.
6. *The Book of Confessions*, The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Part I, “The Confession of 1967, 9:45.
7. Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future, a resolution with recommendation approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 864ff).

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#### Concurrences to Item 11-08 from the Presbyteries of Hudson River and New Hope.

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## Item 11-09

[The assembly approved Item 11-09. See pp. 45, 46.]

*Regarding Assistance for Iraqi Refugees—From the Presbytery of Lake Huron.*

**The Presbytery of Lake Huron respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

- **recognize, support, and applaud the efforts of all United States government employees now assisting Iraqi refugees and displaced persons to the extent possible in Iraq and neighboring countries;**
- **strongly advocate the United States government to act more quickly to provide haven in the United States for threatened Iraqi refugees and displaced persons regardless of their religious faith, after screening for public health and security risks;**
- **strongly advocate the United States government to provide adequate staff, resources, and simplified procedures to rapidly implement an improved Iraqi refugee resettlement program;**
- **encourage churches and presbyteries to welcome Iraqi refugees within their region, sponsoring and assisting in their resettlement; and**



- **direct the Washington office of PC(USA) to advocate for legislation supporting resettlement of Iraqi refugees in the United States.**

### *Rationale*

Christians are called to have compassion and to aid the injured, the lost, and the dispossessed. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long history of policies and actions to aid refugees in stressed regions. Our nation has grown over the centuries from the influx of refugees from many nations. Since 1940, the United States has provided special refugee status to many thousands of refugees from military conflicts in which the United States participated.

The continuing conflict in Iraq has resulted in millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, yet very few Iraqis have been granted requested refugee status and resettlement in the United States. Attempts by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to aid the resettlement of Iraqi refugees, including Iraqi church leaders, have revealed this refugee crisis:

- Very few visas to enter the United States have been authorized or issued for Iraqi refugees
- Processing of refugees is extremely slow, apparently due to complex procedures and inadequate personnel resources
- Most Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons, now in the millions, are in appalling, desperate situations in Iraq and the neighboring countries.

We believe that the church must urge our government to address these humanitarian concerns by taking the actions recommended in this overture and that the church itself must respond to the crisis by encouraging congregations to participate in resettlement efforts.

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### **Concurrence to Item 11-09 from the Presbyteries of Southern New England and the Twin Cities Area.**

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#### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-09—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the overture be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Lake Huron respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

“● confess the responsibility the United States bears for creating the current crisis in which, according to the Office of the United Nations high commissioner for refugees, 4.7 million Iraqis have left their homes, including 2.7 million Iraqis who have been internally displaced and 2 million Iraqis who have fled to neighboring states, particularly to Syria and Jordan;”

“● recognize, support, and applaud the efforts of all United States government employees now assisting Iraqi refugees and displaced persons to the extent possible in Iraq and neighboring countries;

“● strongly advocate the United States government and the United Nations to work with the government of Iraq to increase its capacity to respond to the needs of its people;”

“● strongly advocate that the United States government increase the resources it provides to address the unstable situation of Iraqi refugees and displaced persons in the region, lead an international initiative to support Middle Eastern countries hosting Iraqi civilians, and increase direct bilateral assistance to countries hosting Iraqi refugees;”

“● strongly advocate the United States government to act more quickly to provide haven in the United States for threatened Iraqi refugees and displaced persons regardless of their religious faith, after screening for public health and security risks;

“● strongly advocate the United States government to provide adequate staff, resources, and simplified procedures to rapidly implement an improved Iraqi refugee resettlement program;

“● encourage churches and presbyteries to welcome Iraqi refugees within their region, sponsoring and assisting in their resettlement; and

“● direct the Washington office of PC(USA) to advocate for legislation supporting resettlement of Iraqi refugees in the United States.”

*Rationale*

Christians are called to have compassion and to aid the injured, the lost, and the dispossessed. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long history of policies and actions to aid refugees in stressed regions. Our nation has grown over the centuries from the influx of refugees from many nations. Since 1940, the United States has provided special refugee status to many thousands of refugees from military conflicts in which the United States participated.

The continuing conflict in Iraq has resulted in millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, yet very few Iraqis have been granted requested refugee status and resettlement in the United States. Attempts by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to aid the resettlement of Iraqi refugees, including Iraqi church leaders, have revealed this refugee crisis:

- Very few visas to enter the United States have been authorized or issued for Iraqi refugees
- Processing of refugees is extremely slow, apparently due to complex procedures and inadequate personnel resources
- Most Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons, now in the millions, are in appalling, desperate situations in Iraq and the neighboring countries.

We believe that the church must urge our government to address these humanitarian concerns by taking the actions recommended in this overture and that the church itself must respond to the crisis by encouraging congregations to participate in resettlement efforts.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 11-09 regarding assistance to Iraqi refugees.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that this item be approved.

*Rationale*

As the U.S. has provided refugee status to thousands displaced by war in the past, we should continue to do at least this much for Iraqi refugees.

Our church has historically advocated for compassion and hospitality for refugees of war. In the 1960s we welcomed Cuban refugees. In the 1980s, when Presbyterians acted to help political refugees from Central America, General Assemblies supported them in what was called “The Sanctuary Movement.” Likewise, prior assemblies called for compassionate and lenient U.S. immigration policies toward Southeast Asian refugees in the wake of wars in Vietnam and Cambodia.

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**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-09**

*Comment on Item 11-09—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council (GAC) affirms the Christian concern demonstrated by the Presbytery of Lake Huron for Iraqis who have fled their home country. The GAC commends the Presbytery of Lake Huron for bringing this issue before the General Assembly.

Groups working on refugee issues report that more than 1 million displaced Iraqis are living in Jordan, and 1.5 million in Syria. The vast and still-growing numbers of Iraqis fleeing their home country with no permanent place to go has laid a growing burden on the governments, societies, and churches of neighboring countries in the region. For example, providing education for displaced Iraqi children poses a significant challenge.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through the Office on the Middle East, the Iraq Partnership Network, and other programs, continues to lift up the plight of Iraqi refugees and displaced persons. Through the Peace Fund for Solidarity with the Churches of Iraq (Extra Commitment Opportunity account #E051722) and the Jinishian Memorial Program, the PC(USA) has also assisted the churches of the region, through the Middle East Council of Churches, as they address this crisis.

The GAC supports the call to the United States government to alleviate the suffering of Iraqi refugees. Part of that effort could involve working with other nations, particularly Iraq, and supporting the work of the Office of the UN high commissioner for refugees and other agencies.

## Item 11-10

[The assembly approved Item 11-10 as amended. See pp. 45–46.]

*On Building Peace in Iraq—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Pray, in a spirit of deep [~~sorrow and confession~~] [humility], for God's justice and peace to prevail in Iraq; and recognizing and heeding God's call to love all persons as made in God's own image, and even to pray for our enemies, encourage all Presbyterians to be in intentional and regular prayer for everyone in and of Iraq: for Iraqi civilians, Christian, Muslim, Jew, Yezidi; for soldiers and armed actors; for the refugees and the displaced; for the tortured and their torturers; and for insurgents, kidnapers, and terrorists, for all are God's beloved, all are in need of the transformation of God's love and God's peace.

2. Commend and thank the peacemakers who have worked nonviolently to end the war in Iraq through prayers, vigils, and acts of resistance and witness such as the actions organized by the Christian Peace Witness for Iraq; and encourage all Presbyterians to participate enthusiastically in peacemaking efforts to end the occupation of Iraq.

3. Commend and thank members of the armed forces, and their loved ones, for their service and sacrifice.

4. Call upon the United States government to support our military personnel by granting speedy discharges to conscientious objectors; fully funding veterans' benefits; ensuring that injured service personnel and veterans have the best medical, mental health, and rehabilitation care available; and providing generous benefits to surviving family members.

5. [~~Call upon the government of the United States to end its military presence in Iraq by withdrawing all troops, hired soldiers, and contractors, and permanently closing all military bases in Iraq.~~] [Call upon the United States government to develop and implement a lasting peaceful solution, responsibly bring the troops home, and reaffirm the call of the 216th General Assembly (2004) for the United States government to engage with the international community through the United Nations and other international agencies to cooperate with the government of Iraq in providing security, peacekeeping forces, and funding the rebuilding of the country.]

6. Call upon the United States and all member states of the United Nations to establish and fully fund a United Nations peacebuilding mission for Iraq to work in partnership with Iraqi leaders, neighboring nations, and appropriate international governmental and nongovernmental organizations to establish security in Iraq, rebuild institutions and infrastructure, resettle and assist refugees, and initiate a process of truth and reconciliation to promote healing and forgiveness.

7. Call upon the United States and other responsible nations to voluntarily make restitution in an amount adequate to repair war damage; to fully investigate, and where appropriate, in accordance with the principles of due process recognized in U.S. and international law, to prosecute all charges of war crimes including torture and mistreatment of prisoners; and to cooperate completely with any international investigations of war crimes committed by any party to the conflict in Iraq.

8. Call upon the United States to remove all weapons, mines, depleted uranium, and other military waste products from Iraq; to repair other damage to the environment, including priceless archaeological sites.

9. Call upon the United States to return full direct control of Iraq's oil resources and oil revenues to Iraq.

**10. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to the president of the United States, members of the U.S. Congress, and the secretary-general of the United Nations.**

**[11. Receive the study paper (as found in Item 11-24), “To Repent, Restore, Rebuild, and Reconcile” and direct that it be posted on the Website of the Office of the General Assembly and be commended for study throughout the church.]**

**[12. Commend to the church the call of the 216th General Assembly (2004) for the church to express its pastoral concern for and offer pastoral care to members of the United States armed forces serving their country in the war in Iraq and their families as well as for veterans of the war who have returned home (Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future, *Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 864ff).]**

**[13. Direct the General Assembly Council to continue to expand the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to relief efforts in Iraq in cooperation with our ecumenical partners, to ministries that address human needs in Iraq caused by the war, and to long-term development efforts to assist in the rebuilding of the country.]**

**[14. Call upon all presbyteries, congregations, and members within the PC(USA) to intentionally, personally, and concretely work to bring healing, peace, justice, and care to all affected by the war in Iraq, not only through our prayers but through the giving of our resources, time, money, and very selves to improve the lives and future of all involved, especially the hurting, the poor, the oppressed, and those whose lives have been damaged by the war.]**

**[15. Pray for, call for, and work for a just and peaceful future for the nation and people of Iraq, which includes the establishing of a just, stable, and democratic government and the timely departure of U.S. military forces and their contractors as soon as it is possible to leave the nation in an appropriately stable, just, and self-sustaining form.]**

#### *Rationale*

Most of the sixth chapter of the book of Luke is dedicated to Jesus’ teachings about the act of courage that it will take to strive for right relationships even with our enemies or those who hate us. Toward the end of the chapter, Luke recounts Jesus’ exasperation with his followers, “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I tell you? I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them” (Luke 6: 46–47). The call to act on Jesus’ radical notion of security based on loving one’s enemies is clear.

In the two thousand years since the time of Jesus, Christians have often wrestled with these difficult teachings of Jesus. The ethical questions regarding how we respond to evil have always been difficult, and people of good will and solid faith conviction have often disagreed with one another. Still, Jesus’ words remain, beckoning us into an act of faith that challenges us to defy our deepest fears.

In *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling*, the 192nd General Assembly (1980) declared, “The church is faithful to Christ when it is engaged in peacemaking. . . . To deny our calling is a disservice to the church and the world.” Although a just resolution to the conflict in Iraq requires finding solutions to complex and challenging problems, we accept our responsibility to be advocates for nonviolence and reconciliation as those solutions are developed and implemented.

Fortunately, some consensus has begun to emerge from qualified groups studying strategies for ending the war and occupation in Iraq. The first, and most important, conclusion is that the U.S. military operations in Iraq have failed to provide security for citizens and have motivated an extremely violent civil-war-like conflict, and therefore must be ended. This overture includes suggestions from the proposals of several of these groups: “Towards Peace in and with Iraq,” from The Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research ([www.transnational.org](http://www.transnational.org)); “The Iraq Study Group Report: The Way Forward—A New Approach,” from the United States Institute of Peace ([www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org)); “Pastoral Message on the War in Iraq,” from The General Assembly of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA ([www.nccusa.org](http://www.nccusa.org)); and “Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future,” from the 216th General Assembly (2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (available with other excellent resources at [www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/iraq/](http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/iraq/)).

Two groups of people deserve the special concern of the General Assembly: the civilian population of Iraq and U.S. military personnel and their families. This overture takes the position that the best leadership for the Iraqi people is an elected government free of any U.S. influence and that the best channel for international assistance is the United Nations. The problems of adequately equipping our troops and providing the best medical care for the injured have been well covered in the U.S. press. A good exploration of the mental health problems caused by long and uncertain deployments, insufficient rest, and prolonged exposure to combat may be found in the May 2007 Pentagon mental health survey of troops in Iraq.

Many Presbyterians have been called to the work of peacemaking in this time of war. Christian Peace Witness for Iraq (CPWI) is a network of Christian churches and organizations that coordinates national and local actions that incorporate

spirituality with public witness. Rick Ufford-Chase, a former Moderator of the PC(USA), and other Presbyterians are part of the CPWI leadership team. The CPWI has organized worship services, public vigils and fasts, and nonviolent direct actions to give voice to its message: end the U.S. war and occupation, support our troops, support an Iraqi-led peace process, say NO to torture, and say YES to justice. More information on the Christian Peace Witness for Iraq may be found on its Website, christianpeacewitness.org and on the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship website, www.presbypeacefellowship.org.

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**Concurrence to Item 11-10 from the Presbyteries of Chicago, Santa Fe, and the Twin Cities Area.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-10 from the Presbytery of Baltimore, with concurrences from the Presbytery of Chicago, the Presbytery of Santa Fe, and the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) pray for peace and justice in Iraq; encourage all Presbyterians to be in intentional and regular prayer for everyone in Iraq; commend and thank the peace-makers who have worked nonviolently to end the war in Iraq; commend the members of the armed forces and their families for their service and sacrifice; and, call upon the U.S. government to end its military presence in Iraq and fully fund a UN peacebuilding mission for Iraq.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-10 be approved with the following amendment to Recommendation 6: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“6. Call upon the United States and ~~[all]~~ member states of the United Nations to ~~[establish and fully fund a United Nations peacebuilding mission for Iraq to work in partnership with Iraqi leaders, neighboring nations, and appropriate international governmental and nongovernmental organizations to establish security in Iraq, rebuild institutions and infrastructure, resettle and assist refugees, and initiate a process of truth and reconciliation to promote healing and forgiveness]~~ [place Iraq on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission at the earliest opportunity in order to encourage sustainable peace, security, and development by rebuilding institutions and infrastructure, resettling and assisting refugees and internally displaced persons, and initiating a process of truth and reconciliation that promotes healing and forgiveness].”

*Rationale*

Item 11-10 is consistent with the General Assembly policies such as the *Resolution on Just Peacemaking and the Call for International Intervention for Humanitarian Rescue* (Minutes, 1998, Part I, pp. 74–75, 455–59). Many of the recommendations here are similar to those in the proposed resolution, “Costly Lessons of the Iraq War,” which also provides a teaching resource, while this focuses on the advocacy of the church. Parts of Recommendations 4 (on Conscientious Objectors: see item X), 7 (specifying “war crimes” prosecution), 8 (specifying weapons and military waste removal and archeological restoration), 9 (specifying control of oil) add to the more general and comprehensive recommendations in the resolution. Item 6 is rephrased in conformity with current UN assignment of responsibilities as noted below.

In response to a growing recognition that international peacebuilding efforts have lacked an overall strategic approach and coherence, world leaders at the 2005 World Summit agreed to establish the Peacebuilding Commission (UN General Assembly resolution 60/1). The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is an intergovernmental advisory body of the United Nations that supports peace efforts in countries emerging from conflict.

The Peacebuilding Commission plays a unique role in (1) bringing together all of the relevant actors, including international donors, the international financial institutions, national governments, troop contributing countries; (2) marshalling resources; and (3) advising on and proposing integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery and, where appropriate, highlighting any gaps that threaten to undermine peace.

Peacebuilding is a long-term process that occurs after violent conflict has come to a halt. Peacebuilding initiatives cannot substitute for peacekeeping or peacemaking efforts, but must be planned for sequentially out of hope and in the promise of God’s shalom.

## Item 11-11

[The assembly approved Item 11-11 with amendment. See pp. 45, 46.]

*On Addressing the Violence and Suffering Inflicted on Iraqi Women During the Current Prolonged War—From the Presbytery of Providence.*

The Presbytery of Providence overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to address the pain, violence, and suffering being inflicted upon many Iraqi women during the current prolonged war by

1. Communicating to the Iraqi government~~], through their ambassadors in Washington and the United Nations,~~ our concern for equal rights and justice for women in Iraq; deploring the dramatic increase in abuses since ~~[the changes to the Iraqi Constitution in] 2004; and urging [immediate and speedy correction of these inequities of oppressive radical abuses of basic human rights be taken to improve women's status in all areas of Iraqi society] [steps be taken to improve women's status in all areas of Iraqi society];~~

2. Communicating to the United States government, through letters to the president, the members of Congress, and to the secretary of state, our concern for equal rights and justice for women in Iraq and urging that the U.S. government ~~[devote significant attention to working]~~ [work] with the Iraq government toward correcting inequities and lost civil rights by Iraqi women<sup>1</sup>;

3. Encouraging all sessions and presbyteries, as well as women's and men's organizations within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to engage in study, prayer, and dialogue about the issues of violence against and suppression of women in Iraq;

4. Expressing our ~~[concern]~~ [solidarity] ~~[through communications with our partner churches in Iraq as well as within the World Council of Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches, and the World Association of Reformed Churches, seeking their active participation in support for Iraqi women]~~ [with our partner churches in Iraq as well as with the World Council of Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches, the fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and leaders of the Muslim world assisting them in attempts to address the issue and the difficult conditions under which they are living.]

5. Affirming our belief in the value, dignity, and rights of every human being;

6. Asserting our conviction that demands for justice by Iraqi women require efforts to bring their situations before fair tribunals, especially when extreme actions silence those who are oppressed<sup>2</sup>;

~~[7. Appealing to leaders of the Muslim community in the U.S.A. and in the world that they intervene in Iraq by standing against those who are oppressing women and who deny them basic human rights.<sup>3</sup>]~~

### *Rationale*

Numerous reliable news reports document the beatings, rapes and killings of women in many parts of Iraq, particularly throughout southern Iraq, with more than one hundred women killed in Basrah during the last half of 2007. Such abuse frequently is directed toward women who wear makeup or "western" style clothing.<sup>4</sup>

Political Islamists and religious extremists have been using rape, acid, and assassination to force Iraqi women, and those who defend them, to conform and submit to fundamentalist views of the Qur'an, and thus becoming subservient, non-public, and unequal partners in their lives, actions contrary to the United Nations "Universal Declaration on Human Rights" adopted in 1948.<sup>5</sup>

The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)<sup>6</sup> was ratified by the UN General Assembly in 1979, and by 2005 180 countries, including Iraq, had acceded to it and become "states parties" to it. The CEDAW's Article 1 defines discrimination against women as any "distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of marital status, on the basis of equality between men and women, of human rights or fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."

## Endnotes

1. Isobel Coleman, “Women, Islam and the New Iraq,” *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2006 Summary: Although questions of implementation remain, the new Iraqi constitution makes Islam the law of the land. This need not mean trouble for Iraq’s women, however. Sharia is open to a wide range of interpretations, some quite egalitarian. If Washington still hopes for a liberal order in Iraq, it should start working with progressive Muslim scholars to advance women’s rights through religious channels.
2. “To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as [God’s] reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God’s message of reconciliation and shares [the] labor of healing the enmities, which separate men [and women] from God and from each other. . . .” (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.31); “We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good, and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community” (*The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.3, lines 27–32).

~~[3.—Gen. 21:14–19. God provided safety for Hagar and Ishmael.]~~

4. Anne Garrels, NPR, *All Things Considered*, January 29, 2008, “Iraqi women face greater danger, fewer rights” <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=18518858>; See also “Iraq’s War on Women” by Lesley Abdela, *Open Democracy.net*, July 17, 2005.
5. <http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm>
6. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-11**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 11-11 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) to address the pain, violence, and suffering being inflicted upon many Iraqi women during the current prolonged war.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be approved with amendments. The ACWC suggests that the following language be added and become Recommendation 1 and all other recommendations (1.–7.) be renumbered as 2.–8.: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[1. Accepting humbly the responsibility the United States bears for creating the current humanitarian crisis in Iraq which increases the vulnerability of Iraqi women to exploitation, violence and suffering:]”

The ACWC suggests that Recommendation 4., renumbered as 5., be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[4.] [5.] Expressing our [concern through communications] [solidarity] with our partner churches in Iraq as well as within the World Council of Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches, [the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches,] and the World [Association] [Alliance] of Reformed Churches, [assisting them in attempts to address the issue and the difficult conditions under which they are living] [seeking their active participation in support for Iraqi women];”

*Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) speaks often against violence in all forms, especially directed at women. Wartime is no exception. Women in Iraq are being targeted for kidnapping and violence. It is important to call attention to and stand against violence specifically to women. Globally, the church has done this, in part, through repeated calls on the U.S. government to ratify the United Nation’s Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was ratified by the U.N. General Assembly in 1979 and has been acceded to by 185 countries—more than 95 percent of the member nations of the U.N. At this assembly, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) brings a report on Iraq—“Costly Lessons of the Iraq War”—that gives further context to this Item 11-11.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-11**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 11-11 on addressing the violence and suffering inflicted on Iraqi women during the current prolonged war.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)'s advice and counsel.

## Item 11-12

[The assembly approved Item 11-12 with amendment. See pp. 45, 46.]

*On Preventing the Trafficking of Women, Internationally and Nationally—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.*

The Presbytery of Plains and Peaks respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to remind the government of the United States of America of the provisions of its own Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) signed into law by President Clinton in 2000, and to request that it be conscientiously enforced by doing the following:

1. Instructing the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to communicate with the United States Justice Department

a. to urge law enforcement agencies to work together to close loopholes in the investigation, arrest and prosecution of human traffickers;

b. to urge the targeting of exploiters, not their victims;

c. to urge the development of more efficient law enforcement training programs to aid in identifying human traffickers and their victims.

2. Instructing the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to communicate with the United States Department of Homeland Security

a. to urge the development of methods to recognize and arrest traffickers;

b. to urge the development of methods to identify forged passports and visas in order to limit the number of trafficked victims brought into the United States.

3. Instructing the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to find ways to urge agencies in other countries to stop traffickers from enticing women with the promise of good jobs in other countries, and by promoting false marriage.

4. Instructing the ~~[Executive Director of]~~ General Assembly Council to direct the ~~[Office of Relief and Development]~~ [appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council (GAC)] to work to strengthen laws that prohibit trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children.

5. Instructing the ~~[Executive Director of]~~ General Assembly Council to direct [and promote] the appropriate ~~[entity within GAC's mission structure]~~ [offices of the General Assembly Council (GAC)] to create educational materials on the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children for use by presbyteries and congregations, and to promote the use of the adult curriculum entitled *Sex Trafficking* by Martha Bettis-Gee (available at <http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com>)."

### *Rationale*

As Christians we have a biblical mandate both to establish justice, and to care for the powerless. For example, Micah 6:8 tells us that we are to do justice and love kindness; Amos 2:6 speaks of God's judgment on those who "sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes"; and the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 29ff) reminds us of our responsibility to those who need our help.

As Presbyterians, we have a constitutional imperative to promote social righteousness (cf. The Great Ends of the Church, G-1.0200).

The goal of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 is to help victims of trafficking through the prevention of human trafficking overseas, the protection of victims, and aid to victims in helping them to rebuild their lives ( United States Department of Health and Human Services, *Rescue & Restore: Victims of Human Trafficking* fact sheet <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking>).



Although thirty-six states have human trafficking task forces, the Polaris Project (funded by TVPA) reports:

1. a failure to identify victims;
2. a failure to prosecute traffickers;
3. a failure to provide rehabilitation services to victims;
4. a failure to educate the public about human trafficking.

Many victims are trafficked into the United States through failure to address immigration issues such as forged passports and visas.

Human trafficking is tied with the illegal arms industry as the second largest and fastest growing criminal industry in the world (United States Department of Health and Human Services, *Rescue & Restore: Victims of Human Trafficking* fact sheet. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking>).

Each year, approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims are trafficked across international borders, and 14,500 to 17,500 of those are transported into the United States (United States Department of Health and Human Services *Rescue & Restore: Victims of Human Trafficking* fact sheet <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking>).

The majority of sex trafficking victims are women and underage children who are lured into situations of sex trafficking with the promise of a good job in another country or the promise of (false) marriage.

In May 2006, a free trade agreement with Jordan resulted in tens of thousands of foreign “guest workers” from Bangladesh, China, India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan being stripped of their passports and trapped in involuntary servitude (<http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=10>).

Traffickers use force and coercion in the form of threats of serious harm, physical restraints, rape, beatings, and confinement to control their victims (United States Department of Health and Human Services *Rescue & Restore: Victims of Human Trafficking* fact sheet) <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking>.

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### Concurrence to Item 11-12 from the Presbytery of Tropical Florida.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-12, from the Presbytery of Peaks and Plains, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to remind the government of the United States of America of its own Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and to request that the TVPA be conscientiously enforced by instructing the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of General Assembly Council to urge government and other agencies to act to prevent the trafficking of women, internationally and nationally.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) commends the Presbytery of Peaks and Plains for bringing this issue forth, provides a comment in support, and advises that the overture be approved with the following amendments to Recommendations 4. and 5.: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“4. Instructing the [~~Executive Director of~~] General Assembly Council to direct the [~~Office of Relief and Development~~] [appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council (GAC)] to work to strengthen laws that prohibit trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children.

“5. Instructing the [~~Executive Director of~~] General Assembly Council to direct the appropriate [~~entity within GAC's mission structure~~] [offices of the General Assembly Council (GAC)] to create educational materials on the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children for use by presbyteries and congregations, and to promote the use of the adult curriculum entitled *Sex Trafficking* by Martha Bettis-Gee (available at <http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com>)”

Comment: The ACSWP concurs with the *Rationale* supporting Item 11-12; cautioning, however, that Recommendation 2.b. not be interpreted as a political statement regarding illegal immigration of Mexican Nationals.

*Rationale*

Item 11-12 is consistent with the following General Assembly policies:

1. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved Item 11-25, with amendment, “On Condemning the International Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children,” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 43, 45, 994–97).
2. The 215th General Assembly (2003) approved, with amendment, Report of Research Team, The Review of the Situation of Prostitution Around Military Bases,” (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 39, 585–87).
3. The 214th General Assembly (2002) approved the “Sisters of Mercy, Daughters of Grace: Presbyterians and Prostituted Women” report (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, pp. 75, 604–20).

There are numerous reports on the trafficking of children, but we must be reminded that national and international trafficking of persons for sexual exploitation also includes the trafficking of women. Not only are these women coerced or forced into prostitution but often held in involuntary servitude and sometimes lose their lives. The teachings of the Gospel compels us to speak out for those who have no voice against injustices and to urge the government of the United States and other agencies to act in ways to prevent the trafficking of women.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Item 11-12 as amended and with comment.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-12**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 11-12 requests that the U.S. government be reminded of the provisions of its own Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), and that it be conscientiously enforced.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that item 11-12 be approved.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is called to be a voice of justice and advocacy for women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the world. Sex trafficking and prostitution has been a prominent issue of concern for several years. The following is a list of related reports approved by recent General Assemblies:

210th General Assembly (1998)	The Plight of Women and Children Forced into Prostitution
210th General Assembly (1998)	The Military and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Women
211th General Assembly (1999)	Prostitution in the United States
214th General Assembly (2002)	Sisters of Mercy, Daughters of Grace: Presbyterians and Prostituted Women

Since 2006, ACWC has focused on human trafficking and its effect on women and children. As a result, ACWC submitted a resolution (see Item 11-13, Recommendation 2) to the General Assembly for expanding PC(USA) understanding and increasing efforts that focus on programmatic responses and communicating to the larger church. The church must work diligently in its efforts to combat trafficking through its work together and in cooperation with ecumenical partners. It also must monitor the work being done by the U.S. government to assure that legislation and funds already approved are used to combat this violence against women and children. It is encouraging that congregations and presbyteries also raise this concern.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-12**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

Item 11-12 on preventing the trafficking of women, internationally and nationally.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)’s advice and counsel.

**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-12**

*Comment on Item 11-12—From the General Assembly Council.*

The General Assembly Council (GAC) affirms the deep concerns expressed by the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks for victims of human trafficking and is grateful that the presbytery is bringing this serious matter to the assembly.

In response to previous General Assembly action on this matter, the GAC has created a coordination team made up of staff from across Mission Ministries of the General Assembly Council and from the Office of the General Assembly. This team has worked in the past two years specifically on the issue of sex trafficking and has included staff from Child Advocacy, Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), Social Welfare Organizations/ PHEWA; the Presbyterian United Nations Office, the Hunger Program, (Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministries), Women's Advocacy (Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women), International Health HIV/AIDS Initiative (World Mission Ministries); Sexual Misconduct Ombudsperson (Legal Service/ Risk Management); and Immigration Issues (Office of the General Assembly). Advocating on behalf of this issue in the public arena is facilitated through staff in the Washington Office.

Additionally, Mission Responsibility Through Investment is communicating with corporations in the tourism industry, asking them to sign the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.

The GAC appreciates that education about human trafficking is critically important. Child Advocacy, MRTI, and the United Nations Office have all provided workshops and seminars on this issue. The staff person from Child Advocacy has helped design the curriculum that is mentioned in the overture.

At this time funds are not available for additional educational resources. The GAC suggests that the General Assembly affirm the overall guidance of this overture but amend Recommendation 5 to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“5. Instructing the Executive Director of General Assembly Council to direct the appropriate entity within GAC's mission structure to ~~create~~ promote educational materials on the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children for use by presbyteries and congregations, and to ~~promote~~ encourage the use of the adult curriculum entitled *Sex Trafficking* by Martha Bettis-Gee (available at <http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com>).”

**Item 11-13**

[The assembly approved Item 11-13. See pp. 45, 47.]

***A Resolution to Expand the Church's Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking***

**The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

**1. Direct the General Assembly Council and the Office of General Assembly to expand their ministry with and advocacy against human trafficking to include adults, especially women, by supporting the Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area to work with the ministries of Compassion, Peace, and Justice in providing resources to the wider church for education and advocacy.**

**2. Urge the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to regularly include trafficking of persons in its human rights updates.**

**3. Encourage the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self-Development of People, Presbyterian Women, and other grant making entities in the PC(USA) to fund partner congregations, presbyteries, and synods, in order to**

- a. provide safe housing, medical and psychological help for trafficked persons;
- b. support efforts to obtain appropriate documentation; and/or,
- c. assist trafficked persons, especially women, in safely returning to their country of origin.

**4. Direct the Presbyterian Washington and the United Nations Offices to**

- a. **express concern for the escalation of trafficking within the U.S. and use the public witness channels available to them to raise issues with appropriate national and international representatives; and,**
  - b. **partner with ecumenical and interfaith entities to build coalitions against trafficking and participate in activities such as the National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness (January 11) and the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN).**
- 5. Direct the General Assembly Council ministries of World Mission and Compassion, Peace, and Justice, in consultation with Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries, to work with appropriate offices and partners, to**
- a. **gather data on initiatives that respond to the terror of human trafficking and provide materials on the Web or in its interpretation resources, which lift up the PC(USA) efforts to combat trafficking systemically, in the United States and around the world; and**
  - b. **report its findings to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

### *Rationale*

Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. (Joel 2:29)

The ACWC continues to study and monitor the trafficking of women and to seek ways to inform PC(USA) congregations of the immediacy of this problem. Trafficking is escalating globally and is inextricably linked with migration and is the second largest criminal industry in the world following the illegal arms trade.<sup>1</sup> No one program area or committee can sufficiently address all aspects, we do not have sufficient resources. The PC(USA) needs to work collaboratively to connect the ministries of compassion and advocacy to positively impact this terrible reality.

The General Assembly has historically acted to condemn trafficking, sexual exploitation, and slavery of women and children. Since 1983, the General Assemblies of PCUS, UPCUSA, and PC(USA) have approved reports and statements condemning sexual exploitation, prostitution, and abuse of women and children. Most recently, the 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the overture from the Synod of the Northeast, *On Condemning International Human Trafficking In and Sexual Exploitation of Children (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 994ff)*. Recognizing that 80 percent of sex trafficking involves females, the scope of the focus on sex trafficking of children needs to be expanded. Including women in our targeted ministries will ultimately impact and improve the lives of children.

Every day people worldwide are coerced into bonded labor, bought and sold in prostitution, exploited in domestic servitude, enslaved in agricultural work and in factories, and captured to serve as child soldiers. The US government recently reported that 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year and almost half are minors.<sup>2</sup> The international and diplomatic communities continue to recognize the threat of trafficking. In 2000, the nations of the world developed the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, (commonly referred to as the Trafficking in Persons Protocol). Globally, nations recognize the increased vulnerabilities of women and children and agree to name it in efforts to combat trafficking. The protocol defines the term “trafficking in persons” as meaning

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.<sup>3</sup>

This definition makes it clear why the church must bring its prophetic voice and particular actions to work against trafficking. There are many forms of trafficking and there are many estimates for the scope and magnitude.

The International Labor Organization (ILO)—the United Nations agency charged with addressing labor standards, employment, and social protection issues—estimates there are 12.3 million people in forced labor, bonded labor, forced child labor, and sexual servitude at any given time; other estimates range from 4 million to 27 million.<sup>4</sup>

These numbers are overwhelming, almost too large to comprehend. Yet each of these numbers is a person—a child of God. Each of these numbers has a story to tell—a story we need to hear. One story in the “Trafficking of Persons Report, 2007” follows:

14-year-old Jenny left her native Nigeria for the United States to work in the home of a couple, also originally from an African country. She thought she would be paid to look after their children, but the reality was very different. For five years Jenny was repeatedly raped by her employer and his wife physically assaulted her, sometimes with a cane, and on one occa-

sion with a high-heeled shoe. Tipped off by a local NGO [non-governmental organization], law enforcement officials rescued Jenny and prosecuted the perpetrator.<sup>5</sup>

The U.S. Government's Trafficking Victims Protection Act, passed in 2000, intended to prevent trafficking overseas and protect and rehabilitate victims. This legislation has led thirty-six states to create task forces using funds provided by the Protection Act. However, evaluations of results have revealed failure either to identify or protect victims to any significant degree.<sup>6</sup> The responses explored so far have not ended trafficking but lessons have been learned and we are called to follow a God of Hope who will not let us fail the least of these.

Traffickers use force and coercion to control victims. Rape, beatings, restraints, and confinement are just some of the techniques used in efforts to control.<sup>7</sup> We stand with the Prince of Peace and declare the amazing love for each and every child of God. We Presbyterians have resources. The voices of these least (long silenced) beseech us to employ our resources to witness to the injustices of human trafficking and actively work toward its eradication in the family of God.

#### Endnotes

1. *The Campaign to Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking* (US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families) [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking)
2. National Council of Churches/News, 1/21/08, <http://www.nccusa.org/news/080110humantrafficking.html>
3. *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, United Nations, 2000. p. 2. [http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_%20traff\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_%20traff_eng.pdf).
4. *Trafficking in Persons Report, 2007*. United States Department of State. p. 8. Available online at [www.state.gov/g/tip](http://www.state.gov/g/tip). This resource includes information on more than 150 countries.
5. *Ibid*, p. 18.
6. National Council of Churches/News, 1/21/08.
7. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking)

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-13

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-13 from the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) calls on the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the entities of the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to expand their ministry with and advocacy against human trafficking to include adults, especially women.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Item 11-13.

#### *Rationale*

Item 11-13, "A Resolution to Expand the Church's Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking," is consistent with current General Assembly gender justice policies for women. The 198th General Assembly (1986): "Declare[d] that sexual exploitation of women in any form is not to be condoned, disregarded, or treated lightly" (*Minutes*, 1986, Part I, pp. 79, 653). In addition, the 204th General Assembly (1992) and the 210th General Assembly (1998) called on the United States Senate to ratify the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women<sup>1</sup>" adopted by the United Nations in 1979 (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, pp. 74, 80, 871; *Minutes*, 1998, Part I, pp. 77, 478).

Therefore, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Item 11-13, A Resolution to Expand the Church's Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking.

#### Endnote

1. To obtain a copy of the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women," visit <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cedaw.htm>.

## ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-13

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 11-13. Resolution to Expand Ministry: Human Trafficking.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 11-13 be approved.

## Item 11-14

[The assembly approved Item 11-14 with amendment. See pp. 45, 47.]

*On Endorsing the “Publish What You Pay” Campaign—From the Presbytery of Chicago.*

**The Presbytery of Chicago overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to**

- 1. endorse the Publish What You Pay Campaign<sup>1</sup> (PWYP);**
- 2. direct the Stated Clerk and the Moderator to support in writing and sign the PWYP campaign appeal<sup>2</sup> [on behalf of the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)];**
- 3. call synods, presbyteries, and congregations to advocate for the mandatory disclosure of net taxes, fees, royalties, and other payments made by extractive industry companies, both multinational and state-owned enterprises, to all national governments on a disaggregated and country-by-country basis; and**
- 4. join worldwide efforts to curb the current threats posed by the destructive practices of the extractive industries.**

### *Rationale*

Central Africa is a global reserve of resources with its enormous assets in oil and other minerals.

If revenue payments of this lucrative sector were effectively and transparently disclosed by the extractive industry companies (mining, gas, oil) and well managed by the national governments, it could serve as a basis for growth and poverty reduction.

The state and other institutions that manage these resources are often, in practice, unaccountable to the parliaments and ordinary citizens of their countries.<sup>3</sup>

This lack of accountability facilitates embezzlement, corruption, and revenue misappropriation.<sup>4</sup>

There is a subsequent breakdown of democratic processes and aggravation of civil strife.

As a result of all of the above, Central Africa has seen a lowering of living standards and increased poverty in spite of its assets.<sup>5</sup>

In the example of the Chad Cameroon Oil and Pipeline Project<sup>6</sup>, not even the World Bank has been able to hold the Chad government to the signed agreement for utilization of revenues for poverty reduction programs and for its future generation's fund.<sup>7</sup>

The new compromise between the World Bank and Chad sparks fears that the cash will be spent by the Chad government on guns and not development projects as initially intended.<sup>8</sup>

Nongovernmental organizations identified mandatory, comprehensive, and global measures at transparency as a necessary response to the mismanagement of billions of dollars' worth of oil, gas, and mining revenues paid to many developing country governments, and launched the Publish What You Pay (PWYP)<sup>9</sup> appeal.

The PWYP seeks to establish an international framework requiring transnational extraction companies to publish net taxes, fees, royalties, and other payments made.<sup>10</sup>

The PWYP focuses on countries where natural resources provide a major proportion of state income, where corruption associated with state income is of concern, and where companies are not fully transparent about their payments to national governments.

The leadership of our Cameroonian partners, the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon (PCC), the Eglise Presbytérienne Camerounaise (EPC), and the Network for the Fight Against Hunger (RELUFA) developed a declaration on current trends in the region's extractive industries, which was presented at the 2004 General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) in Accra.<sup>11</sup>

Building on earlier declarations from WARC's General Council in Debrecen, our partners invited the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and its individual denominations to take a series of actions, among others:

“To endorse the ‘Publish What you Pay’ public advocacy campaign [...] for transparency and fairness in extractive industries. . . .”

Since the elaboration of this declaration, the Publish What You Pay Campaign has expanded to Central Africa.<sup>12</sup>

Transparency potentiates sustainable development in poor but resource-rich countries.

This transparency would give civil society the opportunity to monitor government revenues effectively.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has historically responded to the biblical call for justice on behalf of the poor and the oppressed. Addressing merchants who value profit over honesty and justice, the biblical witness in Lev. 19:36 says, “You shall have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.”<sup>13</sup>

The PC(USA) Confession of 1967 states: “[E]nslaving poverty . . . is an intolerable violation of God’s good creation. . . . The church cannot condone poverty, whether it is the product of unjust social structures, exploitation of the defenseless, lack of natural resources, absence of technological understanding, or rapid expansion of populations.”<sup>14</sup> “For Presbyterians, the task of ending global poverty is a matter of confessional status that requires action.”<sup>15</sup>

For all Christians, “Economic policies and systems must be evaluated by how they affect the dignity of all individuals in communal solidarity, particularly, ‘the least, the lost, and the left-out.’”<sup>16</sup>

In light of this, the PC(USA) has said, “Economic policies and systems must be evaluated socially and ecologically on the basis of their benefits and harms to the well-being of all in our interdependent relationships.”<sup>17</sup>

Through the approval of the Africa Resolution by the 215th General Assembly (2003), the PC(USA) affirmed the need for ecumenical efforts that further human rights in Africa; that increase transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility; and that prevent natural resources to be used to fund conflicts around Africa and the world.<sup>18</sup>

The Presbytery of Chicago and the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area have a formal relationship with RELUFA through the Joining Hands Program, a partnership involving many congregations in each presbytery.<sup>19</sup>

Several congregations in these presbyteries also maintain ecclesiastic relationships with our Cameroonian church partners, the PCC, and EPC.

#### Endnotes

1. <http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/english/>
2. The written endorsements can be sent by e-mail to the PWYP coordinator at [coordinator@publishwhatyoupay.org](mailto:coordinator@publishwhatyoupay.org). Together with the written confirmation of the PC(USA)'s endorsement of the PWYP's appeal document, PWYP requests full contact information: e-mail, telephone, fax, mailing address, website, etc. The Joining Hands Against Hunger (JHAH) coordinators of the Presbytery of Chicago and of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area could serve as contact persons to whom all communications from PWYP should be sent for any future advocacy activities.
3. Revenues from resource extraction are disclosed neither by the governments nor the companies involved.
4. Recent extractive resource governance problems have been cited in Algeria, Angola, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, and Sudan.
5. Presented by stakeholders as an opportunity for poverty alleviation, statistics actually reveal the inverse association between the export of natural resources and development. The direct link with the exploitation of the region's natural resources has been well established, and is now widely recognized by the international community.

6. Developed by an international consortium made up of Exxon, Chevron, and Petronas, the Chad Cameroon Oil and Pipeline Project is the largest private investment in Africa with a total cost of US \$3.7 billion. The World Bank backing for the project, in the form of a restricted loan and of a “political risk assurance,” was touted as a model for making African natural resources work for the African people by providing guidelines and restrictions on how the oil money could be spent.
7. The project has been troubled from the start when the first \$3 million (U.S. dollars) of oil proceeds were spent on guns in 2003. In April 2006, the World Bank ended a six-month spat by agreeing to a compromise deal that would allow the government of Chad to access 30 percent of oil revenues, compared to the previous limit of 10 percent, on condition that the remaining 70 percent go on priority poverty programs. The Future Generations Fund, a special account to guard 10 percent of oil income for future development projects, has been scrapped, too.
8. Chad, an arid desert country in north-central Africa, is the fifth poorest nation in the world, according to the UN. It has chronic development problems and has been fractured by civil war for most of the forty-six years since its independence from France. As recent as April 2006, the Chad government thwarted a coup attempt and fought off a rebel attack on the capital N’jamena.
9. On 13 June 2002, Save the Children, Global Witness, Catholic Association AFOD, Oxfam, Transparency International UK and the Open Society Institute launched the Publish What You Pay (PWYP) appeal to achieve transparency in the countries that most need it. This campaign has since expanded in a worldwide coalition of more than 280 ecumenical and secular organizations.
10. The disclosure of these data will allow civil society to more accurately assess the amount of money misappropriated, and to lobby for full transparency in local government spending.
11. The declaration accumulated into the following call for action:

“We, Cameroonian member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, brought together by the Network for the Fight Against Hunger in Cameroon (RELUFCA) to discern our role in the face of rising economic injustice and increasing ecological destruction in Cameroon and other countries in Central Africa, refuse to remain deaf to the appeals and cries of our people. Convinced that joint strategies within the larger global Christian community are needed to curb economic injustice and environmental degradation in our region, we invite all our sister churches in Cameroon, in Central Africa and throughout the world to join efforts to curb the current threats posed by the destructive practices of the extractive industries.” (p.2).

12. RELUFCA was one of the non-governmental organizations that launched the Cameroonian branch in December 2005. The National Council of Churches in Cameroon, CEPCA, is also a signatory of the campaign.
13. The witness of scripture calling for equity and justice is vast.

Addressing merchants who value profit over honesty and justice the biblical witness says:

- “... When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain; and the sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the ephah small and the shekel great, and practice deceit with false balances ...” (Amos 8:5).

Amos’ clarion witness to justice rings clearly:

- “But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24).

The prophet Isaiah is a particularly profound witness to economic accountability.

- “Ah, sinful nation, people laden with iniquity, offspring who do evil, children who deal corruptly, who have forsaken the Lord, who have despised the Holy One of Israel, who are utterly estranged!” (Isa. 1:4).
- “learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow” (Isa. 1:17).
- “Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers.

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?” (Isa. 58:3, 6).

And it is Isaiah who witnesses to the repentant Judah:

- “Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in” (Isa. 58:12).

14. *The Book of Confessions*, 9.46.

15. Hope for a Global Future Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (*Minutes*, 1996. Part I, pp. 524–87).

16. Roman Catholic Bishops Pastoral Message (1986), *Economic Justice for All*.



17. Hope for a Global Future Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development, (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 524–87).
18. Resolution on Africa, Recommendations 6.a, 6.b., 6.f., and 7.e. (*Minutes*, 1993, Part I, p. 593).
19. Joining Hands Program is an initiative of the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

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**Concurrence to Item 11-14 from the Presbyteries of Los Ranchos and San Francisco.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-14**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-14—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-14, overture from the Presbytery of Chicago with concurrences from the Presbytery of Los Ranchos and the Presbytery of San Francisco, requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) endorse the Publish What You Pay Campaign (PWYPC) against corruption in international trade. In addition, it calls upon the Stated Clerk and Moderator of the General Assembly to support and become signatories to this campaign.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Item 11-14.

*Rationale*

The Publish What You Pay Campaign (PWYPC)<sup>1</sup> is a worldwide initiative designed to hold both the organizations doing business with “resource-rich” developing nations and the leaders of these nations accountable for how income obtained through the sale of natural resources are used. This initiative is supported by the PC(USA)’s Joining Hands Against Hunger African partners. By holding both of these parties accountable, PWYPC supporters believe people living in poverty in these regions may benefit from moneys obtained through the sale of natural resources, such as oil, extracted from their communities. Currently, corrupt governmental practices are contributing to the suffering of thousands of women, men, and children in these regions, including Africa as highlighted in the rationale of Item 11-14.

The actions called for in Item 11-14 are consistent with the current General Assembly trade policies. As stated in Item 11-14, through the approval of the *Resolution on Africa*, the 215th General Assembly (2003):

Direct[ed] the State Clerk and appropriate entities of the General Assembly Council to urge the U.S. government to ensure that no oil, diamonds, or other natural resources and commodities are used to fund conflicts around Africa and the world, and also to ensure that such items and commodities so used are prohibited from entering the U.S. (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 37, 593).

Seven years earlier, the 208th General Assembly (1996) spoke out against corrupt business and government practices. That assembly

[R]ecogniz(ing) that the level and extent of corruption in some governments may preclude the advisability of extending assistance, encourage(d) the United States government and private multinational firms doing business with governmental agencies to adopt policies that require disclosure of corrupt practices as a condition of completing transactions; and endorses the objective of Transparency International, an association of private and public officials calling for greater openness in cross-boarder transactions . . . (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 107, 110, 532).

For the reasons cited above and in the Rationale of Item 11-14, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve this item.

**Endnote**

1. For more information on the Publish What You Pay Campaign, visit <http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/english/>.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-14**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-14—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

Item 11-14 on Endorsing the “Publish What You Pay” Campaign.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s advice and counsel.

## Item 11-15

[The assembly approved Item 11-15 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 45, 47.]

*On Support for the Presbyterian Church in Zimbabwe—From the Presbytery of Denver.*

The Presbytery of Denver overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA) to do the following:

1. Call upon the Southern African Development Community (SADC)[, the African Union] heads of state and government to
  - a. establish concrete measures for addressing the political, economic, and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe; [~~and to~~]
  - b. vigorously advocate for free and fair elections in Zimbabwe[-] [;]
  - [c. ensure that the will of the Zimbabwean people is respected.]
2. [~~Encourage~~] [Urge] the president and Congress of the United States to increase humanitarian aid to Zimbabwe and continue support for the Zimbabwean people via legislation[, and to condemn the human rights abuses that have occurred in Zimbabwe].
3. Support the work of individual congregations, church governing bodies, and ecumenical groups within Zimbabwe as well as the Presbytery of Zimbabwe and The United Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa.
4. [Call upon the members of the World Council of Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to call to awareness the situation in Zimbabwe and to] establish a Day of Prayer for the people of Zimbabwe.
- [5. Direct the office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian United Nations Office to communicate the concerns, prayers, and the work of the Presbyterian Church (USA) for justice in Zimbabwe to the United Nations.]

*Comment:* Commend the South African dockworkers for having the courage to refuse to unload a shipment of arms from China for Zimbabwe. Commend the various religious and secular organizations working to restore peace and order in many countries in Africa and around the world.

### *Rationale*

Presbyterians in Zimbabwe struggle for their existence. They share that struggle with their whole country. With an economy in turmoil and a political environment ruled by intimidation and greed, every day brings a new crisis and drives Zimbabwe closer to complete collapse. Once a thriving example of growth, well-being, and stability, Zimbabwe now has become a country known for:

- The highest rate of inflation in the world.
- The largest percentage of orphans according to UNICEF.
- One of the highest HIV infection rates in the world.
- The fleeing of millions of educated citizens that has created a catastrophic “brain drain.”
- A collapse of the health system resulting from a severe lack of health professionals, supplies, and drugs.
- Land reforms badly managed by the government with 90 percent of farm land left idle or underutilized.
- Life-threatening shortages of food, clean water, electricity, and fuel. Estimates by the United Nations World Food Program indicate that at least three million people, a quarter of the population, will need emergency food aid this year.
- A political system that is choking its country with a government that suppresses the free formation of a multiple party system, uses legislation, harassment, and violence to silence the independent media, and grossly abuses its power and the people to subvert free elections.

One of the primary instruments for change is the Southern African Development Community. Its current member states are Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The SADC promotes a vision “that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standards of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice and peace and security for the peoples of Southern Africa.”

The United States government has extended compassion and support for the people of Zimbabwe via humanitarian aid and legislation. Augmented funding for shipments via the U.S. Department of Defense would allow for increased delivery of desperately needed commodities like food and clothing to the people of Zimbabwe. Through legislation such as the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, the United States stands beside the people of Zimbabwe while publicly denouncing the actions of the current Zimbabwe government.

The church in Zimbabwe has been one of the strongest and most significant voices calling for justice and reconciliation. In its ministry, it continues to hold to the saving power of Jesus Christ and to serve its people in the face of overwhelming crisis and poverty. On March 22, 2007, the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA), which includes the Presbytery of Zimbabwe, strongly urged the governments of Zimbabwe and South Africa to seek proactively a multiparty dialogue to strive for a peaceful solution to the protracted, life-threatening problems in Zimbabwe. The UPCSA emphasizes that as a transnational church, it shares the pain and suffering of its community in Zimbabwe and can no longer endure seeing the pain and violence that dismembers the body.

As a partner church of the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes a unity in our common tradition, in our commitment to the justice, peace, and compassion of Jesus Christ, and in the abiding Spirit of God. We dare not remain silent. We seek to share in the struggle of our partners and of all the people of Zimbabwe, and to join with them in giving voice, especially when their voices are muted or ignored, to calling for a new future.

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**Concurrence to Item 11-15 from the Presbytery of Yellowstone.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-15**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-15—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-15 requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) call upon the Southern African Development Community (SADC),<sup>1</sup> and U.S. elected officials to support efforts addressing the political, economic, and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Item 11-15 with the following comments.

“Comment: 1. Commend the South African dockworkers for having the courage to refuse to unload a shipment of arms from China for Zimbabwe.<sup>2</sup>

Comment: 2. Commend the various religious and secular organizations working to restore peace and order in many countries in Africa, and around the world.

*Rationale*

The refusal of officials in Zimbabwe to release the 2008 presidential results has contributed to an increase in political tension in this region. In light of this impasse, the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union backed the South African dockworkers’ position to refuse to unload a shipment of arms from China to Zimbabwe. The dockworkers were concerned that these arms (mortar bombs, rockets, and ammunition) ordered before the presidential election would be used to repress Zimbabweans who did not support President Robert Mugabe. South Africa’s High Court, after hearing an appeal from the Anglican archbishop on behalf of the dockworkers, ruled in favor of their position.<sup>3</sup>

The economic situation in Zimbabwe is heartbreaking. Economic policies put in place by the current Zimbabwean government have created devastating hyperinflation for the people in this region. The Zimbabwean dollar is practically worthless. Zimbabwe’s citizens who are poor must spend their hard earned dollars as quickly as they earn them. Reports released in the beginning of 2008 indicated that two pounds of chicken cost about fifteen million Zimbabwean dollars.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the removal of more than sixty white farmers, and two black farmers off their property has contributed to the economic instabil-

ity in this region.<sup>5</sup> Through the mining of platinum and gold natural resources, the government, however, continues to find hard currency to pay military and political leaders.<sup>6</sup>

In April 2008, the general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the Reverend Dr. Setri Nyomi, called on the members of the Reformed family to pray for the people of Zimbabwe. The president of the WARC, Stated Clerk Reverend Dr. Clifton Kirkpatrick, communicated the general secretary's request to the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and others.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has partnerships in this African nation through the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa—Presbytery of Zimbabwe and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP)—Synod of Harare. Therefore, it is appropriate for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to address the political, economic, and humanitarian turmoil in this region. Furthermore, the 215th General Assembly (2003) affirmed “the participation of congregations, presbyteries, synods, General Assembly entities, and individual Presbyterian in ecumenical efforts that encourage and further human rights in Africa ...” (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 38, 593).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval of Item 11-15.

#### Endnotes

1. A description of the SADC is contained in the rationale of Item 11-15. For additional information on the SADC, visit <http://www.sadc.int/english/about/history/index.php>.
2. *The New York Times*, “Zimbabwe Arms Shipped by China Sparks and Uproar,” April 19, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/19/world/africa/19zimbabwe.html>.
3. Ibid.
4. *Star Tribune*, “Michael Gerson: Hyperinflation ruining Zimbabwe,” February 21, 2008, <http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentary/15854962.html>.
5. *Times Online*, “Zimbabwe faces starvation as mobs rampage through farms,” April 9, 2008, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article3671353.ece>.
6. *Star Tribune*, “Michael Gerson: Hyperinflation ruining Zimbabwe,” February 21, 2008, <http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentary/15854962.html>.

## Item 11-16

[The assembly approved Item 11-16. See pp. 45, 47.]

*On Peacemaking and the Pursuit of Justice and Fairness of Shalom—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.*

**The Presbytery of the Twin Cities area overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to:**

- 1. Stand for constructive national and international policies based on peacemaking and the pursuit of justice and fairness of shalom;**
- 2. Stand for international communication and cooperation, for conflict resolution by non-violent means, and for the enforcement of international law as formulated in the United National Charter, international treaties, and agreements;**
- 3. Support efforts to abolish war and to oppose the doctrine of preemptive war;**
- 4. Promote civil liberties and rights to due process; and**
- 5. Oppose torture and degrading treatment of human beings, and support efforts for the promotion of human rights.**

#### *Rationale*

In view of the circumstances we face today in the life of our planet since:

- Warfare and violence is spreading locally, and on a global scale because governments and nongovernmental organizations increasingly rely on force to achieve their unilateral ends.
- There are problems and concerns of global nature which call for appropriate global action.
- The community of human beings has an obligation to work for a better future, free of the deadly threats by human policies and technology.
- The teaching of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament emphasizes nonviolence, peacemaking, fairness, and justice now.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-16

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-16—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

Item 11-16 calls on the 218th General Assembly (2008) to stand for constructive national and international policies based on peacemaking and the pursuit of justice and fairness of shalom.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises the 218th General Assembly to approve Item 11-16.

#### *Rationale*

The concerns raised in Item 11-16 are consistent with General Assembly peacemaking policies. These policies include:

1. The 192nd General Assembly (1980) affirmed that: “The church bears witness to Christ when it nourishes the moral life of the nation for the sake of peace in our world. The church’s faithful obedience to its calling means active participation in the formation of the values and beliefs of our society. It means seeking peace in personal and social relationships of our culture and exercising our citizenship in the body politic to shape foreign policy ...” (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1980, Part I, p. 203).
2. The 195th General Assembly (1983) “Encourage[d] the various branches of Christianity and other faiths around the world to come together in councils and coalitions presently existing, and those which may be called, to effect a climate of peace among our nations ...” (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 100).
3. The 217th General Assembly (2006) “Affirm[ed] that the ... Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) opposes the use of torture and all forms of ‘cruel, inhuman, or degrading’ interrogation by all agencies, employees, or agents of the United States government, and all foreign governments and/or combatants ...” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 50–51, 867).

In light of these policies, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) to approve Item 11-16. Through its approval of this item of business, this assembly can encourage the entities of this denomination to continue to pursue discussions on the peace and justice concerns contained in this item, accept our Christian responsibility of being peacemakers and peacekeepers, and take appropriate actions within our rights as citizens of the United States of America.

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## Item 11-17

[The assembly approved Item 11-17 with amendment. See pp. 45, 47.]

*Overture on War, Mercenaries, and Profiteering—From the Presbytery of Scioto Valley.*

The Presbytery of Scioto Valley respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Opposes the use of ~~mercenary soldiers or~~ [armed private] military contractors paid to ~~fight~~ [perform security, intelligence, training, and military operational services traditionally rendered by U.S. military and other U.S. government personnel] in wars, military conflicts, or any type of military operations because it is immoral to wage war or kill ~~[for money, even assuming the war or conflict is just]~~ [essentially for private gain, even if the war, occupation, or potential use of force is justifiable, and because of the additional costs and lack of accountability of these forces].

2. ~~Direct the Stated Clerk [to petition the Congress of the United States to prohibit the use of mercenary soldiers and military contractors for any type of military operation, war, or conflict at home or abroad. In no way should the objection to the use of mercenaries and armed military contractors in this overture be interpreted as tacit approval of an expansion of the military or of a military draft.]~~ [, and appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council, to support the development and enforcement of laws to prohibit the use of such private military/security forces, whose work closely resembles that of mercenaries in earlier historical periods.]

3. Direct the Stated Clerk to petition the Congress of the United States [and enter into “Friend of the Court” requests] to review and revise the law[s] applicable to military contractors [and other civilian employees] of the United States in order that human rights abuses and criminal acts committed abroad by military contractors [and other civilian employees fall within] ~~[be covered by]~~ the jurisdiction ~~[and the law of the United States,]~~ [of U.S. criminal law when the Uniform Code of Military Justice does not apply], and that Congress further [be urged to] review past instances of human rights violations and serious violations of law by military contractors.

4. Direct the Stated Clerk ~~[to petition]~~ [and appropriate General Assembly Council offices to petition and otherwise advocate that] the Congress and the attorney general of the United States ~~[to]~~ investigate war profiteering [in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan], both by private military contractors and others. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) further requests that, as in the American Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War, an excess profits tax be assessed against any company found to be engaged in war profiteering, recognizing that it is immoral to use a time of war or national emergency to expand profits [while many soldiers’ families live in poverty and all official U.S. personnel bear the primary risks and sacrifices of the war].”

#### *Rationale*

The war in Iraq has greatly increased two types of private businesses that operate under contract to the Defense Department. The first is private military companies. The second involves businesses that provide military support services, such as cleaning, maintenance, and food preparation. By far, the largest market for private military companies today is in Iraq. These private soldiers are neither civilian nor military, although they perform traditional military functions.

There are few legal restrictions on the activities of private military companies. United States courts have held that they lack jurisdiction over them and that international law does not apply to these contractors. The military has implemented little oversight. Iraqi and other civilians have discovered that laws protecting them from mercenary soldiers are virtually nonexistent.

The massacre of seventeen Iraqi civilians by military contractor Blackwater USA is a case in point. None of the mercenary soldiers involved can be tried for crimes in Iraq, which, under pressure from Washington, was stripped of jurisdiction over mercenary soldiers. None of them can be court-martialed since United States military law does not apply to them. United States courts have no jurisdiction over mercenary soldiers and international law cannot touch them because, technically, they do not work for a state. They are in a virtual law-free zone. Numerous incidents of abuse and even murder by contractors in the Iraq War have been reported but not a single one has been charged with a crime. None of the military contractors implicated in the Abu Ghraib prison abuse have been charged in any crime although most of the military enlisted personnel involved in that abuse are now in prison.

Moral considerations arise when for-profit companies have explicit interest in the continuation of war and violence. These companies are directly benefiting from war and suffering. It is immoral to wage war or kill for money, even assuming that the war or conflict is just.

Moreover, the use of highly paid mercenaries working alongside soldiers performing the same tasks for dramatically less money undermines morale. Some private military companies pay up to ten times the salary of a United States soldier for the same work. Soldiers hired from poor countries are paid far less. When they are killed, their private American employers take no responsibility for compensating their families.

There are concerns over the human trafficking involved in private companies that provide military support services. Some workers have charged that they were recruited from their home countries under false promises and lack the means to return home.

The use of private contractors has escalated the cost of the current Iraq War. These private companies advertise cost savings to the Pentagon, but their claims have never been proven. Further, even when war profiteering is apparent, these companies appear to operate in a law-free zone. After military contractor Custer Battles was found guilty of contract fraud, the verdict was overturned on appeal because the appellate court ruled that federal law has no provisions to charge military contractors with fraud.

As Presbyterians and Christians, and in light of our commitment to wholeness in all of God's creation, we are concerned about the human rights abuses, war profiteering, and lack of accountability that permeate the outsourcing of military tasks.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-17

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-17—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-17 calls for opposition to the use of mercenary soldiers or military contractors paid to fight in any type of military operations.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-17 be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

The [~~Presbytery of Seio to Valley respectfully overtures the~~] 218th General Assembly (2008) [~~to do the following~~]:

“1. Opposes the use of [~~mercenary soldiers or~~] [armed private] military contractors paid to [~~fight~~] [perform security, intelligence, training and military operational services traditionally rendered by U.S. military and other U.S. government personnel] in wars, military conflicts, or any type of military operations because it is immoral to wage war or kill [~~for money, even assuming the war or conflict is just~~] [solely for private gain, even if the war, occupation, or potential use of force is justifiable, and because of the additional costs and lack of accountability of these forces].

“2. Direct the Stated Clerk [~~to petition the Congress of the United States to prohibit the use of mercenary soldiers and military contractors for any type of military operation, war, or conflict at home or abroad. In no way should the objection to the use of mercenaries and armed military contractors in this overture be interpreted as tacit approval of an expansion of the military or of a military draft.~~] [, and appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council, to support the development and enforcement of laws to prohibit the use of such private military/security forces, whose work closely resembles that of mercenaries in earlier historical periods].

“3. Direct the Stated Clerk to petition the Congress of the United States [~~and enter into ‘Friend of the Court’ requests~~] to review and revise the law[s] applicable to military contractors [~~and other civilian employees~~] of the United States in order that human rights abuses and criminal acts committed abroad by military contractors [~~and other civilian employees fall within~~] [be covered by] the jurisdiction [~~and the law of the United States,~~] [of U.S. criminal law when the Uniform Code of Military Justice does not apply], and that Congress further [be urged to] review past instances of human rights violations and serious violations of law by military contractors.

“4. Direct the Stated Clerk [~~to petition~~] [and appropriate General Assembly Council offices to petition and otherwise advocate that] the Congress and the attorney general of the United States investigate war profiteering [~~in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan~~], both by private military contractors and others. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) further requests that, as in the American Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War, an excess profits tax be assessed against any company found to be engaged in war profiteering, recognizing that it is immoral to use a time of war or national emergency to expand profits [while many soldiers' families live in poverty and all official U.S. personnel bear the primary risks and sacrifices of the war].

#### *Rationale*

This overture identifies new and troubling aspects of U.S. State Department and military policy that have subsidized the growth of large private security forces and, according to some reports, weakened morale and retention of experienced U.S. military personnel tempted by higher salaries in those private military forces. Beyond the fundamental issue of morality identified by the presbytery, they cite tragic cases of legal impunity by contractors. We note that Senators Lindsay Graham and John Kerry have sponsored legislation to put all security contractors under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The General Assembly may determine to use the term “mercenary” to characterize private soldiers and the companies that hire them, though the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy provides substitute language. The rise of citizen armies after the Renaissance generally marked the end of large-scale mercenary usage as military affairs came gradually more under control of democratic governments. (Machiavelli himself, in *The Prince* (1515), says “Mercenaries do nothing but harm.”) International law sought to eliminate the problems associated with mercenaries, and the definition below is taken from a Protocol to Article 47 of the Geneva Conventions. In the late 1980s, for example, U.S. support for the “Contra’s” in Nicaragua was determined by twelve of the fifteen judges of the International Court of Justice to have “violated the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.”

Here is the definition for individual mercenaries quoted by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) from Protocol 1, Article 47, to the Geneva Convention (1977):

A mercenary is any person who:

- (a) Is specially recruited locally or abroad in order to fight in an armed conflict;
- (b) Does, in fact, take a direct part in the hostilities;
- (c) Is motivated to take part in the hostilities essentially by the desire for private gain and, in fact, is promised, by or on behalf of a Party to the conflict, material compensation substantially in excess of that promised or paid to combatants of similar ranks and functions in the armed forces of that Party;
- (d) Is neither a national of a Party to the conflict nor a resident of territory controlled by a Party to the conflict;
- (e) Is not a member of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict;
- (f) Has not been sent by a State which is not a Party to the conflict on official duty as a member of its armed forces. (See CRS Report for Congress: Private Security Contractors in Iraq: Background, Legal Status, and Other Issues. Updated July 11, 2007. Order Code: RL32419.9)

The General Assembly has long acknowledged the legitimacy of service in the military and of resistance to such service in conscience-driven pacifism. The need for sincerity of purpose in military service is also affirmed in the confessions; for example, along with a version of the Just War theory, in the Second Helvetic Confession: “And if the public safety of the country and justice require it, and the magistrate of necessity wages war, let them [the citizens] even lay down their life and pour out their blood for the public safety ... in the name of God willingly, bravely and cheerfully” (*The Book of Confessions*, 5.258).

## Item 11-18

[The assembly approved Item 11-18 with amendment. See pp. 45, 47.]

*Report on Human Rights in Colombia—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program*

**The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program (PPP) recommend that the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) do the following:**

- 1. Call on the members and congregations of the PC(USA) to study the situation in Colombia, diligently pray for the work of the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, and advocate with senators, representatives, and the president of the United States to lay down the weapons of violence and support the nonviolent struggle of the churches and civil society of Colombia and those in the U.S. who stand beside Colombians to end the violence by:**
  - a. Withdrawing military support to the government of Colombia.**
  - b. Reorienting U.S. policies toward Colombia in such a way as to encourage a more equitable distribution of that country’s immense wealth, and to protect the rights of groups threatened by the interests of large corporations, including indigenous people, Afro-Colombians, labor leaders, human rights workers, and many campesinos.**
  - c. Ending the aerial fumigation for coca crops and focusing on programs that provide higher levels of support for farmers to convert to alternative crops and that reduce demand for drugs in the United States.**
  - d. Transferring U.S. support to the growing civil society committed to democracy and nonviolence.**
  - e. Providing aid to strengthen health care, education, and nutrition, especially among the displaced.**
  - f. Increasing aid for resettlement of displaced persons in their homelands.**
  - g. Channeling aid through nongovernmental organizations.**
  - h. Supporting the commendable work of the United Nations in Colombia, especially the work of the high commissioner of refugees with internal refugees, displaced women, and threatened indigenous communities.**
  - i. Ratifying and urging Colombia to also ratify, the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.**



2. Direct the World Mission's ministry area, in consultation with the appropriate entities of the General Assembly Council (GAC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), to continue to monitor the situation in Colombia, and to keep the whole church abreast of these findings; and to offer advice and counsel, as needed, about how this denomination can continue to support the peacekeeping efforts of our partners in Colombia.

3. Direct the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO) to continue to educate the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and their representatives in the Congress of the United States of America about the effect of American legislation on the lives of individual Colombian citizens with particular emphasis on Plan Colombia and the Free Trade Agreement.

4. Direct the Presbyterian United Nations Office (PUNO) to continue to represent the concerns of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the committees and delegates of the United Nations.

5. Affirm and further encourage the work of the Accompaniment Program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that watches over and shadows vulnerable and threatened Colombia citizens as they seek justice for their most threatened and needy populations.

~~[6. Direct the General Assembly Council (GAC) through appropriate offices, including World Mission, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to continue to communicate support to the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and to advocate for full respect for human rights, including the suspension of military aid to forces associated with the death, brutal treatment, and arbitrary imprisonment of ministers, other church members, and other Philippine citizens.]~~

[7-] [6.] Direct the appropriate entities of the General Assembly Council (GAC), in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), to continue to monitor and address human rights violations in the United States, and in other nations brought to their attention by the members of this denomination and/or the partner churches.

[7. Direct the Stated Clerk to write to the members of Congress of the United States of America, urging them not to ratify the Free Trade Agreement with Colombia, which would have grave consequences for workers, indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations, and the environment.]

#### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2006 Referral: Item 07-09. Commissioners' Resolution. On the Presbyterian Accompaniment Program in Colombia, Recommendation 5. The 217th General Assembly (2006) Referred Recommendation 5 to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Peacemaking Office with a Request to Include a Report in Their Next Human Rights Update Report—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 16–17, 580–81).*

Recommendation 1, above, is taken verbatim from Recommendation 5 of Item 07-09 (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 580–81*).

The 217th General Assembly (2006) commended the bravery of the accompaniment teams in Colombia who, by their ministry of presence, have reduced the number of church workers targeted by paramilitary forces. That assembly, however, wanted more study of the situation in Colombia to support further recommendations.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program (PPP) consulted with the World Mission's South America Office and individual members involved with the Presbyterian Accompaniment Program in Colombia on the assembly's referral. These consultations found that the actions called for are consistent with previous policy positions taken by the PC(USA) on Colombia and with the church's general human rights policy. Therefore, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program (PPP) make the above recommendations.

#### *A. Introduction*

In this report the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program respond primarily to the specific human rights concerns cited in Item 07-09, Recommendation 5—the directive from the 217th General Assembly (2006) concerning the country of Colombia. Among the many countries suffering from outright war, ethnic and religious “cleansing” or persecution, and grievous poverty and disaster, Colombia unfortunately continues to be marked by long-term military stand-off with rebels who occupy 40 percent of the country.<sup>1</sup> Although groups within the rebel “party” are responsible for kidnappings, the larger source of violence has been paramilitary forces linked to large landowners and the owners of factories. As this brief assessment indicates, these forces are responsible for much of the internal displacement of

approximately four million persons and the consistently terrifying practice of killing labor union leaders who seek better working conditions.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program (PPP) notes the significant parallels between the pattern of violence in Colombia and the pattern in the Philippines, another major recipient of U. S. antiterrorism training and technology. In both cases, official military forces have used counterinsurgency techniques against innocent civilians and have been linked to paramilitary death squads by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. In the Philippines, the ministers and members of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP—our partner denomination) have become a particular target.<sup>2</sup> Of twenty-five persons and lay workers killed since 2001, most have been from the UCCP, though Methodists and Catholic priests have also been killed.<sup>3</sup> Others have been tortured, and several held in prison without due process. The government of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has moved at times toward martial law.

The issue in Colombia and the Philippines (and elsewhere) is whether U. S. policy is relying too much on military assistance and slighting the development aid, human rights support, and democratic example that has been at the core of our good reputation in the world. In 2008, the sixtieth anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, it is important to re-emphasize this basic area where international and domestic rule of law come together.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) called on the Philippine government to “bring to justice the killers of ... pastors, other church workers, and other Filipinos similarly executed and/or tortured by paramilitary forces” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 584). We also are aware that within the last two years the World Mission’s Asia-Pacific area and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), in consultation with other entities of the General Assembly Council (GAC), have monitored and responded to human rights concerns in the Philippines.

In July 2006, the Asia-Pacific Office sent a letter to members of the UCCP with the action approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) on *Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Denial of Human Rights in the Philippines* (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 584–86). That assembly expressed this denomination’s support for the efforts of the UCCP to address the human rights violations in that region and its witness and ministry with and to the families affected by this violence. In 2007, the Reverend Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), sent letters to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and to members of the United States Congress expressing this denomination’s concern about human rights violations in this region. In April 2007, the Reverend Joan Gray, Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), visited the Philippines. Moderator Gray met with Bishop Eliezer Pascua, general secretary of the UCCP, and others and assured them that amid the violence they are experiencing, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) stands in solidarity with the UCCP.

#### B. *An Overview of the Presbyterian Church’s Mission Partnership in Colombia*

For more than 152 years, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors have been engaged in ministry with our Christian sisters and brothers in Colombia. In 1856, the first Presbyterian church was founded in Bogotá. The early Presbyterian missionaries established schools that have educated generations of respected citizens. Today, the educational advocacy efforts of this denomination in this region are moving forward through the dedicated service of this denomination’s World Mission’s area personnel and other agencies. (For more information on the ministry performed by the World Mission’s areas on behalf of the whole church, visit <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide>.)

The Presbyterian Church of Colombia gives strong and vital witness to the teachings and ministry of Jesus Christ and this church has called on us for support in its ministries with the displaced and most impoverished communities. Its assembly has made declarations that warn of the damages from the Plan Colombia and the grave consequences that approval of a free trade agreement would have for broad sectors of Colombia’s population. Pastors and members of the church continue to put themselves at risk. Some have been martyred in order to witness faithfully to the demands of the gospel by serving those most in need and the victims of the violence.<sup>4</sup> (For more information about the ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Church in Colombia, visit the PC(USA)’s Colombia web site at <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/colombia>)

#### C. *Recent General Assembly Statements in Support of the Human Rights of the Colombian People*

Within the last decade, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has reaffirmed this denomination’s efforts to support the human rights of the Colombian people. These actions include:

- The 210th General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) called upon the Colombian government to “make strenuous efforts to curtail the violence and provide protection and assistance to those affected” (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 663). In addition, the assembly encouraged “access for international human rights organizations and the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and humanitarian assistance” (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 663).

- The 213th General Assembly (2001) responded to the United States involvement in the crisis in Colombia. Specifically, the assembly “declare[d] it morally repugnant for the U.S. and its allies to grant large amounts of aid to a military with Colombia’s grievous human rights record, while waving the obligation of the Colombian government to meet acceptable standards of human rights as a condition of continued aid (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 54, 471).
- The 216th General Assembly (2004): “Join[ed] with the Presbyterian Church in Colombia, other Christian churches, and other Christian organizations in calling for the redirection of United States Military aid into social, educational, health, and developmental assistance in the hope that peace would be restored. ... Decr[ied] the characterization of human rights workers as terrorists” (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 70–71, 861).

Through the Accompaniment Program in Colombia, actions taken by the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding this area are being implemented. The Accompaniment Program in Colombia is a joint ministry supported by the World Mission’s area, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. It includes teams of volunteers that are giving bodily representation to the PC(USA)’s concern for the suffering of the Colombian people, and lending protection to threatened communities and a church that has been a victim of surveillance and has experienced threats to its leaders and pastors invested in working for human rights. (For more information about the accompaniment program, visit the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship Website at <http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/colombia/>; for more information about the ministry of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, visit <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/>.)

#### D. *Specific Human Rights Issues*

##### 1. *Plan Colombia: Flawed Anti-drug Policy*

The foreign policy of the United States has a major impact on developments within Colombia. The United States government has identified this region as a key strategic ally in the Western Hemisphere. In the year 2000, Plan Colombia was developed by the Colombian and United States governments in an attempt to address major challenges: to eradicate the coca crops in order to reduce the flow of cocaine to the United States, and to seize control from the guerilla forces that controlled about 40 percent of Colombia’s land mass. Plan Colombia has been financed by \$5.4 billion from the United States<sup>5</sup>, distributed until this year with approximately 80 percent for military aid (which includes the coca eradication efforts) and 20 percent divided between alternative development, human rights programs, aid to displaced persons, and judicial reform.<sup>6</sup>

This well-intentioned plan has not resulted in any decrease in the cultivation of coca or the supply of cocaine to the United States,<sup>7</sup> and it has had unforeseen consequences. The practice of aerial fumigations intended to diminish coca cultivation has only caused an ecological crisis and harm to civilians.<sup>8</sup> In recent years, the conflict that Colombia has endured for nearly fifty years has intensified with the military aid provided by the United States. Paramilitary groups estimated to be responsible for 70 percent of human rights violations in the country established themselves with the support of large landholders and sectors of the armed forces.<sup>9</sup> Guerrilla groups have maintained their war tactics, with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) currently holding about fifty hostages, three of them citizens of the United States who worked for Plan Colombia.

Since the implementation of Plan Colombia, more than two million Colombians have been displaced from their homes. This number, when added to those previously reported displaced in this region, is nearly four million, giving Colombia the third largest internally displaced population worldwide. The displaced seek refuge in slums, which surround many of the major cities,<sup>10</sup> occasioning the greatest humanitarian crisis in the hemisphere, according to the United Nations.<sup>11</sup>

##### 2. *Free Trade Agreement: Will It Protect Factory Workers, Small Landholders, and the Environment?*

While the current appropriations for Plan Colombia enacted by the U.S. Congress for 2008 (56.6 percent military and police aid and 44.4 percent for humanitarian work, most of this shift due to the reduction of harmful aerial fumigation)<sup>12</sup> are a major improvement over previous versions, another problem is taking center stage—the potential for a United States-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. This free trade agreement has not been ratified due to pressure from religious, labor, and political organizations in the United States and Colombia. Colombia continues to be the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists. In 2006 alone, seventy-two trade unionists were assassinated in Colombia, out of 136 killed globally. That same year, 244 Colombian union members received death threats, in addition to forced displacement, violent intimidation, arbitrary detention, kidnapping, harassment, and torture. Witnesses in Colombia have linked U.S. corporations to violence against unionists, who have initiated lawsuits against such U.S. companies as Coca-Cola, Chiquita Brands, and Drummond Coal.<sup>13</sup> These forms of violence not only victimize workers, but families and entire communities.

The agreement also poses major threats to the rights of indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups, particularly around issues of land control.<sup>14</sup> Afro-Colombians, 30 percent of Colombia’s population, began to settle in free-towns as escaped slaves by the year 1600. They settled in isolated territories of the Pacific and Caribbean coasts—considered undesirable at the time—further populating them after winning liberation in the 1860s. Legally, their right to their collectively titled lands is

recognized, but it is ineffectively enforced. In recent years, the value of this land's vast natural resources has become apparent to multinational companies, which, through dubious or outright illegal means, take possession of the land. Some of the most bio-diverse, old growth forests in the world are found in Afro-Colombian territories. But since 1997, they are being forcibly seized, clear-cut of centuries-old hardwoods, and cultivated into large-scale plantations of African palm for the production of palm oil for biofuel. Afro-Colombians are dispossessed of the lands that they have cared for and held for hundreds of years, and irreplaceable biodiversity is destroyed. The Free Trade Agreement privileging multinational companies will intensify this violence and destruction.

The Free Trade Agreement limits itself to demanding that Colombia comply with its own very lax environmental laws, which have been aggressively weakened in recent years. Moreover, the agreement's stipulations override the democratic processes of both the United States and Colombia. With corporations permitted to sue for damages when local regulations and laws are considered to diminish their profits, either nation might be required to ignore its own sovereign laws and even provisions of its constitution. Only those who possess money and power benefit under this current model of trade: international corporations and government elites.

Perhaps the most alarming aspect of this particular agreement is the ongoing collusion between the administration of President Alvaro Uribe and the criminal apparatus in Colombia. Collaboration between paramilitary groups, narco-traffickers, the Colombian military, and the political establishment has been extensive, as has been demonstrated in recent months by the arrests of members of the Colombian Congress and President Uribe's cabinet.<sup>15</sup> Ratification of a trade agreement with Colombia will send a clear signal that the United States is willing to support a government linked with narco-traffickers and human rights abusers.

### 3. *Justice and Peace Law: Needs a Reassessment*

The government of President Alvaro Uribe has attempted to address the injustices committed by the paramilitary forces by enacting the Justice and Peace Law in 2006. This law creates a legal framework for the demobilization of armed paramilitary groups within the country, and large numbers have taken part. However, the framework has been widely criticized by international human rights groups because, after disarming paramilitary personnel, it fails to ensure that they do not rearm themselves.

There is evidence that paramilitary leaders continue their involvement in narco-trafficking from their places of confinement. They also control armed groups with new names composed of the same former members. The Justice and Peace Law created for the paramilitary demobilization process leaves intact the structures of these armed criminal groups that have caused so much violence.<sup>16</sup> It does not guarantee reparations to the victims who continue to suffer persecution and assassinations when they dare to denounce the crimes committed against them.

### 4. *Conclusion*

As Christians we are called to respond to injustices, wherever they may occur: healing the sick, feeding the poor, denouncing injustice, and ministering to those in need are values set before us in the teaching and actions of Jesus Christ (Refer to Mt. 25:31–40, NRSV and the *Book of Order*, G-3.0300c(3)). Therefore, while it is fitting that we recommit to assist beleaguered Colombia, now more than ever it is important that we work with the religious, political, and social networks within our own country to contribute to a future that is just and fair for all of Colombia's citizens. The World Mission's South America Office, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship are three resources available to the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who want to join with our sisters and brothers in Colombia as they work to end the patterns of internal violence that are tearing this country apart.

Finally, as stated in the introduction of this report, the World Mission's ministry areas and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly and other entities of the General Assembly Council, are available to help the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in exploring ways to respond effectively to human violations around the world. Some of these concerns may be similar to the human rights violations occurring in Colombia—such as the paramilitary violations in the Philippines. Some may be as complex as the ongoing ethnic conflicts taking place in parts of the African continent. Others may be as enduring as the struggle to achieve lasting peace with justice in the Middle East. Regardless of the human rights issue, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to “sharing with Christ in the establishing of his just, peaceable, and loving rule in the world” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0300c(3)(e)).

### Endnotes

1. Andrew Palmer, “Global Security and Terrorism: The Main Terrorist Groups,” *Negotiation.biz*, September 20, 2005, ([http://www.negotiation.biz/artman/publish/article\\_26.shtml](http://www.negotiation.biz/artman/publish/article_26.shtml)).

2. The Website of the UCCP Philippines is: <http://www.uccp.ph/>. The church sends out regular alerts and requests for prayer concerning disappeared and victimized individuals. A key liaison and leader in the PC(USA) is the Reverend Larry Emery of Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church, whose dedication deserves commendation.
3. Philippine Churches to file complaints on killings with U.N.” by Maurice Malanes, *Ecumenical News International*, August 25, 2006 (reprinted by *Presbyterian News Service*). The complexity of the paramilitary and corruption issues in the Philippines is related to the enduring role of powerful local families, as well as the misapplication of counterinsurgency tactics. See “Family Ties Bind Philippine Government,” Carlos H. Conde, *The New York Times*, May 12, 2007. A broader context of the use of military force against civilians is given in “Killings of Leftists Are Rising in Philippines, Groups Say,” Seth Mydans, *The New York Times*, August 25, 2006.
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11. *New York Times*, “Crisis Facing Colombians Is Called Worst in Hemisphere” May 11, 2004 (<http://www.november.org/stayinfo/breaking2/Humanitarian.html> or <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C00E4DE133CF932A25756C0A9629C8B63>).
12. Adam Isacson’s blog, available at [http://www.lawg.org/docs/08\\_appropriations\\_analysis.pdf](http://www.lawg.org/docs/08_appropriations_analysis.pdf).
13. Gerardo Reyes and Steven Dudley, “Witnesses Link U.S. Company, Colombian Paramilitaries” *The Miami Herald* June 25, 2007, (<http://www.miamiherald.com/579/story/147574.html>).
14. Church World Service, “Afro-Colombians: Promoting Alternatives to Violence, Displacement, and Impoverishment” February 2004, ([http://www.churchworldservice.org/pdf\\_files/EA/ColombiaResource3.pdf](http://www.churchworldservice.org/pdf_files/EA/ColombiaResource3.pdf)).
15. An example of the high levels of personnel involved: “Colombia Army Chief Linked to Outlaw Militias,” Paul Richter and Greg Miller, *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 2007. The next day, Reuters reported, “Colombia Rejects Times Report,” March 26, 2007, but itself noted:
 

Most of Colombia’s paramilitaries have demobilized under a deal with Uribe, but revelations are surfacing about ties to the political elite. Rights groups have long charged that some military officers have cooperated with the militias in a brutal counterinsurgency campaign. Eight pro-Uribe lawmakers and a state governor have been arrested on criminal charges involving alleged collusion with paramilitary commands, which were set up in the 1980s to help fight Marxist rebels. U. S. officials brand the militias as drug-trafficking terrorists.
16. Juan Forero, “New Chapter in Drug Trade” *Washington Post* September 5, 2007, ([http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/04/AR2007090402018.html?nav=rss\\_world/southamerica](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/04/AR2007090402018.html?nav=rss_world/southamerica)).

## Item 11-19

[The assembly approved Item 11-19. See pp. 45, 47.]

**The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the Commitment to Peacemaking:**

**1. Commends those sessions, presbyteries, synods, and other entities that have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking.”**

2. Recognizes that the office of the Stated Clerk sends a certificate of commendation to the stated clerk of the presbytery in which the congregation is located for presentation at a stated meeting of presbytery for those sessions that have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking.”
3. Requests stated clerks of presbyteries who receive the certificates for sessions that have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking” to present them at a stated meeting of presbytery in such a way as to adequately commend the congregation for this achievement.
4. Urges presbyteries to find ways to share and celebrate the experiences of congregations where sessions have adopted and implemented the “Commitment to Peacemaking.”
5. Urges presbyteries and synods also to consider adopting the “Commitment to Peacemaking” in forms appropriate to those governing bodies and commends those governing bodies that have done so.
6. Commends the sixty-four presbyteries and six synods that have 50 percent or more of their congregations whose sessions have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking.”
7. Commends the five presbyteries that have 75 percent or more of their congregations whose sessions have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking.”
8. Urges peacemaking committees of the presbyteries to contact the sessions in their presbytery that have not adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking” to express the importance of this commitment and to urge their adoption of it.
9. Recognizing that the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program maintains a list of those sessions, presbyteries, synods, and other entities that have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking” in order to serve them in their peacemaking efforts, requests that a report be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the number of sessions that have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking.”
10. Requests the 218th General Assembly (2008) to commend publicly those presbyteries that have actively incorporated peacemaking into their ministry; including acknowledging and supporting those congregations whose sessions have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking.”
11. As requested by the 217th General Assembly (2006), the 218th General Assembly (2008) honors those presbyteries that have reached 50 percent or more of their congregations whose sessions have adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking” since the 217th General Assembly (2006).

#### *Rationale*

The “Commitment to Peacemaking” equips Presbyterians as they seek to implement the Mission Work Plan justice and compassion goal, “Advocate for peace and nonviolence in accord with General Assembly policy and direction, and aid other governing bodies in peacemaking efforts.”

As of February 5, 2008, 4,514 congregations have made the “Commitment to Peacemaking.” Additionally three presbyteries have made the “Commitment to Peacemaking” since the 217th General Assembly (2006). This information will be updated and reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008) Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues.

## Item 11-20

[The assembly answered Item 11-20 by the action taken on Item 11-10. See pp. 46, 47.]

*On Ending the War in Iraq—From the Presbytery of Heartland.*

The Presbytery of Heartland overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Call upon individual Presbyterians, member congregations, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels urgently to raise its voice for peace.

2. Reaffirm the 216th General Assembly (2004)'s call for the church to express its pastoral concern for and offer pastoral care to members of the United States armed forces serving their country in the war in Iraq and their families as well as for veterans of the war who have returned home (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 864).

3. Direct the various mission program agencies engaged in relief efforts in Iraq to continue and expand the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s commitment, in cooperation with our ecumenical partners, to ministries that address human needs in Iraq caused by the war and long-term development efforts to assist in the rebuilding of the country.

4. Call upon the United States government to develop and implement a lasting peaceful solution and reaffirms the 216th General Assembly (2004)'s call for the United States government to engage with the international community through the United Nations and other international agencies to cooperate with the government of Iraq in providing security, peacekeeping forces, and funding for the rebuilding of the country (*Ibid*, p. 865).

5. Direct the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through its Washington Office and all other means available, to advocate with the United States government for a lasting peace and for engagement with the international community to support the government of Iraq, providing resources for peacekeeping and long-term development needs.

### *Rationale*

God is constantly giving us opportunities to define who we are as individuals and collectively as Presbyterians. As the people of God and the followers of Christ, our position needs to reflect what has been taught.

For God so loved the world, that [God] gave [the] only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. [For] God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16–17)

The key aspect for this situation is that God loves the whole world and God sent God's son to give God's message to the whole world. (John 3:16–17) We need to take a worldview. Even on a practical basis, an isolationist position is not feasible. Every day we see the evidence of life intertwined with countries throughout the world. Dealing with the situation in the Middle East and Iraq in particular is an opportunity to define us as followers of Christ. The Presbytery of Heartland believes that as God cares about those people so we also are to care about them.

“On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you” (John 14:20).

Christ teaches us unity: unity with Christ, the Father, and humanity. The unity of the church is also expressed on numerous occasions by Paul. It is not too presumptuous to believe this speaks of a desire by God for the oneness of all people. On that basis, all the acts of love, compassion, hope, justice, and peace that Christ taught us should be extended to all those around the world. This includes those who do not confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12).

What is the greatest expression of our love to others as Christ's disciples? Although that may be difficult to describe in this situation, we do know what Jesus taught. Clearly it is not to abandon people to chaos, terrorism, hatred, and civil war. If we really love our neighbors as ourselves, then we should stand with them in their time of trial, come to their defense when their lives are threatened, intercede to strive for peace, and support their efforts to attain freedom.

Overtures sometimes deceive us into thinking that the proclamation of words completes our responsibility. By choosing to get involved in this, we must go forward and take a stand to support those who are striving for peace even if the form of that peace would not be the one of our choosing. We may not have the information or expertise within the Presbytery of Heartland or possibly even the General Assembly to determine viable solutions. Therefore, we put forth our hope and prayers for those whom we believe to be accountable to solve the problem.

Therefore, Heartland Presbytery commends to the church:

—Starting a massive prayer effort for peace in Iraq;

—Studying all General Assembly actions and educational materials concerning peacemaking; and

—Working within ecumenical efforts to develop creative solutions for world peacekeeping.

## Item 11-21

[The assembly answered Item 11-21 by the action taken on Item 11-18. See pp. 45, 47.]

*On Peacemaking in Colombia—From the Presbytery of Chicago.*

The Presbytery of Chicago requests that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

1. Urge the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program to continue to educate the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) about the importance of supporting Presbyterians and other churches in working for peace and for the displaced, the victims of violence, and the poor and dispossessed in Colombia.
2. Affirm and further encourage the work of the Accompaniment Program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Colombia, which lends protection to displaced communities and threatened leaders and allows us to walk together with the Presbyterian Church of Colombia in defense of human rights and in search of justice for the victims of violence and poverty.
3. Call upon individual congregations, presbyteries, synods, and entities of the General Assembly to advocate, establish, and strengthen partnerships with the Presbyterians of Colombia and with ecumenical organizations that work for the victims of violence and in search of peace.
4. Encourage Presbyterians to join church-sponsored study tours in order to familiarize themselves with the problems and possibilities inherent within Colombian society and to support the ministries of the churches and communities seeking peace.
5. Direct the World Missions ministry area to continue to work with Presbyterians and other ecumenical bodies to address the social, health, economic, and educational issues inherent to the armed conflict in Colombia.
6. Direct the Stated Clerk to write to the members of Congress of the United States of America, thanking them for the changes to Plan Colombia for 2008, which reduce military aid for fumigations and increase funds for humanitarian aid, justice, and social development; and insisting on the need to redirect all military aid and funding for fumigation funding to strengthening the Colombian judicial system and development programs for the poor and for victims of the violence.
7. Direct the Stated Clerk to write to the members of Congress of the United States of America, urging them not to ratify the Free Trade Agreement with Colombia, which would have grave consequences for workers, indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations, and the environment.
8. Direct the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO) to continue to educate the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and their representatives in the Congress of the United States of America about the effects of U.S. legislation on the lives of individual Colombian citizens with particular emphasis on Plan Colombia and the Free Trade Agreement.
9. Direct the Presbyterian United Nations Office (PUNO) to continue to represent the concerns of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the committees and delegates of the United Nations, regarding human rights violations, lack of care for the displaced, impunity, the need for a humanitarian agreement for the release of kidnapping victims, and the need to reach a dialogued solution to the armed conflict in Colombia.

### *Rationale*

#### *Plan Colombia*

Colombia has been identified by the United States government as a key strategic ally in the Western Hemisphere. The foreign policy of the United States has a major impact on developments within that country. In the year 2000, Plan Colombia was developed by the Colombian and United States governments in an attempt to address major challenges: to eradicate the coca crops in order to reduce the flow of cocaine to the United States, and to seize control from the guerilla forces that controlled about 40 percent of Colombia's land mass. Plan Colombia has been financed by \$5.4 billion from the United States,<sup>1</sup> distributed until this year with approximately 80 percent for military aid (which includes the coca eradication efforts) and 20 percent divided between alternative development, human rights programs, aid to displaced persons, and judicial reform.<sup>2</sup>

This well-intentioned plan has not resulted in any decrease in the cultivation of coca or the supply of cocaine<sup>3,4</sup> to the United States, and it has had unforeseen consequences. The practice of aerial fumigations intended to diminish coca cultivation has only caused ecological crisis and harm to civilians.<sup>5</sup> The conflict that Colombia has endured for nearly fifty years has intensified with the military aid provided by the United States: Paramilitary groups estimated to be responsible for 70 percent



of human rights violations in the country established themselves with the support of large landholders and sectors of the armed forces.<sup>6</sup> Guerrilla groups have maintained their war tactics, with the FARC currently holding about fifty hostages, three of them citizens of the United States who worked for Plan Colombia.

Since the implementation of Plan Colombia, more than two million Colombians have been displaced from their homes, who when added to those previously displaced leave a total of nearly four million, giving Colombia the third-largest internally displaced population worldwide. The displaced seek refuge in slums that surround many of the major cities,<sup>7</sup> occasioning the greatest humanitarian crisis in the hemisphere, according to the United Nations.<sup>8</sup>

#### *Free Trade Agreement*

While the current appropriations for Plan Colombia enacted by the U.S. Congress for 2008 (56.6 percent military and police aid and 44.4 percent for humanitarian work, most of this shift due to the reduction of harmful aerial fumigation)<sup>9</sup> are a major improvement over previous versions, another problem is taking center stage—the potential for a United States/Colombia Free Trade Agreement. This free trade agreement has not been ratified due to pressure from religious, labor, and political organizations in the United States and Colombia. Colombia continues to be the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists. In 2006 alone, 72 trade unionists were assassinated in Colombia, out of 136 killed globally. That same year, 244 Colombian union members received death threats, in addition to forced displacement, violent intimidation, arbitrary detention, kidnapping, harassment, and torture. Witnesses in Colombia have linked U.S. corporations to violence against unionists, who have initiated lawsuits against such U.S. companies as Coca-Cola, Chiquita Bananas, and Drummond Coal.<sup>10</sup> These forms of violence not only victimize workers, but families and entire communities.

The agreement also poses major threats to the rights of indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups, particularly around issues of land control. Afro-Colombians, 30 percent of Colombia's population, settled in *palenque* free-towns as escaped slaves in isolated mountain and coastal zones of the Pacific and Caribbean coasts—considered undesirable territories at the time—further populating them after winning liberation in the 1860s. Afro-Colombians make up 80–95 percent of the population in these regions. Legally, their right to their ancestral, collectively titled lands is recognized, but it is ineffectively enforced. Amid rapid globalization, the value of their territories' vast natural resources has become apparent to multinational companies that, through dubious or outright illegal means, take possession of the land. Some of the most bio-diverse, old-growth forests in the world are found in Afro-Colombian territories. But since 1997, they are being forcibly seized, clear-cut of irreplaceable centuries-old hardwoods, and cultivated into large-scale plantations of African palm for the production of palm oil for bio fuel, dispossessing Afro-Colombians of their territories, which they have had for 500 years. The Free Trade Agreement privileging multinational companies will sharply intensify this physical and economic violence, forced displacement, and natural resource depletion.

The Free Trade Agreement limits itself to demanding that Colombians comply with its own very lax environmental laws, which have been aggressively weakened in recent years. Moreover, the agreement's stipulations override the democratic processes of both the United States and Colombia. With corporations permitted to sue for damages when local regulations and laws are considered to diminish their profits, either nation might be required to ignore its own sovereign laws and even provisions of its constitution. Only those who possess money and power benefit under this current model of trade: international corporations and government elites.

Perhaps the most alarming aspect of this particular agreement is the ongoing collusion between the Uribe administration and the criminal apparatus in Colombia. Collaboration between paramilitary groups, narcotraffickers, the Colombian military, and the political establishment has been extensive, as has been demonstrated in recent months by the arrests of members of the Colombian Congress and President Uribe's cabinet. Ratification of a trade agreement with Colombia will send a clear signal that the United States is willing to support a government linked with narcotraffickers and human rights abusers.

#### *Justice and Peace Law*

The government of President Alvaro Uribe has attempted to address the injustices committed by the paramilitary forces by enacting the Justice and Peace Law in 2006. This law creates a legal framework for the demobilization of armed paramilitary groups within the country, and large numbers have taken part. However, the framework has been widely criticized by international human rights groups because, after disarming paramilitary personnel, it fails to ensure that they do not rearm themselves.

There is evidence that paramilitary leaders continue their involvement in narcotrafficking from their places of confinement. They also control armed groups with new names composed of the same former members. The Justice and Peace Law created for the paramilitary demobilization process leaves intact the structures of these illegal armed criminal groups that have caused so much violence.<sup>11</sup> It does not guarantee reparations to the victims who continue to suffer persecution and assassinations when they dare to denounce the crimes committed against them.

*Christian Calling of Presbyterians in Colombia and the U.S.A.*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a longstanding relationship with Colombia. Early Presbyterian missionaries established schools that have educated generations of respected citizens. As a result of this effort, the Reformed University established by the Presbyterian Church of Colombia flourishes today as an important peace initiative and gives strong and vital witness to the words and work of Jesus Christ. This church has called on us for support in its ministries with the displaced and most impoverished communities. Its assembly has made declarations about the damages from Plan Colombia and the grave consequences that approval of a free trade agreement would have for broad sectors of Colombia's population. Pastors and members of the church frequently put themselves at risk and some have even been martyred in order to witness faithfully to the demands of the gospel by serving those most in need and the victims of the violence.<sup>12</sup>

The 210th, 213th, and 216th General Assemblies (1998, 2001, 2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have expressed our rejection of this cycle of violence. The Accompaniment Program has been formed, with teams from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) giving bodily representation to our concern for the suffering of the Colombian people, and lending protection to threatened communities and a church that has been the victim of surveillance and threats to its leaders invested in working for human rights.

While it is fitting that we express appreciation for our past and present contributions to this beleaguered country, it is even more important that we work with the religious, political, and social networks within our own country to contribute to a future that is just and fair for all of Colombia's citizens.

As Christians we are required to respond to injustices, wherever they may occur: healing the sick, feeding the poor, denouncing injustice, and ministering to those in need are values set before us in the words and actions of Jesus Christ. Large numbers of Colombians suffer from injustices caused by the indifference and/or greed of their own government. This suffering is exacerbated by the well-meaning but often counterproductive policies of the United States. Let us support the work of Presbyterians in the United States and in Colombia who labor to create a more just society, according to the demands of the Gospel.

## Endnotes

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11. "New Chapter in Drug Trade," Juan Forero; *Washington Post*, September 05, 2007, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/04/AR2007090402018.html?nav=rss\\_world/southamerica](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/04/AR2007090402018.html?nav=rss_world/southamerica)
12. "Death-Defying Ministry: Protestant leaders practice grassroots justice—and keep a low profile," Alexa Smith, *Christianity Today*, February 5, 2007, <http://ctlibrary.com/ct/2007/february/30.110.html>.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-21**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-21—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-21, overture from the Presbytery of Chicago, requests that the 218th General Assembly (2008) urge the members and entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to continue to work for peace and justice in Colombia.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Answer Item 11-21 by the action taken on Item 11-18 “Report on Human Rights in Colombia;” and
2. Commend the Presbytery of Chicago for its support of the peace efforts of the Presbyterian Church of Colombia.

*Rationale*

The recommendations contained in Item 11-21 and in Item 11-18 entitled, “Report on Human Rights in Colombia,” are consistent with current General Assembly policies on Colombia. Many of these policies are cited in the rationale sections of these documents. Both of these business items call on the members and entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to work to strengthen our partnerships with the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, and other ecumenical organizations working to end the horrendous human rights violations in this region. In addition, both of these business items call on the members and entities of the church to continue to communicate these human rights concerns to the appropriate officials serving in the U.S. Congress and the United Nations. Therefore, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 11-21 by the action taken on the “Report on Human Rights in Colombia,” and commend the Presbytery of Chicago for its efforts to bring about peace in this region.

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## **Item 11-22**

[The assembly approved Item 11-22. See pp. 45, 47.]

*On Supporting Those Who Feel Called to Seek Status as Conscientious Objectors—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

**The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

1. **Approve the following policy:**

**The 218th General Assembly (2008) reaffirms the church’s position on the freedom of conscience, especially as it relates to a person’s status as a conscientious objector against participating in the armed services, (cf. the 215th General Assembly (2003) statement: On Strengthening Our Christian Peacemaking Vision and Witness in Wartime, *Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 651).**

2. **Therefore, the 218th General Assembly (2008)**

- a. **Encourages the Peacemaking Program to produce and identify study guides and discernment materials for individuals, congregations, and presbyteries to help church members and their friends be able to articulate God’s calling on their lives in regard to participating in the armed forces, and war. Such materials will be made available on the denomination’s Website, with notice of its accessibility sent to every congregation and presbytery in the denomination.**

- b. **Encourages presbyteries to provide education opportunities for ministers, military chaplains, and sessions on how to fulfill their responsibility of educating young people about issues of faith, conscience, and war, including civic alternatives to serving the country through the armed forces.**

- c. **Encourages presbyteries and sessions to create a structure to document and support those who feel called to seek status as conscientious objectors to participation in the armed forces, or war. Active members of the church can now register with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for conscientious objector status, and certificates are sent to the church for their records and for the church member (G-5.0202) (2003 Statement—*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 651, Recommendations 2, 3. Also found in “Presbyterians and Military Service—PDS #7027005035). Encourages the**

**Stated Clerk, presbyteries, and sessions to extend this ministry to non-confirmed baptized members (G-5.0201) and to attending non-members of the church as a function of the church's ongoing pastoral care, outreach, and work of reconciliation (G-5.0301a-c).**

**d. Directs the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) to communicate the denominational stances and policies to members of the U.S. Administration, the Department of Defense, each branch of the armed forces, military chaplains, and others to include those Presbyterians who have discerned that they are conscientious objectors with all the rights and responsibilities of official conscientious objector status.**

**[Financial Implication: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$3,000; (2010): \$0 [Mission]]**

#### *Rationale*

The people of God, in various times and places, are called to be the voice of peace and nonviolence in a world of war and conflict, even in the hardest of times (Gen. 44:17, 1 Sam. 20:42, Esth. 8:3-8, Isa. 52:7, Mt. 25:31-46, Mk. 9:50, Jn. 14:27, Rom. 14:19, Gal. 5:22-23, Eph. 2:14-17, Heb. 12:14).

As followers of Christ, church members are called to be people of conscience (G-1.0301, G-1.0307). Presbyteries and congregations are called to fulfill their role as communities of discernment and reconciliation surrounding issues of calling, hunger, poverty, war, and violence (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.21-26, 9.31-32, 9.38, 9.43-.47, 9.53-.56) "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God" (Mt. 5:9) Broadening this ministry to baptized, but unconfirmed members and attending non-members of the church is a natural extension of our church's common pastoral ministry.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-22

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-22—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-22, from the Presbytery of San Francisco, overtures the General Assembly to ask congregations, presbyteries, and General Assembly programs to support members and friends of Presbyterian congregations who feel called to seek conscientious objector status and to make it possible for non-confirmed baptized members and attending nonmembers of the congregation to register their conscientious objector status with the Stated Clerk.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the overture be approved with the following amendments to Recommendation 2: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

"2. Therefore, the 218th General Assembly (2008)

"a. Encourages the Peacemaking Program to produce and identify study guides and discernment materials [in Spanish and English] for individuals, congregations, and presbyteries to help church members and their friends be able to articulate God's calling on their lives in regard to participating in the armed forces, and war. Such materials will be made available on the denomination's Website, with notice of its accessibility sent to every congregation and presbytery in the denomination.

~~"[b. Encourages presbyteries to provide education opportunities for ministers, military chaplains, and sessions on how to fulfill their responsibility of educating young people about issues of faith, conscience, and war, including civic alternatives to serving the country through the armed forces.~~

~~"[e. Encourages presbyteries and sessions to create a structure to document and support those who feel called to seek status as conscientious objectors to participation in the armed forces, or war. Active members of the church can now register with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for conscientious objector status, and certificates are sent to the church for their records and for the church member (G 5.0202) (2003 Statement—*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 651, Recommendations 2, 3. Also found in "Presbyterians and Military Service—PDS #7027005035). Encourages the Stated Clerk, presbyteries, and sessions to extend this ministry to non-confirmed baptized members (G 5.0201) and to attending non-members of the church as a function of the church's ongoing pastoral care, outreach, and work of reconciliation (G 5.0301a-c).~~

~~"[d. Directs the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) to communicate the denominational stances and policies to members of the U.S. Administration, the Department of Defense, each branch of the armed forces, military chaplains, and others to~~

~~include those Presbyterians who have discerned that they are conscientious objectors with all the rights and responsibilities of official conscientious objector status.]~~

“[b. Encourages presbyteries and sessions to document and support all who feel called to seek status as conscientious objectors to participation in the armed forces, or war by:

“(1) Encouraging active members of the church to register with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for conscientious objector status, with the Stated Clerk sending certificates to the church for their records and for the church member. (G-5.0201) (2003 Statement—*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 651, Recommendations 2, 3. Also found in “Presbyterians and Military Service—PDS #7027005035).

“(2) Encouraging the Stated Clerk, presbyteries, and sessions to extend the ministry of registration as conscientious objectors with the General Assembly to non-confirmed baptized members (G-5.0201) and to attending nonmembers of the church as a function of the church’s ongoing pastoral care, outreach, and work of reconciliation (G-5.0301a–c).

“(3) Directs the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) to communicate the position of the PC(USA) on conscientious objection to the U.S. Administration, members of Congress, the Department of Defense, each branch of the armed forces, military chaplains, and PC(USA) governing bodies and congregations so that those Presbyterians who have discerned that they are conscientious objectors will have all the rights and responsibilities of official conscientious objector status.]”

At the present time, almost all male U.S. citizens regardless of where they live, and male immigrant aliens residing in the U.S., are required to be registered with Selective Service if they are at least 18 years old but are not yet 26 years old. See [www.sss.gov/must.htm](http://www.sss.gov/must.htm) for information on who must register.

There is no draft in the United States at the present time. The draft can be reinstated at any time by an act of Congress. If Congress does authorize a draft, the first draftees may be inducted as quickly as within two weeks following the authorization. Therefore, it is important that those who discern themselves to be conscientious objectors begin documenting their position before a draft is authorized.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-22

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-22—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 11-22. On Supporting Those Who Feel Called to Seek Status as Conscientious Objectors.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s advice and counsel.

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## Item 11-23

**[The assembly disapproved Item 11-23. See pp. 46, 47.]**

*On Divestment from Caterpillar, Inc., and Motorola, Inc., for Profiting from the Israeli Military Occupation of Palestinian Territories—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

The Presbytery of San Francisco respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to instruct MRTI to report to the General Assembly Council on the compliance, or lack thereof, by the Caterpillar and Motorola corporations with regard to General Assembly guidelines on responsible investment. In accordance with previous resolutions approved by the General Assembly in 2004 (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 64–66) and 2006, the General Assembly Council is authorized and encouraged to act on this information, and as it deems appropriate, implement divestment procedures.

#### *Rationale*

##### 1. *Current Status of Corporate Engagement*

Since the 216th General Assembly (2004), the committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) has implemented a process of principled corporate engagement with Caterpillar, Inc., Motorola, Inc., and several other corporations that are profiting from Israel’s military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem and contributing to the

escalating humanitarian crisis among Palestinians. This process of corporate engagement has thus far failed to produce any changes in the military-related activities of these corporations in the Occupied Territories.

## 2. *Resolutions On Divestment: 2004, 2006*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved an alternate resolution to an overture on the Geneva Accords involving Israel and Palestine (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 64–66), and urged both parties to revive negotiations toward a just and peaceful resolution of the dispute that would result in two states: an Israel within safe and secure borders, and an economically and geographically viable Palestine within safe and secure borders. The assembly also directed MRTI to initiate a process of phased, selective divestment of companies doing business in Israel that contribute to violence and/or profit from the occupation of territory in the West Bank. The MRTI developed a set of six criteria focused on General Assembly concerns about violence against Palestinians and Israelis alike, the occupation, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and the Separation Barrier. Five companies were identified for engagement according to the criteria: Caterpillar, Citigroup, ITT Industries, Motorola, and United Technologies.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) said that investments in companies doing business in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank, should be only in companies engaged in peaceful pursuits. The General Assembly also said that the customary MRTI process of corporate engagement is the proper vehicle for determining whether or not a company is involved in peaceful pursuits (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 944–45).—MRTI, *Priority Issues Work Plan, 2006–2007*

Corporate engagement is the process whereby the church researches the companies, determines their compliance with its standards, and then pressures them to change. Divestment refers to the ultimate termination of investments from the targeted corporations, and is the next step in the process of morally responsible investment to be implemented when and if engagement fails to produce positive change.

## 3. *Past Resolutions on Israel and Palestine*

Presbyterian General Assemblies have repeatedly addressed issues involving Israel and Palestine, in 1948, 1967, 1974, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2006.

“The consistent Presbyterian position has been to affirm the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign state within secure, internationally recognized borders and the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, including the right to the establishment of a neighboring independent, sovereign state, toward the end of establishing a just and durable peace.”—A Brief Summary of General Assembly Statements, February 2005

“In statements of successive assemblies since 1967, the General Assembly has decried the cycle of escalating violence—carried out both by Palestinians and Israelis—which is rooted in Israel’s continued occupation of Palestinian territories. Presbyterians have continued to be concerned about the loss of so many innocent lives of Israelis and Palestinians as evidenced by the *Resolution on the Middle East*, approved in 1997, and the *Resolution on Israel and Palestine: End the Occupation Now*, approved in 2003.”—The Social Justice Actions of the 216th General Assembly 2004.

## 4. *MRTI Mission Guidelines/Divestment Criteria*

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) believes that church investment is more than a practical question. It is also ‘an instrument of mission and includes theological, social and economic considerations.’ This belief flows from our understanding of the stewardship of God’s resources entrusted to the church. Thus, ‘we confess that the Lord is really the acknowledged Master of our entire life—moral, physical and material.’”—MRTI, *A Christian Call to Faith-Based Investing*

“The General Assembly of the PC(USA) urges divestment and/or proscription of some corporations due to their involvement in military-related production, tobacco, or human rights violations. This policy is an outgrowth of the General Assembly’s adoption of *Peacemaking: A Believer’s Calling*, which asked the entire church to review its witness and seek additional ways to promote peacemaking.”—MRTI, *2007 G.A. Divestment List*

“As a result of this policy, investments would be used to promote the church’s mission goals in society, as well as to bring integrity to the church’s ethical and moral values as they were applied to the policies and values of the private sector.”—William Somplansky-Jarman, *The Presbyterian Church As Investor*

## 5. *The Israeli Occupation and Related Human Rights Violations*

Israel routinely engages in gross patterns of human rights violations in its military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. The killing and injuring of civilians, torture, extrajudicial assassinations, the delib-

erate destruction of civilian infrastructure, acts of collective punishment, and economic warfare are but a few examples of Israel's human rights violations. Below are some of the elements of the "matrix of control" (ICAHN) that Israel uses to dominate, humiliate, impoverish, and transfer Palestinians.

*The Security/Separation/Apartheid/Annexation Wall/Fence/Barrier:* Although the officially stated purpose for the wall is security for Israel, only 11 percent of the structure is actually located on the pre-1967 border or "Green Line," the internationally recognized boundary between Israel and the West Bank. The other 89 percent cuts deep into the West Bank, effectively annexing some of the most fertile and productive Palestinian land. Fourteen percent of West Bank lies between the border and the wall, land that is currently home for more than 274,000 Palestinians living in closed enclaves surrounded by the wall. Another 400,000 Palestinians live on one side of the wall while their farms, jobs, and services are on the other side. The effect is to cripple the Palestinian economy, prevent economic development and foreign investment, and hobble the ability of the Palestinians to maintain security or govern their territories. The International Court of Justice declared the wall illegal in July 2004, and the PC(USA) has joined the overwhelming international community calling for the immediate removal of the barrier from Palestinian land.

*Checkpoints:* According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 528 checkpoints and roadblocks have been recorded in the West Bank, choking its roads every few miles. Israel's daily *Haaretz* newspaper puts the figure even higher: 75 permanently manned checkpoints, some 150 mobile checkpoints, and more than 400 places where roads have been blocked by obstacles.

"As a result, moving goods and people from one place to the next in the West Bank has become a nightmare of logistics and costly delays. At the checkpoints, food spoils, patients die, and children are prevented from reaching their schools. The World Bank blames the checkpoints and roadblocks for strangling the Palestinian economy."—Jonathan Cook, "Daily Indignities and Humiliations: Watching the Checkpoints," *Counterpunch*, Feb. 22, 2007.

One of the main purposes of the policy to restrict Palestinian movement is to protect Israeli settlers. Given that the settlements are illegal, the policy only aggravates the situation: it comprehensively and disproportionately impedes the freedom of movement of an entire population in order to perpetuate an illegal policy. If the restrictions were intended to prevent attacks inside Israel, and not in the settlements, the policy would still be illegal because it is sweeping and disproportionate, giving it a semblance of collective punishment which is forbidden.

Furthermore, Israel's policy is based on the assumption that every single Palestinian is a security threat, thereby justifying restrictions on his or her freedom of movement. This assumption is racist and leads to the sweeping violation of the human rights of an entire population on the basis of national origin. As such, the policy flagrantly violates international law. —B'Tselem, The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories

"Checkpoints serve to humiliate Palestinians and create feelings of deep hostility towards Israel ... In this respect they resemble the 'pass laws' of apartheid South Africa, which required black South Africans to demonstrate permission to travel or reside anywhere in South Africa."—John Dugard, United Nations, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967*

*Israeli settlements:* Under Article 49 of the 4th Geneva Convention, Israel is prohibited from establishing settlements: "The Occupying Power shall not transfer parts of its own civilian population into territories it occupies."

During the Oslo negotiations, when the status of the occupied territories was supposedly being negotiated, Israel expropriated 200 square kilometers of farm and pasture land for its own exclusive settlements and infrastructure. Since 1967, Israel has declared 73 percent of the West Bank "state lands," thus annulling Palestinian deeds going back generations. This unilateral and non-negotiated policy set the stage for massive expropriations for settlements, military facilities, highways and bypass roads, industrial areas, closed military areas, and nature reserves.

Since 1967, Israel has established at least 214 settlements in the West Bank, and another 18 in the Gaza Strip. During the Oslo negotiations, the settler population doubled. Thirty new settlements were established, including entire cities such as Kiryat Sefer and Tel Zion. As of May 2002, more than 400,000 Israelis lived beyond the "Green Line": 200,000 in the West Bank, and another 200,000 in East Jerusalem. Israel has approved almost 20,000 new homes in illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank during the past seven years. In defiance of the current "Roadmap Towards Peace," plans have resumed for further settlement expansion in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the West Bank. —Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

*House demolitions:* Since 1967, 18,000 Palestinian homes have been demolished in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem. The majority of house demolitions are conducted for "administrative" reasons and are generally because the house was built without a permit. However, permits are almost impossible to obtain by Palestinians living under occupation. Israel has denied 94 percent of Palestinian building permit requests over the last seven years, granting only ninety-one requests.

More than 628 Palestinian homes have been demolished during the second Intifada as collective punishment and “deterrence” affecting families of people known or suspected of involvement in attacks on Israeli civilians. On average, twelve innocent people lose their home for every person “punished” for a security offense—and in half of the cases the occupants had nothing whatsoever to do with the acts in question. The Israeli government insists its aim is to “deter” potential terrorists, although 79 percent of the suspected offenders were either dead or in detention at the time of the demolition.

Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, Occupying Powers are prohibited from destroying property or employing collective punishment. Article 53 reads: “Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons... is prohibited.” Under this provision the practice of demolishing Palestinian houses is banned, as is the wholesale destruction of the Palestinian infrastructure.—Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

*Land and Water expropriation:* Israeli settlers and the State of Israel have taken the richest Palestinian agricultural land. Even the Jordan River Valley, well within the West Bank, is used primarily for Israeli farming enterprises. Israelis control all the aquifers that supply water to Palestinian lands. Palestinians are charged four times more for potable water than Israeli settlers.

*Destruction of fruit orchards and olive groves:* The olive tree is a primary source of food and income for Palestinian farmers. Since 1967, more than one million Palestinian olive trees have been uprooted or cut down by the Israeli military and settlers.

*Ethnic cleansing:* As a direct result of the occupation, the livelihood of many Palestinians has been destroyed and they are thus expelled from their historic homelands. As documented by the highly respected Israeli human rights organization, B’Tselem, in a case study of the city of Hebron, “Israel has brought about over the years the expulsion of thousands of Palestinians residents and merchants from the center of the city. The ‘separation policy,’ constitutes, therefore, a policy of expulsion of Palestinians. The army acts according to similar principles throughout the West Bank.”

The “two-state solution” advocated repeatedly by past General Assembly resolutions is most seriously threatened by the ongoing construction of Israeli settlements and bypass roads: without a halt to such construction, a two-state solution may be impossible to implement. Indeed, a growing number of academics and intellectuals throughout the world argue that Israel will never allow the Palestinians to have a viable state and Palestinians should instead focus their efforts on obtaining equal rights as Israeli citizens.

## 6. *Corporate Complicity*

*Caterpillar:* The company that best exemplifies the interest of U.S. corporations in the occupation and the complete refusal to address human rights concerns in the region is Caterpillar. The most destructive weapon of the occupation may not be an F-16 or helicopter gunship, but rather an armor-plated D-9 or D-11 bulldozer. In 2001, Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz declared, “*The D-9 is a strategic weapon here.*” The Israeli military adds its own armaments, including machine-gun mounts, grenade launchers, and bulletproof windows, bringing the machine’s weight up to approximately 60 tons.

These are the machines that have demolished thousands of homes, uprooted countless olive trees, and carved gaping holes in roads, making them impassable. Even when used in the construction of settlement housing or bypass roads, CAT equipment is being used daily in violations of international law, playing a central role in clearing Palestinian agricultural land for the 450-mile-long Separation Barrier.

Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention deems the “extensive destruction and appropriation of property carried out unlawfully and wantonly” to be a war crime. The sale of Caterpillar bulldozers to the Israeli military is subject to the U.S. Arms Export Control Act, which prohibits the use of U.S. made machinery or weapons against a civilian population.

Despite years of corporate engagement by investors, Caterpillar is expanding its role in the occupation by its joint venture with InRob Tech. Ltd. to develop unmanned remote-controlled bulldozers for Israel.—US Campaign to End the Occupation

*Motorola:* Motorola Israel—a fully owned subsidiary of Motorola Incorporated—produces the 980 Low Altitude Proximity Fuse for the MK-80 series of high explosive bombs. On July 30, 2006, during its war on Lebanon, the Israeli Air Force dropped an MK-84 high-explosive bomb on an apartment building in Qana, Lebanon, killing at least twenty-eight civilians, many of whom were children.

The \$100 million contract used to develop and supply the “Mountain Rose” secure cell phone communication system to the Israeli military directly enhances the coordination and monitoring capabilities of the occupying forces in their illegal military operations in the Palestinian territories.



Motorola Israel supplies Israel with the Wide Area Surveillance System (WAAS) to monitor and maintain the illegal wall/fence barrier it has constructed in violation of the July 2004 International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion.

Motorola Incorporated set up advanced radar detection devices and thermal cameras in forty-seven Israeli settlements. According to the Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 49, it is considered a war crime for an occupying power to transfer its civilian population into an occupied territory. The Motorola WASS equipment helps entrench Israeli settlers on expropriated Palestinian territory, in direct violation of international law.—US Campaign to End the Occupation

#### 7. *PC(USA) Relations with the Jewish Community*

Since the overwhelming approval of the 2004 “Divestment Resolution,” the PC(USA) has experienced a significant backlash in the form of pressure and public criticism from certain pro-Israel organizations, such as the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Council, and others, with accusations of anti-Semitism and unfair bias against Israel. We join with Israelis and Palestinians and most of the world in condemnation of targeting of civilian populations.

However, many pro-peace Jewish and interfaith groups, including Jewish Voice for Peace, the American Friends Service Committee, Tikkun, the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, and the Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have actively supported the church’s position. The New York City-based Jews Against the Occupation wrote in a letter to the PC(USA) that divestment was “an important step forward for peace and justice in Israel and Palestine.”

“Economic sanctions against Israel are not invoked against Israel per se, but against Israel until the occupation ends. With this proviso it is Israel’s policy of occupation that is targeted, its status as an occupying power, not Israel itself.”—Dr. Jeff Halper, an American-Israeli Jew and director, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD)

#### 8. *Precedent for Divestment: South Africa*

No less an authority on human rights than Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu has said that he believes the Israeli government is in some respects worse than the South African apartheid government. At an October 2007 conference in Boston, the South African Nobel Peace Prize laureate cited what he described as the Israeli government’s use of “collective punishment” of Palestinians, and criticized the Israeli government for brutality and what he described as “gross violations of human rights.”

Tutu, who has condemned suicide terrorism against Israel and recognized the Jewish state’s right to secure boundaries, and was even honored in 2003 by Yeshiva University’s law school with an award for promoting world peace, also wrote an op-ed in the Boston Globe in which he stated:

What do I see and hear in the Holy Land? Some people cannot move freely from one place to another. A wall separates them from their families and from their incomes. They cannot tend to their gardens at home or to their lessons at school. They are arbitrarily demeaned at checkpoints and unnecessarily beleaguered by capricious applications of bureaucratic red tape. I grieve for the damage being done daily to people’s souls and bodies. I have to tell the truth: I am reminded of the yoke of oppression that was once our burden in South Africa.

While his comments attracted substantial criticism from some within the Jewish community, Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, had the following reaction: “Tutu has certainly been an outspoken, sometimes very harsh critic of Israel and Israeli policies, but certainly is not an anti-Semite and should not be so characterized.”

Within this context, it is important to remember the history of past General Assembly actions: in 1985, MRTI proposed a policy of phased, selective divestment from corporations doing business in South Africa. The purpose of this approach was to keep the focus on the corporations involved, to permit other shareholder strategies to bear fruit if possible, and to make more feasible a “sustained and widening strategy of interpretation and education of church members and the general public.” The policy also acknowledged that total divestment might be impossible for large portfolios, and that the fiduciary responsibility of trustees might limit such actions as well. Clearly, some divestment was feasible, and MRTI felt that a phased, selective approach would permit the church to test whatever limits might exist while proceeding with an approach that promised more public and corporate impact.

“The policy named four companies that year as the first to be divested, and in subsequent years through 1991, twelve others were added to the divestment list. As companies pulled out of South Africa they were removed from the list, and finally, after apartheid was ended in 1993, the policy was rescinded and all remaining companies were removed from the divestment list.”—William Somplansky-Jarman, *The Presbyterian Church as Investor*

Archbishop Tutu concludes: “If Apartheid ended, so can the Occupation. But the moral force and international pressure will have to be just as determined. The current divestment effort is the first, though certainly not the only, necessary move in that direction.”

9. *Peacemaking: A Believer's Calling*

We live in a time of kairos  
 when humanity stands on the border of a promised time,  
 when God's people are summoned to obedience and faithfulness  
 to preserve God's creation,  
 to stand with the poor and oppressed everywhere, and  
 to stand together as the people of the earth;  
 when with confession and with humility we repent of  
 our blindness to the division and war in our own hearts  
 and in our own land,  
 our obsession with money and our pursuit of power,  
 our irrational belief in security through weaponry, and  
 our worship of secular gods.

We are called  
 to be obedient to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace,  
 who loves the whole world and  
 who invites us to be stewards of the earth and servants of his people,  
 to be co-workers in the new Creation.

Let us be peacemakers.

Let us be called the children of God,  
 speaking boldly with moral conviction to the nation and to the world,  
 building, with God's grace, a new moral order in the world community; and  
 acting now for world peace, an enterprise of justice, an outcome of love.

10. *Conclusion*

"Enough is enough. No more words without deeds. It is time for action." This was the message that Christians in Palestine and Israel delivered to the WCC International Peace Conference "Churches Together for Peace and Justice in the Middle East" held in Amman, Jordan, in June 2007. "Risk the curses and abuse that will be aimed at you and stand in solidarity with us and with our Palestinian brothers and sisters of all faiths...."

Our church provided great hope to many Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Middle East when we began a process of corporate engagement with American companies profiting from the occupation. After four years, corporate engagement with Caterpillar and Motorola has produced no results. If we fail to take the next step of actual divestment, we lose credibility and dash the hopes of those who languish under Israel's oppressive military occupation. Now is the time to divest from these two companies.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-23**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 11-23—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the recommendations of Item 11-23 be answered by the action taken on 11-01.

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**Item 11-24**

**[The assembly answered Item 11-24 by the action taken on Item 11-10. See pp. 46, 47.]**

*Costly Lessons of the Iraq War: Resolution with Recommendations and Study Paper—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the resolution and recommendations, "Costly Lessons of the Iraq War," and receive the study paper, "To Repent, Restore, Rebuild, and Reconcile."

## Resolution: Costly Lessons of the Iraq War

*Introduction*

This resolution is accompanied by the study paper, “To Repent, Restore, Rebuild, and Reconcile.” This resolution summarizes the theological grounding and position of the church, raises open questions about important matters of context, puts forward “lessons learned” from the Iraq conflict, and makes recommendations for both pastoral and prophetic response. The sheer number of deaths (estimates from 100,000–1,000,000 Iraqi; 4,250 U.S. combat; 307 allied coalition; 1,000 U.S. contractor, est.), an unknown number of civilians and approximately 29,000 U.S. wounded, the destruction of the physical, cultural, and civic bases of Iraqi society, and vast expenditure of U.S. funds (approximately \$600 billion, not counting long term health and reconstruction costs and relatively limited Coalition funds), are each grievous moral challenges.<sup>1</sup> With the additional losses to U.S. national purpose, credibility, and reputation, all make it impossible for the church to keep silent. At the same time, recognizing that the tragic pattern of military intervention going back well before Vietnam has continued in the post-Cold War period, the recommendations section includes several long-range proposals for Presbyterian and ecumenical peacemaking witness.

The pursuit of “social righteousness” inevitably calls the church to serve as conscience in society. Just as the Holy Spirit speaks to our moral sense, convicting us of sin and drawing us to the good, so the example and witness of the church point to the way of Christ. That path of discipleship is rooted in salvation, demonstrated in love, and experienced as fullness of life. In communities of any size, that way of love is expressed in justice, and justice itself is a linchpin of peace. In the Reformed tradition, the non-violent peace of Jesus does not rule out all protective uses of force, but Jesus’ reign stands against all forms of domination. In Gethsemane, Jesus warns that those who live by the sword will die by it; in Colossians, the victory of the cross and resurrection reveals the “powers” or false gods of the world to be exposed and disarmed.

The church’s position as described below is neither pursuit of an unclear victory (“stay the course”) nor immediate withdrawal (“cut and run.”) As the study document affirms, even though the U.S. invasion was effected without adequate planning or international legitimacy, the U.S. should not withdraw in the same unilateral manner, without taking into account its continuing moral responsibilities for the condition of Iraq. Nor, above all, should the United States respond to the ironic strengthening of Iranian and Shiite influence in Iraq and elsewhere by another unilateral bombing or invasion, especially since the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate revealed the absence of an ongoing nuclear weapons program in Iran.

The position here proposed may be termed: Repent, Restore, Rebuild, and Reconcile. These goals are:

1. To repent of engaging in an unnecessary war, to express remorse for the suffering, and to change the disposition to exercise power without understanding the lasting effects of coercion on both occupying and occupied peoples.
2. To restore responsibility for sovereignty and security to Iraqi civil authorities bolstered as necessary by international troops under UN auspices, with U.S.-built bases contributed to the multilateral effort and control.
3. To rebuild a battered Iraq through serious, well-managed, and accountable foreign aid, including massive healthcare assistance for the wounded and maimed.
4. To reconcile political, ethnic, and religious groups through diplomatic and peace-building measures based in truth-seeking, mutual respect, and peace with neighbors, including the supervised return of as many as three million refugees from Syria, Jordan, and other area countries and two million who have been internally displaced.

*Lessons from the Second Iraq War (March 20, 2003–)*

In Luke 14:25ff, Jesus gives various images of the need to count the cost: in following Jesus himself, but also in building a tower or going to war, lest one not have the resources to complete the task. Jesus recommends that an outnumbered king sue for peace, and then changes images to suggest giving up everything to be a disciple. This is realism combined with a framework of repentance. In its prophetic work, the Church is not only called to tally and mourn the dead, Iraqi as well as American and British, soldier and civilian, terrorist and contractor. The church is also called to help society to do the moral math about the basic effectiveness of war and of relying on overwhelming military force and massive weapons sales to one-party regimes as the basis for a foreign policy. Drawing on both Christian ethical and pragmatic judgments, we draw these conclusions for future deliberation by General Assemblies, ecumenical and public bodies:

1. The consequences of the initiation of the second Iraq war by the Executive branch of the United States government reaffirm the Constitution’s wisdom of requiring that Congress declare war, and that only after the Just War/Just Peace criteria of just cause, legitimate authority, proportionality, protection of noncombatants, likelihood of greater peace and justice, and proactively exhausting all alternatives have been met. Preventive or preemptive wars violate international law and Just War

principles, particularly the criterion of “last resort,” as they involve the unilateral choice of one nation or coalition to invade another before a last resort of defensive necessity is established.<sup>2</sup>

2. The Christian church, by distinguishing patriotism from nationalism, and refusing to be stampeded through fear of terror, thereby prevents the false demonization of other societies and the false sanctification of our own, defends the civil liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, and maintains its own faithful resistance to idolatry and tyranny.

3. Unless United Nations peacekeeping forces are strengthened, or the UN authorizes humanitarian intervention, there can be no legitimate occupation, exploitation of resources by private companies, or exemption of military and contractors from civil or human rights law.

4. Democratic institutions cannot be imposed by violence on any people or nation. Democracy is not simply a matter of freedom but of “covenantal responsibility” based in equality before law and cannot be sustained in conditions of great inequality of power or wealth or physical security.

5. War requires a national consensus and can never be a regular act of governance. Without shared sacrifice through realistic taxation and other means, the human costs of war are borne by a limited sector of the population and the financial costs by borrowing, the first weakening the military and the second weakening the economy. Even humanitarian interventions approved by international authorities need to meet Just War/Just Peace criteria and be declared by the Congress of the United States of America.

6. a. Without effective civilian and judicial oversight, human rights violations will occur.

b. Without effective executive branch and congressional oversight, military contractors will profit from no-bid contracts and insufficient performance.

c. Even with cultural awareness and oversight by a free press, even temporary occupation oppresses the subject population.

7. Those parties and lobbies favoring war deserve particular scrutiny; with regard to targets in the Middle East, such as Iran, these parties would include military contractors, oil companies, other nations in the region, and civilian contractors that profit from occupation, security, and reconstruction.

8. “A superpower that insists on absolute security for itself makes all other nations insecure.”<sup>3</sup> This affirms a realist argument for multilateral cooperation and “collective security” in an interdependent world where security interests transcend national boundaries.

9. The role of the United Nations as chief agent for multilateral cooperation would be enhanced by the existence of a significant NATO-like security alliance on each continent; rather than stretching NATO from the Balkans to Afghanistan, regional alliances, stronger than the African Union peacekeepers in Sudan for example, could help organize stabilizing international forces in places like Iraq.

10. The struggle against terrorism should return to the model of police work, as Britain has done, rather than be carried on as a “war.” “The police model views terrorists as criminals, refusing them the status of combatants,” and prosecutes them according to accepted traditions of international law, using techniques of detection and prevention rather than universal surveillance and indefinite detention.<sup>4</sup>

#### Recommendations

In light of the Gospel of peace and the lessons learned from the second Iraq war, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008):

1. Approve this resolution and receive its study paper, and direct that both be posted for study and action on the Website of the Office of the General Assembly and be given limited printing for councils, peacemaking and educational programs, and educational institutions related to the church.

2. Encourage congregations and individual Presbyterians to continue praying for the people of Iraq and all occupation forces, particularly those who have been wounded or who have lost loved ones, and to support adequate healthcare and rehabilitation, including psychiatric care, for those affected.

3. Commend the Reformed principle that “God alone is Lord of the conscience,” and that in evaluating U.S. actions in Iraq every Presbyterian has the right to arrive at their own judgment, even if, after prayerful consideration, that places them in opposition to the position of the General Assembly.
4. Direct the General Assembly Council, through its Peacemaking Program and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), to convene a seminary- and college-wide review of peace studies and peacemaking opportunities appropriate to the major shifts needed in the approach of U.S. international relations, and to report the results of this study to the 220th General Assembly (2012).
5. Commend support for the UN Declaration of Human Rights on its sixtieth anniversary, the Geneva Conventions, and the International Criminal Court, and make widely known its conviction that all U.S. military and covert operations should comply with the highest human rights standards.
6. Urge the World Mission program of the General Assembly Council to offer material, moral, and spiritual support to the Presbyterians of Iraq, whether in country or in dispersion, in conjunction with regional ecumenical bodies, and urge the whole church to keep them in our prayers.
7. Direct the Office of Interfaith Relations, in cooperation with ecumenical partners and other offices of the General Assembly Council, and in addition to dialogue and study assignments, to participate in shared Muslim and Christian peace-making efforts and assist other efforts designed to improve understanding between these two families of faith, proposing public statements, worship events, and other actions as necessary between assemblies.
8. Direct the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian Washington and UN Offices, and other appropriate offices of the General Assembly Council, in conjunction with ecumenical partners, to communicate and advocate the following positions derived from this and other resolutions:
  - a. the swiftest possible internationalization of the occupation of Iraq under UN aegis, to improve security (removing U.S. troops as a focus of violence), prevent further religio-political cleansing, and assist return of refugees and persons internally displaced;
  - b. the provision of a truly generous reconstruction fund, to be administered under international auspices with full transparency and accountability, using internationally accepted standards for procurement, attention to human rights of recipients, and high environmental standards;
  - c. a full and honest accounting for the funds expended and to be expended upon on the war, including the costs of recruitment, rehabilitation, covert operations, and interest on debt;
  - d. a plan to conclude major military operations in a responsible and expeditious manner, leading to the withdrawal of virtually all U.S. forces and the international use for peace and reconstruction of fourteen bases built by U.S. contractors;
  - e. the tabulation of casualties among all parties and general inventory of destruction so that the human and material costs of the war may be assessed and the moral obligations of reconstruction and restitution be kept before the conscience of the nation;
  - f. the completion of investigations of intelligence failures, human rights abuses, and contractor scandals so that accountability may be restored to U.S. government agencies;
  - g. the significant increase of funding for United Nations, international development, and diplomatic operations and the corresponding decrease in the funding of the military, consistent with the development of “collective security” measures and the abandonment of the doctrines of “full spectrum dominance” and unilateral regime change;<sup>5</sup>
  - h. the re-adoption of the “police model” for dealing with international terror and the development of greater awareness and understanding in dealing with Muslim and Arab nations; and
  - i. a confirmation of the endorsement of congressional and judicial remedies for the use of all forms of torture (including waterboarding)<sup>6</sup>
9. Direct the Stated Clerk and ecumenically involved offices of the General Assembly Council to encourage consideration of a panel of peace and security experts on the model of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace in the post-World War II period, funded by church and foundation sources, to foster the sharing of Christian peace understandings among church bodies and with policy makers in government, universities, and the private sector.

### *Rationale*

#### *A. The Grounding of the Position of the Presbyterian Church*

As Christ's kingdom or reign cannot be gained by violence, so the Christian faith is not a religion of war and does not trust in violence to establish peace. The church's resistance to war has been expressed over the centuries in a minority commitment to pacifism, in the development of Just War doctrine, and more recently in proactive Just Peace thinking. Increasingly, biblical scholars recognize the place of nonviolent resistance in the New Testament, heightening the contrast between early Christianity and the Roman Empire. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and many other churches have supported the establishment of the United Nations and international laws to minimize the horrors of war and enlarge the concept of human rights. Based upon this historic Christian skepticism about war and empirical warnings heeded by many nations, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), most other ecumenical churches, and the Roman Catholic Church opposed the current Iraq war. This was done well before its vastly tragic and costly mismanagement and the steep decline in international respect for our country, out of a judgment that the administration was repudiating time-honored moral restraints on violence. The 216th General Assembly (2004), building on the concerns of the 215th General Assembly (2003) and a study of "*Religion, Violence, and Terrorism*," termed the Iraq war "unwise, illegal, and immoral."<sup>7</sup> It urged that Iraqi sovereignty be restored and hence the occupation end as swiftly as possible, a position that was held unchanged by the 217th General Assembly (2006).

#### *B. The Policy Direction*

In calling for the termination of a primarily military role for the United States, the four broad goals bear resemblance to those of the Iraq Study Commission (or Baker-Hamilton) Report. The first goal addresses a motivational context within the United States, while the next three are processes in which the United States would help or support a genuine work of the international community that has been largely kept at arms length. Reconciliation also has spiritual and relational dimensions and is linked to rebuilding since the refugees are disproportionately a "brain drain" of the most educated citizens. The recommendations also focus on the very difficult situation of the already small Christian community in Iraq, whose situation (like those of Christian minorities elsewhere in the region) has been made more difficult by the actions and statements of the U.S. government. In general, the last twenty years have shown the increasing importance of addressing religious dimensions in international politics, perhaps especially in the Middle East.

The study paper provides some assessment of the effects of the multiparty civil war in "the Arab world's Yugoslavia," which has always made the number of troops deployed into Iraq a secondary (though important) matter. It is the basic assumption that the U.S. has the right to "transform" the Middle East, starting with Iraq, that is challenged by a belief in democracy and self-determination. Opinion polls in Iraq regularly show majorities favoring U.S. withdrawal.<sup>8</sup> The effects of tactical decisions like the "surge" or the alliance with once-hostile Sunnis can be debated. Advocates of withdrawal maintain that residual U.S. garrisons will continue to focus resentment while not furthering our two main strategic interests in the region: protecting allies and oil interests, which they see achievable through naval and air power from bases outside Iraq.<sup>9</sup> In the long term, Arabic and Muslim cultures need to be far better understood, alternative energy sources must be developed, and the role of inter-religious cooperation for peace much more respected. The long occupation of Palestine by Israel, as the Baker-Hamilton report notes, is widely associated with the occupation of Iraq and remains an undeniable source of radicalization throughout the Middle East, and indeed a matter of concern for most U.S. allies as well.

Any substantial increases in reconstruction funds for Iraq need to be seen in light of current war costs, which include some reconstruction efforts, primarily in Iraq. Using nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office numbers, Reuters reports: "All of the Iraq and Afghanistan war money—about \$11 billion a month—is effectively being put on a government credit card at a time when U.S. government debt has skyrocketed to more than \$9 trillion, up from around \$5.6 trillion when Bush took office. . . ."<sup>10</sup> The recession, reinforced by the net trade deficit (\$811.5 billion in 2006) and increased oil costs, may eventually put pressure on military spending, although the Pentagon budget request has now "reached its highest level since World War II," excluding "supplementals" for the wars.<sup>11</sup>

#### *C. The Study Paper and Continuing Questions for Christians in the United States*

After a theological introduction, the study paper reviews the arguments for the war and the facts that have been revealed concerning the pre-9/11 ambitions of some top U.S. officials to remove Saddam Hussein, as well as over-optimistic dreams of establishing democracies throughout the Middle East, and understated interests in maintaining access to oil and markets. Clearly, many false statements were made about the existence of weapons of mass destruction and about purported linkages between the Sunni extremists responsible for 9/11 and the secular Baathist regime of Iraq.<sup>12</sup> This resolution does not answer the question, however, of whether the patterns of deception that have been revealed approach the level of impeachable offenses. Neither does this report focus on the pattern of counterterrorism measures that have led to large-scale indefinite detention and mistreatment of alleged combatants in Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay, and in secret prisons acknowledged by President George W. Bush. The 2006 assembly spoke strongly against torture and government surveillance and called for an

investigation of apparent violations of U.S. Constitutional and Geneva protections. The question of whether military and/or political leaders should be prosecuted is left open—only low level military personnel have been imprisoned so far.

In addition to those questions concerning the rule of law, there are questions concerning the governmental choices before Iraq and the United States. This report does not specify a level of federal devolution or even partition of Iraq on religious or ethnic lines. As in the Balkans, Somalia, the Sudan, and more recently Kenya, political pressures can open up ethnic, religious, and tribal tensions. We caution against exaggerating religious differences, and lift up instances of inter-confessional and ethnic harmony, as well as the uses of truth and reconciliation commissions, demonstrating the role of what Presbyterian ethicist Donald Shriver (in his book, *An Ethic for Enemies*) terms, “forgiveness in politics.”<sup>13</sup> In the United States, the growing unpopularity of the war in Iraq has underlined the massive powers of the presidency to establish policy through administrative fiat, but we leave it an open question whether the three branches of our own government are out of balance.

In terms of the role of the church, it must be noted that the already small Presbyterian community of five congregations has been severely reduced by flight and death and functions largely underground. The Christian community overall, which had been allowed freedom of worship and relative security under Saddam Hussein, has been reduced by fundamentalist Muslim “jihadis” and driven from some areas, as have other religious minorities. With these refugees, as with others associated with the U.S. occupation, the U.S. government faces a choice of whether to allow immigration to the U.S. or to push repatriation into hostile areas.<sup>14</sup>

As this resolution is finalized in February, the “frontline” in dealing with terror seems to be Pakistan, following the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, followed closely by the resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan. It lies beyond the scope of this resolution to analyze the fragility of “nation-building” in Afghanistan and the dangers of subsidizing a military dictatorship in Pakistan. Alliances with military governments or other dictatorships are inherently unstable, and high levels of military assistance do not assure that U.S. national interests or purposes will be served. Humanitarian assistance can also strengthen one party regimes, but offers greater possibility for the growth of civil society and voluntary institutions and lessens the appeal of religious and other extremism—if it is administered with competence, commitment, and international coordination.

In Iraq, despite the highest yearly U.S. death toll in 2007 (899), a “surge” in the number of U.S. troops (130,000 to 160,000), a ceasefire by the Mahdi army, plus alliances with Sunni tribal groups and de facto ethno-religious cleansing, contributed to a decline in levels of violence in late 2007. The almost-entirely Shiite government of Prime Minister Maliki opposes the arming of new militias once allied to insurgents, but these Sunni groups have helped reduce the role of Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia (a domestic Sunni group now estimated at ten thousand that did not exist in Iraq prior to 2003). The lack of progress in meeting most “benchmarks” and moving forward politically in the time bought by the “surge” partly reflects the religious and communal polarization of Iraqi parties. Yet there remains a continuing commitment to national unity by a majority of Shiites and Sunnis, though not Kurds. And in this commitment to be Iraqis, despite all suffering and destruction, there is perhaps hope of a peaceful reconstruction without further civil war. But that remains an open question as well.

To Repent, to Restore, to Rebuild, and to Reconcile  
A Study Paper on Lessons Learned and Directions Toward Peace in Iraq

I. Introduction

The purpose of this study paper is to state more fully the Christian basis for the “costly lessons” affirmed in the resolution and for the directions signaled in its title, “to repent, to restore, to rebuild and to reconcile.” In practical terms, repentance can simply mean changing the direction of our policy, but it means here changing assumptions about how international relations are done. Similarly, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group (Baker-Hamilton Commission) speaks frequently of the need for “national reconciliation” in Iraq, building on dialogue, equitable sharing of oil and other resources, and even-controversial “amnesty” for those who participated in the horrific violence of the past five years.<sup>15</sup> Beyond this emphasis on retaining national coherence through hard compromise and international support—goals we support and see no need to duplicate in many cases—this paper sees the response to Iraq as a major test for how the international role of the U.S. may be revised. In this, it is influenced by the work of Donald W. Shriver Jr., on both forgiveness and repentance as faith-inspired approaches to reconnect power and morality in international affairs. Its primary author is Edward L. Long Jr., a prolific scholar well-versed in Just War and Just Peace thinking, with significant insights from Gary Dorrien, a third well-known ethicist whose assessments of foreign policy appears regularly in the *Christian Century* and other periodicals.

Many observers have bemoaned the fact that the United States did not build an international consensus after 9/11 to address the causes and cures of terrorism in a way that would bridge cultural and religious divides. But the bigger missed opportunity came when the Cold War ended. Rather than redirecting the enormous military expenditure toward human needs in a “peace dividend,” the United States continued to build its military power as the “indispensable nation” in a “unipolar” new world order.<sup>16</sup> Beyond this, a number of influential policy thinkers believed it was time for the “one remaining superpower” to reshape the world. Some of this was idealism, some was ideology, but the combination resonated with Americans who

already saw their nation as an “exception” to the destiny of normal nations. After the deeply disturbing attack on September 11, 2001, the proponents of a plan to remove Saddam Hussein through regime change—first publicly proposed in the United States in January 1998—were positioned to carry out that reshaping plan, ostensibly to “democratize” the Middle East. Of the eighteen members of the neoconservative “Project for a New American Century” who signed the 1998 public letter urging that “removing Saddam Hussein . . . needs to become the aim of American foreign policy,” eleven gained high-level appointments in George W. Bush’s administration.<sup>17</sup> Afghanistan became the acknowledged initial war focus to remove the Taliban who sheltered Al Qaeda, but virtually immediately, as then-counter-terrorism director Richard Clarke reports, links were sought between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein.<sup>18</sup>

At this time, the United States may be faced with another “mythic” or deeply formative moment, as its capacity to maintain a military budget larger than those of all other nations combined, and to exercise “full spectrum dominance” in the world, may now be severely curtailed by the costs and consequences of the Iraq war. If the United States is, in fact, moving into a time of relative decline as a world power, it will be all the more important to understand how this situation came about, and what wiser role this country may yet play in helping establish a “just and durable peace.” And if such a redirection is to take place, it seems likely to require a Christian vision much bigger than nationalism, a reconciling patriotism, or “prophetic realism” explored in studies such as this one.

To call on one’s own nation to “restore, rebuild, reconcile,” much less “repent,” requires a deep conviction that there is a better way. That way is not simply a distillation of lessons, however wise, or a list of recommendations as the resolution in part provides. We find the fundamental way of redirection in the peace of Christ, whose “way, truth, and life” reveal a basic coherence of means and ends that brings violent means and peaceful goals into sharpest contradiction. The way, the truth, and the life preached and lived by Jesus of Nazareth is to Christians a summary of salvation: that God acts through the love of Christ to save and that only by responding in love of God and neighbor do we experience that salvation fully.

The Confession of 1967 affirms that “God’s reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures describe in various ways” (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.09). The Bible presents many images of salvation, and many of these involve the making of peace and sharing material blessings through the sacrificial yet abundant life in Jesus Christ. Calling our nation (and others) to repent and to contribute as lavishly to restoration and reconstruction as we have to war is a necessary part, in our view, of the long-term work of reconciliation to overcome the mistrust and frequent hatred of the United States expressed by the Iraqi people. Perhaps for all of the Middle East, we might say that Iraq has become the frontline in the struggle for reconciliation.

Because the Confession of 1967 speaks so clearly about the linkage of peace and justice with reconciliation, it was influential in the major 1980 policy, *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling*. Notice how it describes the place of peace in the work of the Holy Spirit:

God the Holy Spirit fulfills the work of reconciliation in human life. The Holy Spirit creates and renews the church as the community in which human beings are reconciled to God and to one another. The Spirit enables us to receive forgiveness as we forgive one another and to enjoy the peace of God as we make peace among ourselves. In spite of our sin, the Spirit gives us power to become representatives of Jesus Christ and his gospel of reconciliation to all. (9.20). (Inclusive Language Version in *Church & Society*, Vol. 92:5; May/June 2002, p. 206).

The peace of Christ is neither easy nor cheap, neither for God, nor for us. It is a call to sacrifice, to take up one’s cross, to be converted and led by God’s Spirit. As in everyday life, where our faith helps us order the goods of life and avoid idols, so in community the church must stand for truths that put even nations in their place. The peace of Christ is powerful as the truth is sometimes divisive: God’s questions echo in our minds and hearts, from God’s question to Cain about Abel’s fate to Jesus’ basic question, “what does it profit a person to gain the whole world and lose his soul?” (Luke 9:25) In national terms, what does it profit a country to become an empire and lose its character?

This is not the place for a full theology of peace, but it is necessary to indicate that the words chosen to title this background paper refer to fundamental movements of God’s redemption, even if none—such as reconciliation of Shia and Sunni—are likely to be fully achievable.

We ourselves must repent for confusing comfort and even security with being centered in God’s promise. The sacrifices of dead and wounded soldiers need to be honored, but not used to justify the slaughter of innocents as if they were terrorists. To take the lives of others, to limit the fulfillment of others’ lives for the enrichment of our own, this is to be in a foreign land, far from the path of righteousness. The Reformed Church never denies that there is a terrorist threat; we know that each of us, and even great nations, can be guilty of terror, torture, and casual cruelty. The memory of the innocent 9/11 victims, invoked so often, is truly honored when it points to peace.

In Ulrich Mauser’s *The Gospel of Peace* (WJKP, 1992), there is a careful survey of the way peace is portrayed in Scripture. Mauser shows how peace in the Old Testament is often pictured as coming after violent struggle, and that struggle is often related to idolatry. Idolatry, the worship of false gods, is itself linked to greed and injustice, so that the establishment of peace also restores justice. In the New Testament, Jesus famously says, “blessed are the peacemakers,” (Matt. 5:9), the only



time the word “peacemaker” appears. But peace is pervasive in the blessing of well-being, or shalom, that is repeatedly proclaimed by Jesus and the disciples. Acts 10:36 sums up the whole story of Jesus as “the good news of peace.”<sup>19</sup>

A basic link between the peace of Christ, restoration, and rebuilding, can be seen in the way the proclamation of peace and the announcement of the kingdom or reign of God go with Jesus’ healing power. Mauser summarizes the element of struggle with evil in the healings, the way some are seen as exorcisms, expelling satanic spirits and breaking accursed conditions. When Jesus is said to have healed “every disease,” Mauser sees a universalizing of Jesus’ healing. The peace of God does not use violent methods, even or especially in the Garden of Gethsemane; the cross and resurrection show a struggle and victory over illegitimate powers.

On a personal level, repentance leads to a restoration of inner connection with God and new or renewed growth in the Spirit: sanctification, regeneration. This is not the work of nations of themselves, but it has a communal dimension sometimes seen in national policy. In the biblical history of Israel, we see prophets repeatedly calling on their nation and others to repent. Exile is partly punishment for national sinfulness; the restoration and rebuilding of Zion, described in Ezra and Nehemiah, requires new dedication, though it also shows continued struggle over the land and identity of its inhabitants. That the exiles are allowed to return and that relative peace is maintained are attributed to changes in the attitude of a Persian emperor in which God’s hand is seen. (Many commented early in the war about the Bible’s frequent references to places in what is now Iraq; Baghdad as Babylon, Mosul as Nineveh, etc. Now so many of those inhabitants are in exile and their cultural heritage in jeopardy.)

The material aspect of restoring peace and justice can be heard sharply in James, which is so much a call to repentance for those who have much. “If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?” (James 2:15–16). A chapter later James returns to “peaceable” wisdom with moral force: “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace” (3:17–18). Then James looks at “what causes wars” and murderousness and names covetousness, vanity, pride, and doublemindedness or inner conflict rather than humble faith. “Friendship with the world,” or the world’s standards, functions as idolatry and makes one “an enemy of God” (James 4:4).<sup>20</sup>

Reconciliation as overcoming social divisions cannot, again, be extrapolated directly from the personal focus of James, despite the emphasis on righteousness or justice. But James is addressing the roots of violence and naming idols. In the early Church, as Walter Wink describes in *Engaging the Powers*, violence and idolatry were closely associated and pacifism was resistance to both. Killing for Rome was sacrificing to a false god. Wink’s work provides an analysis of how the New Testament does speak of systems in the sometimes apocalyptic language of “principalities and powers.” More importantly, the kingdom or reign of God is itself an intrinsically social reality and provides the link between personal redemption and communal participation.

In a short book, *When the Powers Fall: Reconciliation in the Healing of Nations*, Wink looks at God’s reign as God’s sovereignty in the world and in the believer, both outside and inside. In symbolic shorthand, he refers to the “Domination system: a social system characterized by hierarchical power relations, economic inequality, oppressive politics, patriarchy, ranking, aristocracy, taxation, standing armies, and war. Violence became the preferred means for adjudicating disputes and getting and holding power.”<sup>21</sup> This echoes what James was warning against. Wink looks at the ways Jesus refused to exalt himself, the ways he “took the form of a servant,” unlike the rulers of the Gentiles, who “lord it over each other.” To proclaim the “kingdom of God,” then, is to practice a different politics, to proclaim an alternative order based in equality and nonviolence rather than domination.

When dictatorships fall, Wink looks to the Church to live out its alternative politics through forgiveness and reconciliation. Though forgiveness is for reconciliation, the former can be unilateral; the latter is inherently mutual. Wink distinguishes between true and false forgiveness and reconciliation: the key is the role of truth, and this leads him to examine the truth and reconciliation commissions in many Latin American countries, South Africa, and Namibia. In almost all cases, former military dictators and torturers declared amnesty and gave themselves impunity, effectively refusing repentance. Yet still the power of truth worked to heal in those who had suffered. By the way of biblical application, Wink comes to a position similar to that developed in social ethics and history by Donald W. Shriver Jr.

In *An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (1995), Shriver examines the key ways forgiveness has played a role in the relations between the United States, Germany, Japan, and between white and black Americans. Though forgiveness is seen as distinctive and freeing by Christians and non-Christians, such as Hannah Arendt, Shriver describes the way it had been privatized in what he calls “the sacramental captivity of forgiveness, 500–1500,” where forgiveness took particular ritual and institutional forms of confession, absolution, and penance, usually with specific gradations.<sup>22</sup> Shriver goes on to look at historic moments and leaders, such as Lincoln, who was able to say, “with malice toward none, and charity toward all,” looking to reconciliation after the Civil War, just days before his death. Here is a key conclusion that may speak to the political leadership needed in our time:

... only in a context of perceived interconnectedness between participants in great traumatic political injustice can one go on to assert the symbolic, representative role of politicians in the enactment of a political form of forgiveness. An indefinite but real network of victims and agents calls for that role. Whether leaders accuse an enemy of crime, confess to crimes of their own people, or hold out hopes for a future reconciliation, they do all of this on behalf of one collective in addressing another. To deny this representative, symbolic role to politicians is to impoverish their service to a society's dealing with its past wrongs and its present corrective responsibility to the future.<sup>23</sup>

In *Honest Patriots: Loving a Country Enough to Remember Its Misdeeds* (2005), Shriver develops the theme of political-social repentance more fully. His book is a form of listening and reflecting deeply on the moral experiences of Germany, South Africa, and the United States, in our case with particular attention to African American and Native American relations with the European American majority. If he were to have chosen proof-texts, they would be from the book of Lamentations. Shriver, too, looks at the Truth and Reconciliation process in South Africa and the painful stripping away of official denial that it involved, even when its official amnesty did not produce repentance. A rare few Afrikaner leaders made public confessions that revealed what Shriver calls, honest patriotism rather than a nationalism that favored only part of the nation. In turning to race relations in the United States, he is eloquent about his own past as a Southerner, and about the ironies of American history. He ends with a look at the Iraq war, and “the question presses upon Americans now as seldom before in our history: for what displays of *hubris*, in our current collective stance in the world, may the American government one day have to consider apologizing?”<sup>24</sup>

When the paper moves to consider the rationales stated and unstated for the invasion of Iraq, the question of *hubris*, pride, or what the psychologists call, grandiosity, will return.<sup>25</sup> Shriver looked at long-term periods of arrogance and amnesia; a reporter on the conduct of the Iraq war, Robert Woodward, titled a book, *State of Denial*, for a governing style that tried to impose ideology on reality.<sup>26</sup> It is not necessary to understand the United States as an empire, to see at least some of the use of its power as imperial.

Much of the work of peacemaking is not done on the national level by political leaders, but by citizens engaging in a whole range of activities that show a more peaceful reality is possible. Political organizing can help change a country's motivation and address its fears, particularly if it can appeal to both patriotism and moral empowerment—even to the spiritual empowerment that Christian faith provides. Yet we are also aware that there will be resistance to having U.S. forces pull back to allow Iraq to regain its sovereignty and reluctance to provide funds for rebuilding a nation that is no longer a threat. Thus we turn to examples of peacemaking that also show reactions, lest we think reconciliation will not be costly.

The role of religious peacemakers is lifted up in *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, edited by David Little, which describes interfaith work, including joint Muslim-Christian peacemaking in Nigeria and Palestine/Israel. Little writes, “... the experience of most of the Peacemakers in this volume ... proves that even those figures most consistently devoted to the principles of conciliation and amity are not in fact strangers to conflict and violence. Those who seek peace by peaceful means are, despite their intentions, often the objects of hatred and retaliation; they predictably heighten tension rather than relax it, because they denounce what they believe is injustice and abuse.”<sup>27</sup>

Little outlines “four general types of peacemaking that apply to the work of religious peacemakers ... enforcement, peacekeeping, institution-and-capacity building, and agreement-making.” The first two functions can be backed up by force of arms, but the second two involve the particular diplomatic and participatory strategies of religious peacemakers. “The first is occupied with the design and creation over time of an array of institutions and practices capable of increasing and sustaining the balance of social harmony and civil unity over hostility and violence. This entails broadening and strengthening commitment to and training in multireligious and multiethnic respect and tolerance, along with the management and reduction of violence, human rights compliance, rule of law, empowerment of women and minorities, advancement of educational and vocational opportunities, expansion of health care, reduction of inequities in wealth and power...” Agreement-making is the process of sustained interaction by which hostile parties are brought to work out and accept a peace settlement. “Track One” diplomacy involves official governmental and third party representatives; “Track Two” is unofficial diplomacy by non-governmental groups and individuals. One example of the latter is Presbyterian minister William Lowrey's “creative work in helping facilitate agreements between the Nuer and Dinka peoples in Southern Sudan.”<sup>28</sup>

In light of the particulars summarized by Little, it should be clear that “nation-building” involves rebuilding relationships within a given nation among its peoples, and among neighboring nations who may rightly fear the contagion of chaos or the burden of refugees. This section has moved from the peace given us in Christ to the ways we share that peace, without false innocence or arrogance, to those who are in conflicts—and that includes ourselves.

## II. Summary of Previous Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Resolutions on the Iraq War (2003 and 2004) and “Violence, Religion, and Terrorism” (2004)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has studied the situation in Iraq for more than five years and has issued a number of background papers, policy recommendations, and study guides to foster thoughtful deliberation about the moral issues raised by American policy. There is no doubt but what the war in Iraq has created enormous disagreement as to whether or not it

constitutes a wise undertaking. The members of our church are not all agreed as to what can or should be done. However complex, the issues do not go away nor can they be ignored. A great deal is at stake—militarily, politically, diplomatically, interreligiously—and anyone who cares about basic humanitarian concerns must address the problem.

The first document in which the Presbyterian church dealt with Iraq was presented to the 215th General Assembly (2003) (Denver) and was entitled “Iraq and Beyond.” This document raised serious doubts about the moral legitimacy of preventive wars and the national policy of full spectrum dominance that was coming to be the operative basis of national policy, especially the action taken against Iraq. It acknowledged the unresolved differences between opponents of all armed conflict and those who acknowledge the legitimacy of military action under just war principles. It pointed out that it is possible to support U.S. military personnel as persons without linking that support with approval of national policy. It emphasized the importance of keeping noncombatants, especially civilians, from harm; highlighted the need to maintain the viability of economic life and public order in taking any action; and urged cooperation with the United Nations in creating and implementing all strategies.

It also pointed to the importance of religious communities for the humanitarian renewal of Iraq. The Worldwide Ministries Division of the church provided reinforcing considerations that emphasized the importance of maintaining good relationships with Christian churches in the Middle East and with the Muslim community in our country, and underscored the commitment to love enemies and that is at the heart of our Christian peace-seeking.<sup>29</sup>

One year later, the General Assembly meeting in Richmond accepted another study about Iraq with the title “Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future.” The study paper was more explicit in looking at just war principles and drew moral distinctions between various kinds of military intervention—concluding that strategic intervention for the purposes of regime change was the most difficult to defend on moral grounds, if not indeed impossible. This paper also affirmed our solidarity with Iraqi Christians and their churches, called for pastoral support for U.S. military personnel and their families, encouraged continued prayer for peace and stability in Iraq, condemned in the strongest possible terms torture and the abuse of prisoners, and called for a mission plan to respond to the needs and concerns of our brothers and sisters in Iraq. The most pointed aspect of the action taken in 2004 was to concur in the judgment of many church leaders around the world, that the invasion of Iraq has been “unwise, immoral, and illegal.” It called upon the United States government to speedily restore sovereignty to Iraq. The General Assembly also declared with equal seriousness that the “United States bear(s) a legal and moral burden for the reconstruction of Iraq.”<sup>30</sup>

The doubts and criticism of launching military action against Iraq that are expressed by the actions of the General Assemblies of 2003 and 2004 were made when there was somewhat greater support for the war among the public-at-large than has come to be the case. These criticisms embodied a moral judgment that the military action failed the tests of moral legitimacy commonly posed by just war thinking. An entirely different kind of criticism would later develop in other circles—criticism that reflected disillusionment with how the war was being carried out and a judgment that it has been badly managed rather than ill conceived.<sup>31</sup> Both kinds of criticism were to combine by early 2006 to provide increasingly widespread support in the general public for bringing the military action to an end, though no consensus developed as to just how this should be accomplished. The administration has rejected all such calls for abandoning its military venture and mounted a so-called “surge” designed to provide time for political progress among Iraqi leaders and to demonstrate the possibility of a more promising outcome from the military effort. This has further intensified the public debate but not alleviated public concern about the war.

While pressure to end America’s military involvement in Iraq is likely to gain increasing support, this does not necessarily mean that the moral issues have come to be more fully understood or that the premises that led to taking military action in the first place have been repudiated. To withdraw because of fatigue or disillusionment would be quite different from seeking to redress the action on moral grounds, as we recommend. This does not preclude combining these impulses to end the war, but it does recognize that they may be quite different reasons for the same actions and different judgments about what are appropriate subsequent responses. It is the role of the church to insist that the moral reasons not be overlooked irrespective of whether or not opponents of the war are successful in bringing some cessation to the military action. It is important, then, not merely to add whatever influence we can exert to the public calls for changing a policy, but to think about the implications of what has already been done and the moral dimensions of any possible future actions.

### III. Reconsideration of War Motivations, Objectives, and Decision-Framework

#### A. *Issues Related to the Decision to Initiate Military Action Against Iraq*

The wisdom of taking military action in Iraq had been a source of debate from the very beginning. Several reasons have been advanced for taking such action and each has been scrutinized at length. The result is that each proposed justification for taking such action has tended to lose credibility as the debate has progressed and as more and more information has shown the inadequacy of those justifications.

1. One of the reasons, which figured prominently in the beginning, was a belief that Iraq was in possession—or would soon be in possession—of weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein had used chemical weapons against the Kurds, and he had resisted efforts of inspectors from the United Nations to have clear and unencumbered access to all parts of his country. There was ambivalence among members of the United Nations as to how rigorously to hold Iraq accountable and the resulting hesitation created a situation that seemed to invite more stringent action by the United States acting as the chief world power.

It has subsequently been learned that the intelligence reports implying there was a serious threat from weapons of mass destruction held by Iraq were either faulty or deliberately misinterpreted in order to bolster the case for making a preventive strike. Extensive investigative reporting has since cast doubts on the presence of such weaponry and even on the intentions of those who used this argument to legitimize the attack on Iraq. Of particular relevance has been the “Downing Street Memo” made public July 23, 2003, which indicated that the decision to go to war against Iraq was well crystallized before the putative evidence of weapons of mass destruction was fully assessed.<sup>32</sup> And it may have been possible, with longer time, that Hussein’s acquiescence to weapons inspections would have continued.

2. A second alleged reason for taking preventive military action against Iraq was the awareness that Saddam Hussein was a ruthless and evil ruler who had little concern even for the welfare of Iraq’s people (especially the Kurds and Shiites). The fact that Saddam Hussein was a brutal ruler has never been significantly contested; but there has been a difference in judgment as to what should have been done about this horror.

A traditional assumption governing the use of military action has been to regard self-defense as legitimate whereas aggression is not. However, more recently a body of thought has been gaining acceptance approving intervention for humanitarian reasons.<sup>33</sup> There has also been a school that believes American power should be used to bring about free and democratic regimes where they do not now exist. Humanitarian intervention to alleviate suffering has the widest support, followed by intervention to establish minimally functional order in cases where no such order is operative. But intervention to overthrow a particularly cruel regime, which was the situation in Iraq, is far more problematic, particularly if carried out unilaterally. The action was essentially unilateral despite the largely nominal commitment of forces by nations belonging to what was called “the coalition of the willing.” There is little warrant in international law to support the view that a single nation is entitled to delegate to itself the right to judge another nation “evil” and on that basis initiate military action against it.

Moreover, as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has indicated in studying this matter, any intervention, even if undertaken for humanitarian purposes, must be governed by measures similar to those used in just war thinking, one of which is that it must be a last resort and another that it must have a reasonable chance of success. The military action against Iraq did not meet either test. It was taken before the international community had exhausted all diplomatic remedies and with limited regard for the incipient tensions and rivalries among religious factions in Iraq that would stymie any constructive outcome from the simple removal of an oppressive leader. Many students of the Muslim world and Iraq in particular were aware of the potential pitfalls in this kind of preventive maneuver but their wisdom, like much of a State Department study process, was disregarded.

3. A third alleged reason, not entirely distinct from the previous humanitarian concerns, was to help create a democratic example in the region. Idealistic in a way, the idea of exporting democracy is to some a form of soft intervention. Yet it has support, particularly if any military occupation by the United States can be an exception to the imperial rule, and if the U.S. is a chosen exception in itself. This agenda is even more triumphalist than the effort during World War I to make the world “safe for democracy” (an effort that was anything but successful). Saddam Hussein was removed from power rather quickly following the beginning of the Iraq war and elections were held to symbolize movement toward democratic governance of the nation. But the rise of bitter hostilities between political and sectarian factors within a power vacuum undercut the confidence that Iraq was either willing or able to cohere in an adequate way to make democracy possible. Democracy depends, not merely on freedom, but upon the acceptance of covenantal responsibility between the members of a society who agree to accept majority decisions as having a claim on their behavior. It will not arise simply from the removal of a tyrannical regime.

4. Another reason advanced for taking military action against Iraq was to combat terrorism. It was alleged that Iraq either was already, or could soon become a central actor in the support of terrorism even if it seemed to have no role in the attacks of 9/11. The trauma associated with those attacks, plus fear from an anthrax scare, prompted a strong clamor for decisive response. But careful inquiry, such as the work of the Kean-Hamilton Commission, showed that there was little, if any, connection between Saddam and Al Qaeda. Unfortunately, when the commission came to that conclusion its judgment continued to be questioned by the advocates of the Iraq war. Indeed, the connection has been alluded to repeatedly by the president and spokespersons for the administration despite the well-substantiated evidence to the contrary. This attempt to project the existence of Al Qaeda in Iraq back onto the time of Saddam Hussein’s regime has no legitimacy yet is used to bolster support for having taken the military action against Iraq.

5. Yet another reason for taking military action against Iraq has been proposed, not so much by the proponents of such action, but by its critics. It is suggested that the primary motivations for the use of military force to establish American dominance has been to protect American's access to oil, of which Iraq has a considerable supply. In his memoirs Alan Greenspan indicates this is the most operative underlying reason.<sup>34</sup> And certainly it has great plausibility, from the protection of the oil fields initially in the invasion (as chaos was allowed elsewhere) to the efforts by U.S. corporations and contractors to lock in favorable oil extraction agreements. Paradoxically, however, as the invasion has helped drive the price of oil up, the international thirst for oil did not seem as great five years ago.

Obviously, the first four reasons have greater appeal than the concern about oil. They have more positive sounding moral implications, either because they bear some similarity to self-defense or to the idealistic spread of freedom in the Middle East. While the anti-war slogan, "blood for oil," may thus point to a big part of the truth, there is another understated rationale for the war that has also come out more with time.

6. Starting before the 1998 open letter urging President Clinton to remove rather than simply "contain" Saddam Hussein, many of the "neoconservative" policymakers had been expressing ideas about how the United States should consolidate its power in the "unipolar," post-Cold War moment that opened up with the Soviet Union's implosion in 1989.<sup>35</sup> Influential beyond their numbers, though supported by various Washington-based "think tanks," neoconservative policymakers provided key direction for the Iraq war and remain among its key backers. Books on the group are many, and it is beyond this paper's scope to attempt a full assessment of their influence.<sup>36</sup> A flavor comes through from Charles Krauthammer: "The form of realism that I am arguing for—call it the new unilateralism—is clear in its determination to self-consciously and confidently deploy American power in pursuit of those global ends [of maintaining world peace and stability]" ... The new unilateralism argues explicitly and unashamedly for maintaining unipolarity, for sustaining America's unrivaled dominance for the foreseeable future. ... This in itself will require the aggressive and confident application of unipolar power rather than falling back, as we did in the 1990's, on paralyzing multilateralism. ... To impiously quote Benjamin Franklin: 'History has given you an empire, if you will keep it.'<sup>37</sup>

Gary Dorrien describes how some of the self-described neoimperialist elements had to be soft-pedaled in public, though they were vigorously debated by historians like Niall Ferguson (pro) and Paul Kennedy (con). America in this sense was an "empire in denial," though to the neoconservatives it was almost always "a benign hegemon." The (first) Gulf War showed the effectiveness of force but left unfinished business. William Kristol, Robert Kagan, and the Project for a New American Century, after Afghanistan, made "the case for extending the war to Iraq, Iran, and Hezbollah, usually in that order."<sup>38</sup> Other lists of potential targets were developed: the "axis of evil" that ended up in President Bush's 2002 State of the Union included Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. In military terms, this meant a steady build-up of forces, one that would be able to carry on more than one war at a time. And in terms of planning within the White House, this meant preparing for the Iraq war through much of 2002.

In the next subsection, on the management of the war, it is important to remember that the State Department began a "Future of Iraq Project" only one month after 9/11, convening seventeen working groups of varying sizes and producing a thirteen-volume study, now declassified and available on-line.<sup>39</sup> This project did warn against wholesale de-Baathification (that purged skilled middle managers throughout Iraqi society and helped feed the Sunni insurgency), the disbanding of the army, the possible need for a "five to ten year" occupation, and of the need for immediate security. Yet a sample from the "Democratic Principles" working group carries echoes of the neoconservatives' unrealistic realism (really a form of idealism):

Nothing in this report, however, requires of the UN or the U.S. to police or manage into existence the new and budding democratic institutions. That is a challenge that the people of Iraq must and will face on their own. A historic opportunity that is as important as anything that has happened in the Middle East since the fall of the Ottomans and the entry of British troops into Iraq in 1917 presents itself. Once the regime of Saddam Hussein is removed from power, Iraq can be remade out of the ashes. ...<sup>40</sup>

As it turned out, the Department of Defense's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance took over from the State Department would-be planners, and then the Coalition Provisional Authority took charge; an unnamed Defense official said the recommendations were "mostly ignored."<sup>41</sup>

Whatever the relative weight ascribed to the elements above, there is yet an additional matter that deserves to be considered in the debate over responsibility for the war. It concerns the role of the president in relationship to Congress. The Constitution places the decision to begin war in the hands of Congress. In the case of both the war in Vietnam and the war in Iraq, instead of actually declaring war Congress has passed resolutions delegating the authority to initiate military action to the president, to use at a time and under circumstances the executive branch deems strategically appropriate. This has been tacitly accepted as conforming to the spirit if not the letter of the Constitution, but leaving war to the discretion of the president may have the unintended consequence of adding to both presidential power and secrecy.

It would seem unwise that a decision to begin military action should rest in the hands of any single person, rather than be a matter on which the representatives of the people come to a common mind in face of a broadly acknowledged threat. That

may well have been the reason why the founding framers wrote the Constitution as they did, and a strict constructionist reading of the Constitution would hew to their judgment. Congress is the ongoing body most representative of the people. To vest the president with the power to determine when to initiate military action—which advocates of a strong executive role clearly desire—may militarize the role of the president from commander-in-chief responsible for policy to someone more involved in implementation. Is there a connection between the futility and unpopularity of both the Vietnam and Iraq wars and the fact both were undertaken on the authority of resolutions rather than specific declarations by a body representative of the people?

#### B. *Issues Stemming Out of the Conduct of the War*

The foregoing discussion focused on the question whether or not the decision to take military action against Iraq was morally warranted and who is best qualified to make such a decision. We must now consider questions as to whether or not that action has been carried out in an operationally productive or a morally responsible manner. These questions are not, of course, entirely insulated from the previous considerations. If the manner in which a war is carried out involves strategic blunders, logistical inadequacies, procedural malfeasance, and/or monetary opportunism, then Christians would be called to oppose a particular military venture even if the reasons for taking it were morally compelling.

Of course, we are never likely to know in advance whether or not the implementation of a military effort will be marred by bad judgments and operational short-sightedness. Therefore, the problems that are about to be discussed in this section were not immediately obvious when the action to go to war was taken or even when the Presbyterian General Assembly voted shortly thereafter to oppose doing so. The appearance of the following problems means that we must come back to the moral issue of the war in Iraq with new concerns.

1. The most striking and troubling aspect of the war's conduct has been the way in which alleged enemies have been treated. It has been generally (and questionably) portrayed as part of the struggle against terrorism. Because terrorism is often outside the traditional restraints of international behavior, it seems to many that those restraints need not be observed in dealing with it. Although there has been some difference of judgment about how great and how widespread the violations of traditional international standards have been, the use of interrogation techniques that cross the line into torture, the rendition of prisoners to other jurisdictions so they may be subject to more stringent and unacceptable treatment, and the detainment of individuals without access to legal counsel and redress have been far too prevalent to overlook. These practices are notoriously disturbing. They have been condemned by military and civilian leaders with impeccable standing as patriots as well as people with deep concerns for human rights.

The 217th General Assembly (2006), meeting in Birmingham, expressed its profound dismay at these developments.<sup>42</sup> This action was separate and distinguishable from the opposition to the military action in Iraq taken two years earlier. Opposition to the use of torture (or to any excessively stringent means of extracting information from prisoners that violates humane standards) is an extension of the commitment to human rights that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long espoused. Members of our church have been active in saying "No to Torture," and have held conferences, conducted demonstrations, given speeches, and used channels of civil protest to make their feelings known.

The attitude of the administration toward the criticism of torture has not been reassuring. The president flatly denies we employ torture but meanwhile his subordinates write memos (not always made public until ferreted out by investigative journalists) that allow for highly unusual and strenuous treatments that deeply offend the sensibilities of most Americans and other people in the world. The duplicity involved creates the same damage to credibility that attends the misuse of intelligence information in order to justify going to war and is perhaps far more serious. Sometimes with a straight face and often with unconvincing denials our leaders have given this nation a reputation for barbarism: Abu Graib, Guantanamo Bay, ghost detainees, waterboarding. ... In light of the judgment of most professional interrogators that torture is an unreliable way to extract information, this continuing tendency to embrace it is evidence of how deeply rooted in the thinking of many leaders is belief in the efficacy of violence. Although there is no explicit condemnation of the use of torture in the usual versions of just war teaching, it is a practice so far removed from the behavior expected of civilized communities that it would seem hardly necessary to state the prohibition. Yet now it needs to be emphasized. To flout the Geneva conventions, to make a false trade off between national security and civil liberties, and to imply all critics of doing so are somehow either weak or unpatriotic: these are alarming developments against which the most sober and vehement protest is needed.

2. Another feature in the conduct of the war against Iraq that needs to be scrutinized is the attempt to carry it out without a general mobilization of the country's human and economic resources. This means that the war has been carried out so as to raise the least resistance from the public at large and in a manner than allows the average citizen to avoid its impact or feel its costs. There has been no draft and no wartime tax. The Army, Marines, and Navy went to war; the country didn't.

Shrewd as this strategy may seem to have been as a way of avoiding the domestic turmoil that might result from conducting military operations that do not have widespread support it raises serious issues. In this first place this has placed inordinate obligations on the professional military, whether regulars or reserves. These have been ordered into combat on a repeated basis, tour after tour, often with only short respites between engagements. The price paid by their families, and in the

case of reservists by the disruption of their ongoing life plans, has been very high. This is more than a country should ask of them.

In the second place, pursuing warfare almost as if it is but one function of government—an ordinary and customary function rather than something extraordinary and unusual—undercuts the assumption that war should always be an extraordinary undertaking that requires special efforts by everyone in a society and that it should be ended as soon as a specific danger has been eliminated. While maintaining an appropriate defense is a continuous task, actual military operations shouldn't be. If the conduct of war is so construed as to seem to be normal, this can have a tendency to permanently militarize a society, however unintentionally.

3. Coupled with a strategy to conduct military operations without imposing sacrificial obligations on all members of society, the use of private contractors to supplement the military operations in Iraq raises serious moral concerns. These contractors have been employed for both quasi-combat roles—such as the protection of State Department staff—and in reconstruction efforts that can be carried out only under armed protection. Early on their conduct was specifically exempted from ordinary legal restraints so they do not necessarily feel the need to adhere to customary standards of behavior—particularly with regard to the use of force. Therefore, at times they have become an embarrassment and the government of Iraq has demanded that some of them be removed. According to some reports the number of persons serving in such roles may equal or exceed the number of properly designated and carefully disciplined members of the armed forces. Without being called such, some of these contractors are essentially mercenaries, often paid extraordinary sums for hazardous duty, but nevertheless sums that exceed their normal earning potential in other lines of work. Just war criteria have never specifically addressed the moral issues raised by such strategies. That may be simply because they are so egregious that moralists would not suppose they would even have to be explicitly condemned.

The use of contractors to rebuild the infrastructure destroyed by violence (whether from military action of our forces or by the violence of insurgents) poses another moral issue. Many of these contracts have been let without competitive bidding—presumably because of time constraints—and often to persons with close connections to those in high official positions in the government. This process has created a whole new industry that depends for its profit on the existence of warfare. In World War II, when it was recognized that many industrial firms stood to make unprecedented profits from supplying military-related needs, they were subject to an excess-profits tax that kept them from reaping inordinately high returns from providing war materials. There was a moral fairness in that which seems altogether lacking today. If firms are allowed to gain extraordinary remuneration from supplying military needs, this can create consequent pressures through lobbying and other means of exerting influence—to keep warfare going because it is financially attractive. Military operations involve too much tragedy, both to members of our own armed forces and to the soldiers and citizens of other nations, to be allowed to serve as the occasion of making particularly high private profit. That the moral issue incipient in the widespread use of contractors for quasi-military operations has not been raised more is a judgment on the extent to which as a nation we have become morally numb.

What has been noted is the lack of body armor and sufficiently armored vehicles, both for U.S. troops and also for Iraqis. At the same time, facilities like schools and police stations, touted as unheralded good effects of the occupation, have in too many cases been revealed to have been shoddily constructed by contractors of contractors in an environment rife with corruption. But especially if one is advocating “rebuilding” Iraq, how is the environment changed? “The Bush administration’s favors to oil-services company Halliburton alone were enormous, beginning with a no-bid federal contract for Iraqi reconstruction projects that was signed six months before the invasion. By the time that American troops entered Baghdad, Cheney’s former company held \$425 million in work orders for troop support projects ...; \$28 million for POW camps ...; \$50 million to fight oil well fires. ...”<sup>43</sup>

#### IV. The Problem of Assessing Consequences and Responsibility

Acknowledging the limits of our social location and the ideological warp that affects all judgments, especially about historical events near to us in time, we must thus look at the way decisions and developments in Iraq are presented.

In assessing the current situation in Iraq this problem was especially evident in the use of General David H. Petraeus as a congressional witness asked to assess the policy of the administration and particularly the success of the surge. His appearance prompted much scrutiny, even skepticism, and one group opposed to the continuing military operations in Iraq highlighted the issue with an advertisement impugning the general’s integrity by dubbing him “General Betray Us.” This tactic was regrettable and produced a backlash—doing something to discredit the group’s cause. But a respectful treatment of the problem needs to be offered. General Petraeus, as an active duty military officer charged to carry out a policy, should not have been placed into the position of being a policy advocate. Regardless of his personal integrity and well-regarded competence, to expect him to offer testimony in support of a policy was simply unfair—to him and to his listeners. To be sure, the technical expertise of military officers must be factored into the making of policy, but this may be jeopardized by increasing the politicization of military leadership. Thus it seems wrong to make the general a party to policy controversies.

The use of General Petraeus stands in an instructive contrast to the manner in which the Bush administration treated the recommendations of the Iraq Study group chaired by Messrs. Baker and Hamilton. That group, composed of distinguished persons with great experience in both military and political affairs, reached the conclusion that the war should be terminated—albeit with certain safeguards—because it had relatively little chance of achieving the alleged purposes for which it was undertaken. Group deliberations tend to mitigate the problem of ideological bias more than do individual judgments and, therefore, presumably deserve to be taken more seriously than individual points of view. The use of one person directly committed to taking orders from the administration as an advocate for its policies and the tacit dismissal of the suggestions offered by a thoughtful and distinguished group provide a worrisome contrast. It is a contrast between an image of authority and the actuality of careful deliberation.

The problem of knowing and presenting information affects not only government policymaking, but how information is presented in newspapers, magazines, and broadcasts. Respect for the sacrifices made by the military should not make hearers, or even “embedded” journalists, cease to be careful to distinguish reporting from editorializing. The media in general are not immune from partisanship; hence the need to be clear about patterns of ownership, interests served, and conflicts of interest.

The particular perspective of the church always seeks insight from sisters and brothers abroad, aware at the same time that links to U.S. Christians can bring danger. What then, can we learn from our church connections about this troublesome war and controversial policy? As Presbyterians, we are connected by history and ecumenical unity with a small and minority Christian community in Iraq. Leaders from Iraq tell us things about their experiences and even venture to come to our shores and share such experiences with us. In most cases, our correspondents and visitors have expressed great grief over the consequences of American policy and described the extent to which the present turmoil in that country is particularly hard on them. Their suffering and risk are part of their testimony, though they also have limited views of a complex reality. When Younan Shiba, ecumenical delegate to the 216th General Assembly (2004) in Richmond was asked by a commissioner whether or not Christians in Iraq were better off than before the coming of the Americans, his answer was a resounding “No!” That was a shock to some of his audience who were accustomed to hearing more favorable reports and efforts by the administration to put a positive spin on information.

Similarly, in November of 2007, a delegation from the United States visited Jordan and was told Jordan had taken in between 500,000 and a million Iraqis—greatly straining the resources of the country without much, if any, help from the United States. Speaking to the delegation, Wade Fawzy Gouissous, director of the Middle East Council of Churches, decried the impact of the war in Iraq on church life in the Middle East and noted that whereas America once sent doctors and teachers to the area it now sends soldiers. He said that the Bush administration “has made our job as Christians very difficult in a Muslim region. The U.S. government needs to revise its message as a Christian nation in the world because, rightly or wrongly, the U.S. represents Christianity in the world.”<sup>44</sup>

With rare exceptions, Christians do not regard the use of armed conflict as the most appropriate instrument of social transformation, even if some of them do admit that in some cases it may be a tragic necessity to be undertaken only as a last resort and primarily for defensive purposes. Christians are bound to have misgivings about what is happening in Iraq. To marshal evidence to show how and why this is the case is a form of social witness. For example, in September of 2007, Professor Dorrien provided a study paper for use along with the bulk of this paper written by Professor Long. His conclusions were blunt: “America’s debacle in Iraq has reached a crossroads. Iraqi society has been ripped part by ferocious insurgent and sectarian violence; the Maliki government is paralyzed by its sectarian bias; there is no military solution to the insurgency or the civil war; and by next spring the U.S. Army will be tapped out, necessitating reductions in troops levels.”

Dorrien goes on to discuss the Sunni/Shiite hostility, the presence of militia groups, the extent to which those Iraqis who can do so are fleeing the country, the move by the United States to arm Sunni groups within the triangle of Baghdad, Ramadi, and Tikrit to attack Al Qaeda, with a result that groups that hate each other are readied to create a seeming unending maelstrom. Dorrien’s analysis indicates how much American policy is deeply rooted in the acceptance of violence as the solution to the turmoil in Iraq and why it is bound to fail.<sup>45</sup>

It is hard to predict what the Sunni militias in Anbar province will do once they displace Al Qaeda of Mesopotamia and begin to focus on their Shiite opponents in both the militias (like the Badr Organization) and the military. Many remember that funding conservative Sunnis to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan did not prevent them from turning against the West.

## V. Reconciliation and Its Alternatives

As public opinion turns increasingly against the war, so opinion in churches that supported the war is also shifting in ways that are welcome to “mainline” churches whose voices were literally disregarded at the start of the war. A number of evangelicals, generally associated with the religious right and supportive of the president on other matters, are now expressing reservations about the wisdom of U.S. policy.<sup>46</sup> This may help open up the moral deliberation of our whole society, be-



cause the zeal with which the administration embraced its policy was reinforced by both Christians and Jews on the Religious Right.

There are various suggestions for dealing with the situation in Iraq, with multiple versions of each. Each possible alternative has potential strengths and unavoidable liabilities. It is frequently said, “There are no good solutions to the problem of Iraq,” but that must not be used as an excuse for not attempting to arrive at thoughtful judgments as to which of the imperfect suggestions is most deserving of support. Very little would ever happen in political life if people acted only when assured of making perfect decisions! Nor would political life be tolerable if people used the excuse that no good solutions are possible to continue to support obviously bad existing conditions. The overview of alternatives that follows is, like each of the options examined, imperfect and in need of refinement—but we believe it illustrates the kind of analysis that is needed and supports the substantially different strategy of multilateral reconciliation.

1. Continuing the reliance on military force: Those who believe that the use of superior American military power to create a different world is both feasible and legitimate are likely to suggest strategies that further that goal. With respect to Iraq, even if the mantra, “stay the course,” is not used for describing what is needed, we will see a commitment to the dominance of American power. These so-called “hawks” argue that we need to dedicate even greater resources to succeed militarily in Iraq than anything attempted up to now. Moreover, they are likely to urge the extension of this approach to other areas. For example, in the neoconservative camp, Norman Podhoretz would not only stay the course in Iraq but employ aerial bombing to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weaponry. He considers this as part of taking a firm stand and decisive action against all versions of Islamofascism—a term deliberately devised to conjure up analogies to the rise of dictatorships before World War II.<sup>47</sup> Podhoretz hurls charges of cowardice and anti-Americanism at opponents of current administration policy, and attacks even political realists as defeatists. He decries the media’s portrayal of the present situation as misguided and sees the world as sharply divided between good and evil forces.<sup>48</sup> This view is likely to sneer at all other proposals as failure of nerve, defeatism, or recipes for disaster. It sees little, in any, place for traditional diplomacy in settling disputes, and foresees decades of conflict that will eventually recast the political configuration of the world into American terms. We have suggested that the cost of this “rule by bayonet” is as high as its likelihood of success is low—but our goal is peace with justice.

This neoconservatism and the unilateralism it advocates is very radical. It is at odds with the social teaching of the Presbyterian and most other churches. Despite the crypto-idealism with which it seeks the eventual triumph of democracy, this is a view that depends almost entirely on a cynical trust in brute force. It is a reductionist rather than prudential form of political realism. It depends on instrumental reasoning that is opaque to any concerns about the misuse of power and disregards the value of moving as an international community toward peace achieved through cooperation and mutual endeavor. Although it does not seem possible to sustain democracy at home with such an imperial approach abroad, we acknowledge that this position is still influential.

2. Immediate withdrawal: The sharpest contrast to the proposal to extend and intensify the use of American power in Iraq—ratcheting up the pressure in order to succeed—is the proposal to withdraw our troops with the most feasible and logistical dispatch. This proposal is often dubbed “cut and run.” Those who suggest such action tend to see the turmoil in Iraq to be primarily the consequence of American presence and believe that removing that presence would prompt various factions in Iraq to face the necessity of arriving at a viable way to work together. They also believe that since America is the target of the insurgent activity that has arisen in Iraq, withdrawing the target would decrease the extent to which terrorists may use Iraq for staging future activities.

It is simply impossible to know what would happen if American forces were withdrawn from Iraq with the greatest possible dispatch. Those who advocate withdrawal may be correct but they have not convinced the majority of people this is the best course of action to take. Even though a majority of people are anxious to find some solution to the present situation, they sense that there would be something irresponsible in simply walking away from a situation that has developed in large measure from actions our nation has taken. If using military power preventively to overcome tyrannies and advance the cause of democracy is problematic, to begin such action and then abandon it if unsuccessful would seem to be even more so. That being said, without serious planning for orderly withdrawal, it could be that this will become the only possible option—however reminiscent of the U.S. exit from Vietnam, the French exit from Algeria, and even the British exit from India. If overhasty exit becomes the case, the trauma associated with having created turmoil and leaving people to suffer it unaided could be very grave.

3. Gradual departure—prolonged occupation: Most of the other proposals for dealing with the situation in Iraq stand somewhere between the poles just described. One of them, which employs the slogan “We’ll stand down as they stand up,” foresees phased withdrawal taking place as conditions improve. This proposal, which is probably closer to what the administration has in mind than simply staying put, might seem to be procedurally realistic. However, it still puts too much reliance on military means of establishing order and it is too often pursued as a unilateral strategy. Moreover, it fails to take into account the tremendous power of religious outlooks in the Muslim world—outlooks that sometimes conflict with one another.

This approach is not likely to be fruitful unless it has the candor to acknowledge the taking of military action was premature and begun without any apparent awareness of the sectarian problems in Iraq that might develop. To take action in the world, whether military or diplomatic in nature, without careful inquiry into the historical, political, and religious circumstances that will be encountered is naïve at best and culpable at worst. Without acknowledging that fact, any attempts to deal with a situation through incremental change are likely to be unsuccessful. As the resolution and this paper maintain, those who have gravely erred must repent before they can attain newness of life or undo the consequences of the actions they have taken.

Helping the Iraqis to “stand up” will have moral legitimacy only if accompanied by diplomatic and restorative efforts, including an effort to demilitarize the situation and a clear declaration of the intention to withdraw from Iraq in the foreseeable future. It is far from clear this is what is being contemplated by some of those who use this descriptive phrase. For instance, the Americans have been arming Sunni insurgents in order to attack terrorist insurgents. This has offended the Shi’ite dominated government and is likely to intensify the possibility of intergroup conflict rather than reduce it.<sup>49</sup> It represents a manipulation of armed force that is highly opportunistic and hardly leads to “standing up” in ways that will result in peaceful security in the region. Moreover, despite legislation disclaiming permanent bases, presidential signing statements indicate that the administration sees “enduring” bases, hardly convincing evidence of an intention to withdraw.

4. **Inter-religious Understanding and Joint Christian Muslim Peacemaking:** With regard to the religious factors, no strategy will ever be successful unless it is undertaken with a clear awareness of the ways in which religion functions in Mid-Eastern societies. Much more is needed than a bland disclaimer that Islam is not an evil religion. Ways must be found to reach out to those elements in Islam that are dedicated to dialogue and interaction with other groups—both within their own heritage and beyond—which are engaged in peacemaking. To utilize religious forces constructively in a situation like Iraq may be the greatest challenge of all—but the situation will never improve until ways are found to do this. The Pentagon is hardly the most qualified agency to undertake this task. “Standing down” must consist of much more than diminishing military force; it must include changing attitudes and building structures of peaceful existence.

We must respond thoughtfully, humbly, and with great appreciation for the initiative taken on October 11, 2007, by a group of 138 Muslim leaders to seek common ground between their tradition and the Christian West. The preparation of that document was coordinated by Jordan’s Royal Institute of Islamic Thought. It “acknowledges that some Muslims ‘relish conflict and destruction for their own sake or reckon that ultimately they stand to gain’ from violence ...” and urges the two traditions to work together to seek peace.<sup>50</sup> For any such interchange to be fruitful, it will be necessary for Christians to be as candid about the belligerency sometimes expressed in their name as the Muslims have been about the problems they face in their group. The great challenge is to have such dialogue affect the general public in ways that eventually have positive consequences in the political sphere.

5. **The Partition Option—Extreme De-centralization:** Still another suggestion for dealing with the turmoil in Iraq is to partition the country into three sections according to the ethnic/religious identity dominant in each. Some observers of the situation in Iraq believe this is an eventual necessity. The U.S. Senate in an early October 2007 action sponsored by Senators Biden and Brownback has by a vote of 75–33 given weight to this idea by declaring Iraq is broken beyond repair. This suggestion seems plausible on the surface and obviously attracts support. But other persons familiar with Iraq doubt this course of action is either possible or wise. Joshua Holland, a writer on the AlterNet staff, and Raed Jamar, consultant on Iraq to the American Friends Service Committee, have sharply criticized this proposal. They argue that most Iraqis still desire to live in mixed neighborhoods rather than in neat enclaves, that an attempt to divide the area would produce great hardship and also open the way to even more ethnic conflict than has already happened in the area.<sup>51</sup> While the Kurds have effectively adopted this strategy in much of “their” territory, to embrace this idea without the benefit of careful scrutiny and debate may be to grasp at straws. In the name decreasing violence it may lead to even more violence and the virtual removal of religious minorities—like Christians, Mandeans, and Yadhzis.

6. **Transition toward UN-linked internationalization:** This approach to dealing with the turmoil in Iraq would use the United Nations in an expanded way. The United Nations has already had a role in Iraq. On August 10, 2007, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1770 extending the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) for twelve months and de-linking UNAIM from the resolution authorizing the use of multinational force in Iraq (the current coalition arrangement—though the U.S. is virtually the only country now represented). The UN is authorized to facilitate efforts at dialogue and reconciliation between groups dealing with border issues, energy, and refugees, to help the Iraqi government provide essential services, and to aid in the implementation of humanitarian assistance. Providing such relief services is an enormous task, and may not be adequate but nevertheless it might affect the political situation even if not deliberately intending to do so.

Asking the United Nations to deal with the turmoil would possibly remove the United States from being viewed as the primary actor without merely withdrawing and dumping the entire task of overcoming the turmoil onto a fledgling government. This approach would not be easy to implement because it would require the admission that the largely (if not essentially total) unilateral action by the United States has been wrong and that our nation has done a number of things to weaken

the United Nations—though we advocate precisely that difficult repentance and truth-telling. Clearly, only by strengthening and bolstering the resources of the United Nations would such a policy be feasible. It would most likely also require the creation of an international peace force acceptable to the Iraqi people to replace the approximately 160,000 American and less than 7,000 British troops in the area. Some people think that the creation of such a force and its acceptance by groups in Iraq is possible; others do not. It would also involve launching a Global Marshall Plan to rebuild Iraq and other areas that have suffered—a plan that would be very costly. For awhile Iraq might even be a protectorate of the United Nations.

Much of what has happened in taking military action against Iraq has represented a repudiation of internationalism, replacing the role of the United Nations with a “coalition of the willing.” The latter, as a creation of the United States, was not a genuine international group. To take action under the pervasive influence of one or two countries is not to advance international responsibility. To move toward a much more decisive role for the United Nations would be neither easy nor cheap. Many pressures on the United Nations make this difficult. But to move in this direction would be consistent with policies long supported by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and ignored or neglected by the current American administration. This would be a major challenge to the United Nations itself, but to accept such a challenge might provide a significant opportunity for this international body to demonstrate its potential value for solving a very major matter.

To the extent that making policy involves moral considerations, it can be fruitful only if done by persons self-critical of their own limitations, and able to interact respectfully with others. Thus, while the resolution and study paper favor this last approach, we do not minimize its difficulties.

## VI. Resources for Further Christian Witness

There are several ways in which Christian faith can help to create the conditions that make it possible to act with wisdom and poise in dealing with public issues such as the turmoil in Iraq. As Christians we recognize that all forms of domination, whether deliberately intended or simply the consequences of being in a position of preeminence, create the potential for resentment and have the power to corrupt those who possess them. We, therefore, witness to a concept of responsible ser-vanthood that eschews the use of power as a club with which to make others conform to our conception of righteousness. On our best days we know that empire building—even if done with noble intentions and professions of compassion—is contrary to the proper role of nations within the global community. We reject the premise that the chief vocation of the strong is to compel others to conform to their will. We are committed to cooperative internationalism despite the difficulties it faces. We know that evil cannot be quashed once and for all by some heroic venture—a stance that tempts the strong rather than the weak, those who are morally earnest rather than those driven by doubts or even by cynicism. This basic conviction informs important stances for dealing with the troubling vicissitudes of history.

1. In the first place, mature faith helps to counter fear. Fear is a normal human experience but it often throws responses to threatening circumstances off balance and can be used to prompt people to act against perceived dangers with inordinate zeal and even catastrophic excess. Most resorts to violence are prompted by fear. In the case of preventive uses of military power, fear of what might happen overrides the assessment of what is actually taking place. Judicious caution is legitimate—nobody is compelled to be foolish—but to engage deliberately in the creation of fear, to imagine scenarios that are artificially dire, and to suggest that such threats can only be eliminated by the use of violence, is to set aside all of the wise cautions that make interactions between human being potentially creative. A major contribution of religion to social well-being is to enable people to deal with circumstances without being blinded by fear. By urging believers to “Be Not Afraid,” the Scripture helps to counter the pressures that so readily escalate into paranoid behavior. In this we echo the 2003 statement of the General Assembly responding to the instrumental use of “9/11,” understanding that any new instance of terrorism will tempt our society to seek immediate retaliation by military means, however focused or justified.

It is because people are afraid that they may, for example, accept the suspension of freedoms and invite governmental action that violates cherished liberties. It is because politicians are afraid of being soft on defense that they vote for belligerent actions they may well understand to be dangerous. The inability of the American political system to come to some decisive program for dealing with Iraq may well be a result of the fear that many politicians have of being charged with being soft-headed about dealing with troublemakers in the world. Those who purvey fear work the system to their advantage as long as such fears are present and as long as the public has acquired no source of confidence with which to offset them. We believe the Christian faith is that source.

2. A second contribution that faith can make to the creation of a culture that can deal with antagonism and hostility is to keep communication open—even when it simply reveals the persistence of disagreements and the depth of hostilities. Nothing is resolved by a posture of apartheid that deems all interchanges with enemies as weakness and all diplomatic communication as futile. The tensions of the world cannot be relieved by not engaging in conversations with those whose actions are regarded as contemptible. Refusal to talk is not an effective way of exercising power or influence but a form of petulant behavior. To be sure, such interchanges are never likely to be easy and are often bound to be futile. They often demand inordinate patience and great care not to make unjustified concessions to the viewpoint of the antagonists. As children we were advised to heed the ditty, “Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” In the current situation we

find great scorn heaped on those who engage certain parties verbally and are condemned for doing so. If we are able to talk only with our friends, what reward have we? Do not even the most malicious actors in the world do the same?

Genuine dialogue does not depend on scrubbing out differences. It does, however, require care not to use inflammatory words, like World War Three (or World War Four). It is hindered by language that categorizes groups or nations under the rubric “good” or “evil.” Policy differences must be fairly described and dangerous intentions identified, but with a care that avoids bombast and a courtesy that is a distinguishing quality of mature diplomacy. Neither is keeping conversations open aided by shifting treatments of other groups—utilizing them as allies in one set of circumstances and castigating them as enemies at another time. The record of the United States in dealing with the Arab world is replete with such vacillation, not least in the case of both Iraq and Iran. We must aim to treat others with long-range consistency that does not provoke them to regard our motives as opportunistic. Doublespeak is about as bad as not being willing to talk at all.

3. A third contribution of mature religious faith to international affairs is a willingness to acknowledge that our actions have been wrong—that we must repent and act differently. The examples that Donald Shriver identifies on the national level and that David Little and colleagues identify on a personal level, both give us encouragement. We think the truth is that we are citizens of a nation that has been guilty of miscalculation and of illegitimate self-confidence bordering on arrogance. We are all participants in tragic consequence even if from the beginning we have opposed what has happened. The means that the major need of the present is to acknowledge the wrong that has resulted from what we have done even though we have not intended those consequences to happen. We need to seek forgiveness, pursue attempts at reconciliation, and repudiate the central premises of a policy that has pursued domination under the cloak of idealistic intentions. Going through this process is essential to any newness of life, but however painful and difficult it may be for us, it will many times more so for the Iraqis—and we owe them more than we know. A logistical withdrawal of troops will be difficult and hazardous enough, but it may turn out more possible than the task of reconsidering America’s national destiny. Yet unless we begin to do the latter, we may not do the former seriously—in which case, there will be the stronger possibility that our nation will go down in history as another ignoble empire that reaps the consequences of pretending to be invincibly strong and morally unique.

#### Endnotes

1. John Tirman, “Counting Iraqi Casualties—and a Media Controversy,” posted on [www.johntirman.com](http://www.johntirman.com), February 14, 2008. Tirman is Executive Director and Principal Research Scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Center for International Studies. It is well known that the U.S. military and Provisional Authority determined not to count civilian deaths. Tirman’s article and departmental website, <http://mit.edu/humancostiraq>, review several ways of calculating the Iraqi death toll, from “Iraqi Body Count,” which uses English language reports and tends to smaller numbers (47,668 persons up to June 2006, for example), to a survey by “the private UK firm, Opinion Business Research (ORB), (which) found more than one million dead Iraqis” (by January 2008). He backs the work of the Johns Hopkins epidemiologists over criticisms of their work in the *National Journal*: “Their survey of 1,850 households resulted in a shocking number: 600,000 dead by violence in the first 40 months of the war. The survey was extensively peer reviewed and published in the British medical journal, *The Lancet*, in October 2006.” Prof. Tirman also critiques the 400,000 figure produced by the Iraqi Health Ministry (then controlled by Moktada al Sadr), which “shows a flat rate for killings throughout the war” (inconsistent with news reports). The World Health Organization, however, conducted a study of the period from March 2003 to June 2006, a similar period to the Hopkins study. *The New York Times* said that its study “indicated with a 95% degree of certainty that between 104,000 and 223,000 civilians had died” (“W.H.O. says Iraq Civilian Death Toll Higher Than Cited,” by Lawrence K. Altman and Richard A. Ooppel Jr., January 10, 2008, p. A12.). As for the U.S. decision not to count Iraqi casualties, “Soon after the formal end of the short 2003 invasion, the surviving Iraqi Ministry of Health proposed investigating the number of Iraqi dead, but on December 10, 2003, the American authority in Baghdad ordered a stop to the investigation...” in *Honest Patriots: Loving a Country Enough to Remember its Misdeeds* by Donald W. Shriver, Jr. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), p. 270.
2. This point is drawn from the General Assembly’s 2004 Resolution, “Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future,” p. 15 in the printed booklet (also available to download at [www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp))
3. Gary Dorrien, “Crossroads in Iraq: Politics, Strategic Options, Ethics,” September, 2007, p. 5.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 11. See also Edward L. Long Jr. *Facing Terrorism: Responding as Christians* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2004), pp. 81–85. Long says, “A system of criminal justice aims to curtail and manage wrongdoing, holding it to tolerable limits. Military action often aims at eliminating wrongdoers, wiping them off the face of the earth rather than limiting or changing their behavior. Law enforcement does not seek “victories” in the same sense as does warfare,” p. 84.
5. The concept of “full spectrum dominance” comes from the Department of Defense’s mid-2002 publication, Joint Vision 2020 ([www.dtic.mil/jointvision](http://www.dtic.mil/jointvision)), “the creation of a force that is dominant across the full spectrum of military operations—persuasive in peace, decisive in war, preeminent in any form of conflict.” The General Assembly’s 2003 Resolution, “Iraq and Beyond,” includes an assessment of this significant change in U.S. military doctrine, with its determination, “given the global nature of our interests and obligations, [that] the United States must maintain its overseas presence forces and the ability to project power worldwide...” (cited in the 2003 Resolution, reprinted as Appendix A in booklet, “Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future,” op.cit. at note 10.)
6. Human Rights Watch describes waterboarding as “a form of mock drowning that causes severe physical suffering in the form of reflexive choking, gagging, and the feeling of suffocation.” Human Rights Watch, “Human Rights Watch’s Submission to the Commit-

tee Against Torture in Response to United States Positions Expressed During the Committee's Consideration of the Second Periodic Report of the United States on May 5 and May 8, 2006," [http://hrw.org/us/hrw\\_response\\_051706.pdf](http://hrw.org/us/hrw_response_051706.pdf).

7. The judgment that the war was "unwise, immoral, and illegal," is contained in "Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future" (2004; available from Presbyterian Distribution Services: PDS #68-600-05-002, or downloadable at [www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp)). The study of "Violence, Religion, and Terrorism" also resulted in a resolution of that name in 2004 (PDS #70-270-04-025), building on papers published in *Church & Society* magazine by a working group of Presbyterian ethicists, pastors, and two military officers (back issues of the magazine remain available on the Web: [www.pcusa.org/church&society](http://www.pcusa.org/church&society)).
8. The International Republican Institute (<http://www.iri.org/mena/iraq/2006-07-19-IraqPoll.asp>) provides poll data since the invasion showing a commitment to national unity. Their July 19, 2006, data shows "seventy-eight percent strongly disagree or disagree with the idea of segregating Iraq according to religious or ethnic sects." The Global Policy Institute presents a survey of poll results on the occupation from 2003–2007, with some interpretation as to events affecting fluctuations in public opinion (<http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/iraq/pollindex.htm>). The Iraq Study Group Report, p. 29, gives perhaps the most graphic poll number, that 61% of respondents supported attacks on U.S. forces, though the desire for restored Iraqi sovereignty is not always linked to a national unity government.
9. Gary Dorrien, "After the Surge," *The Christian Century*, Oct. 30, 2007, p. 9. Dorrien summarizes the position of the major Democratic candidates following the Baker-Hamilton model: "the U.S. to pull back, leaving air, ground and naval deployments in Kuwait, Bahrain and other bases in the Middle East while maintaining some residual U.S. forces in Iraq to fight terrorism and stabilize the Kurdish region." Dorrien himself favors a return to the main 1980's policy of relying on naval power and bases outside the Middle East.
10. "US War Costs in Iraq Up: Report" by *Reuters*, edited by Howard Goller and Doina Chiacu, January 23, 2008. "War funding, which averaged about \$93 billion a year from 2003 through 2005, rose to \$120 billion in 2006 and \$171 billion in 2007 and President George W. Bush has asked for \$193 billion in 2008, the nonpartisan (Congressional Budget) office wrote." As of February 2008, the article states that there are "around 158,000 U.S. troops in Iraq and 27,000 in Afghanistan."
11. "Proposed Military Spending Is Highest Since WWII," by Thom Shanker, *The New York Times*, February 4, 2008. For the current accounts deficit number, Chalmers Johnson cites the CIA's "World Factbook" in his *TomDispatch* web-article, "Going Bankrupt: Why the Debt Crisis is Now the Greatest Threat to the American Republic," January 22, 2008, p. 2. The role of oil in the recession is emphasized in "Barreling into Recession: How Oil Burst the American Bubble," by Michael T. Klare, also in *TomDispatch.com*, February 1, 2008: "In 1998, the United States paid approximately \$45 billion for its imported oil; in 2007, that bill is likely to have reached \$400 billion or more. That constitutes the single largest contribution to America's balance-of-payments deficit and a substantial transfer of wealth from the U.S. economy to those of oil-producing nations. This, in turn, helped weaken the value of the dollar in relation to key foreign currencies, especially the euro and the Japanese yen, boosting the cost of other imported foreign goods and so threatening to fuel inflation at home."
12. In the research databank, *False Pretenses*, Charles Lewis and Mark Reading-Smith of the Center for Public Integrity ([www.publicintegrity.org/warcard](http://www.publicintegrity.org/warcard)) summarize, "President George Bush and seven of his administration's top officials, including Vice President Dick Cheney, National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, made at least 935 false statements in the two years following September 11, 2001, about the national security threat posed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq ... . On at least 532 separate occasions ... [these figures] stated unequivocally that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (or was trying to produce or obtain them), links to Al Qaeda, or both."
13. Donald W. Shriver, Jr. *An Ethic For Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (Oxford: Oxford and New York, 1995). This is not solely a phenomenon in societies influenced by Christianity (as in South Africa, Northern Ireland, Central Europe)—although progress in East Timor, Cambodia, and Nepal, for example, has proven fragile
14. Michael Schwartz, "Iraq's Tidal Wave of Misery," (*TomDispatch*—online, Feb 10, 2008), p. 3; "The United States, which accepted about 20,000 Iraqi refugees during Saddam Hussein's years, admitted 463 additional ones between the start of the war and mid-2007." This contrasts starkly with the numbers being accepted by Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Iran, and even Lebanon.
15. The Iraq Study Group report is available on the website of the U.S. Institute for Peace which was among the bodies assisting the ten member bipartisan committee. It may be noted that Presbyterian Representative Frank Wolf (R-Virginia) was the legislator who obtained funds for this valuable study. The web-address is: [www.usip.org/isdg/iraq\\_study\\_group\\_report/report/1206/index.html](http://www.usip.org/isdg/iraq_study_group_report/report/1206/index.html).
16. This quote is from Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of State in the Clinton Administration, quoted in Mark Lewis Taylor, *Religion, Politics, and the Christian Right* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), p. 64, though the 2004 General Assembly resolution, *Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future*, notes her early opposition to the war, in "Bridges, Bombs, or Bluster?," *Foreign Affairs* (September 2003), pp. 3–19.
17. Gary Dorrien, *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (New York: Routledge, 2004) p. 17 (also quoted, Mark Lewis Taylor, *ibid.*, p. 65)
18. Richard Clarke, *Against All Enemies* (New York: Free Press, 2004), p. 32, tells of how on September 12, 2001, when Al Qaeda has clearly been identified, the president is already asking, "See if Saddam did this. See if he's linked in any way. ..."
19. Ulrich Mauser, *The Gospel of Peace: A Scriptural Message for Today's World* (Louisville: Westminster/JohnKnox, 1992), pp. 55, 57, 48.

20. The Peacemaking Program has produced a series of booklets on the place of peace in many books of the Bible.
21. Walter Wink, *When the Powers Fall* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), p. 4.
22. Donald W. Shriver, Jr. *An Ethic For Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) p. 49ff.
23. Ibid. p. 113.
24. Donald W. Shriver, Jr. *Honest Patriots: Loving a Country Enough to Remember Its Misdeeds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 281.
25. An insightful psychological look at the lures and shadows of greatness is Robert L. Moore's *Facing the Dragon: Confronting Personal and Spiritual Grandiosity* (Wilmette, IL: Chiron, 2003). Agreeing with Scott Peck on the links between evil and narcissism and lack of empathy, he does not see these limited to a relative few, "people of the lie," but rather—through cultural projections—as temptations for whole societies.
26. Robert Woodward, *State of Denial* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006).
27. *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, edited by David Little. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 434.
28. Ibid. pp. 442–44.
29. The background paper was printed, together with the text of the comment by the World Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council, by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy with a study guide developed by Edward LeRoy Long Jr., as Presbyterian Distribution Services Item #68-600-03-005.
30. The background paper and the policy recommendations of the 2004 General Assembly were printed by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, also with a study guide by Edward LeRoy Long, Jr. (Assisted by Victor Makari) as Presbyterian Distribution Service Item #68-600-05-002.
31. An example of such criticism is the book *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* by Thomas E. Ricks. (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006).
32. For a thoughtful and balanced discussion of this and other arguments for and against taking military action in Iraq see *Faith and Force: A Christian Debate About War* by David L. Clough and Brian Stiltner. (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2007), 188–204.
33. "Just Peacemaking and the Call for International Intervention for Humanitarian Rescue" (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, pp. 75, 445–61). This PC(USA) resolution includes the "just peace" steps that build proactively on "just war" thinking. The case for intervention out of a "responsibility to protect," in the UN's language, reflects experiences of the failure to protect Tutsis in Rwanda and the relative success of even late intervention in Bosnia and Kosovo. Concern for genocide in "failed states" continues to offer an argument for armed intervention, but this has not come to pass in the Sudan.
34. Greenspan's exact wording is as follows: "I am saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows: the Iraq war is largely about oil," *The Age of Turbulence: Adventures in a New World*, New York: The Penguin Press, 2007, 463. A more detailed analysis of the role that American interest in Iraqi oil is the driving force behind the war can be found in an article by Jim Holt entitled "It's the Oil." *London Review of Books*. Volume 29, Number 20 (October 8, 3007). According to Holt, the administration actually hopes that the war will continue as a means of legitimizing continued American presence in the region in order to safeguard the availability of the oil and the economic interests of American corporations in obtaining it.
35. "If the Bush administration's agenda meshes almost completely with that of the Israeli right's, it's partly because the same thinkers laid the foundations for both governments' policies. ... some of the Bush Administration's current ideas about military preemption and regime change in Iraq echo a 1996 policy paper called "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," authored by a group including Richard Perle, currently a Pentagon advisor, and Douglas Feith, now undersecretary of policy at the US Department of Defense. Written for the incoming government of Benjamin Netanyahu, the paper argues that Israel should scrap the peace process, work to subdue its neighbors by force, and overthrow the Iraqi government in order to reshape the region's dynamics." Michelle Goldberg, "Why American Jewish Groups Support War with Iraq," *Salon.com*, September 14, 2002.
36. Among the books most targeted on the Iraq war are: Jim Mann *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (NY: Penguin, 2004), Gary Dorrien *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (NY: Routledge, 2004) and most recently Jacob Heilbrunn *They Knew They Were Right: The Rise of the Neoconservatives* (NY: Random House/Doubleday, 2008). Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol were influential thinkers for the group; Paul Wolfowitz among the most influential; Michael Lind and Francis Fukuyama now number among the ex-neocon's criticizing the group for its overreach.
37. Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," *National Interest* 70 (Winter 2002/3), pages 14, 17, quoted in Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, p. 113.

38. Dorrien, *ibid.*, p. 157.
39. The National Security Archive located at George Washington University is at Website: <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB198/index.htm>.
40. Democratic Principles Working Group, "Final Report on the Transition to Democracy in Iraq," November 2002, p. 5 (of 98). See National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 198, introduced by Farrah Hassen, posted September 1, 2006.
41. Eric Schmitt and Joel Brinkley, "Pre-invasion Plans Sidelined," *The New York Times*, October 13, 2003.
42. The action of the General Assembly has been printed in a pamphlet made available by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy with the title *Resolution Against Torture: Human Rights in a Time of Terrorism; A Call for a Commission of Inquiry*, 2006.
43. Dorrien, *op. cit.* p. 250, drawing on investigative reports.
44. "Going It Too Much Alone," by Jerry Van Marter, Presbyterian News Service (November 6, 2007) [www.pcusa.org/pnews/2007/07724.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pnews/2007/07724.htm)
45. Dorrien, "Crossroads in Iraq: Politics, Strategic Options, Ethics." September 2007 unpublished paper.
46. See "The Evangelical Crackup." by David D. Kirkpatrick. *The New York Times Magazine*. October 28, 2007, 38–45. 60, 64, and 66.
47. Professor Paul Krugman has argued there is no such thing as Islamofascism. See "Fearing Fear Itself," *The New York Times* October 29, 2007, A23.
48. Norman Podhoretz, *World War IV: The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism*. (New York: Doubleday, 2007).
49. See "After the Surge: Getting Out of Iraq," by Gary Dorrien in *The Christian Century*. (October 30, 2007), 8–9.
50. See "Muslims Point to Common Ground," *The Christian Century*, Volume 124, Number 23 (November 13, 2007), 12f. The letter can be viewed at [www.acommonword.com](http://www.acommonword.com) and a response from people at Yale Divinity School at [www.yale.edu/faith/about-commonword.htm](http://www.yale.edu/faith/about-commonword.htm).
51. The internet entry by Holland and Jarrar is dated October 15, 2007, and found on AlterNet.org. Support for the idea of dividing Iraq is found in an article by Peter W. Galbraith, former United States ambassador to Croatia in an OpEd piece in *The New York Times* October 23, 2007.

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#### COGA AND GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-24

*Comment on Item 11-24—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

In order to be good stewards of our resources, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council urge the 218th General Assembly (2008) not to make exceptions to Standing Rule H.2.a.(12).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council remind commissioners and advisory delegates of Standing Rule H.2.a.(12), which reads: "(12) As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly's proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk."

This rule was added to *Manual of the General Assembly* several years ago to help control expenses and maximize distribution of documents.

If the General Assembly decides to make an exception to the rule, it will be necessary for the assembly to suspend the Standing Rules, which requires a 2/3 affirmative vote of the total enrollment of commissioners.

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## Item 11-25

**[The assembly answered Item 11-25 by the action taken on Item 11-06. See pp. 45, 47.]**

*On Becoming Non-Partisan Advocates for Peace—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to

1. Be non-partisan as we seek peace and freedom from violence for those living in both Israel and Palestine.
2. Ask the General Assembly governing bodies, entities, networks, staff, members, and congregations to refrain from the self-righteous comfort of taking sides and rather to become non-partisan advocates for peace.

***Rationale***

At its 416th Stated Meeting on May 3, 2008, the Presbytery of Santa Barbara voted to overture the 218th General Assembly (2008) to be non-partisan as we seek peace and freedom from violence for those living in both Israel and Palestine. We ask PC(USA), our GA governing bodies, entities, networks, staff, members, and congregations to refrain from the self-righteous comfort of taking sides and rather to become non-partisan advocates for peace. As such, we ask that our church not be caught up in the propaganda whirlwind, which invites us to take sides in the conflict between the Palestinians and their supporters and Israel and their supporters. Instead, let us identify with the voices for peace in the midst of horrific acts of violence and terror.

As followers of Jesus we will condemn all acts of violence against innocent civilians. We will not take a stand that tries to over-simplify a very complex situation into a convenient but false view of reality where we accuse one side as clearly at fault and the other side as clearly the victim.

This overture invites a humble confession of our false starts in the past and invites us to regain our historic role of reconciliation. We wish that the PC(USA) might be involved in solving the problems in the Middle East yet recognize our past statements have hurt our friends rather than helped. We also realize our role in the region needs to maintain a humble disposition. We will try to be part of the voice for dialog and peace and refrain from giving false support to one side over and against the other.

We ask that the United States government take on an unflagging role as a peacemaker, bringing together the opposing parties in forums where reasonable people can reach reasonable compromises about highly complex issues.

We will support any and all others who seek a solution that creates two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and justice. We ask that all who cling to narrow self-interests avoid statements or actions that stand in the way of such a solution.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-25**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-25—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 11-25 be answered by the recommendations taken on Item 11-06.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-25**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-25—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)'s advice and counsel.

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## **Item 11-26**

**[The assembly answered Item 11-26 by the action taken on Item 11-01. See pp. 45, 47.]**

*On Middle East Peacemaking—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to answer all overtures concerning Israel and Palestine with the following statement:

“The Arab/Israeli conflict presents an unprecedented level of complexity amid constantly changing political conditions in the region. Thus, the best course of action for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is to defer from positions or policy statements that appear to favor either side in the conflict.



“Therefore, we call upon the leadership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to use our limited resources and influence to direct our specific involvement as peacemakers to:

- “● Offer our prayers to God for the success of all peaceful efforts;
- “● Support peacemakers who encourage tolerance and reconciliation;
- “● Advocate for the process of establishing a step-by-step, negotiated, two-state Israel/Palestine solution;
- “● Condemn all acts of terrorism and unwarranted violence;
- “● Provide humanitarian assistance to innocent victims of the conflict.

“As we witness for peace in this manner, we will defer from taking actions or making statements that align the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with unilateral support for any of the specific parties involved in the struggle.

“The General Assembly also appeals to the General Assembly Council to ensure that employees, entities, affiliated organizations, and networks abide by these directives.

“We pledge our constant prayers and conscientious support for the overall welfare of all the peoples in the region, and indeed for the world.”

### ***Rationale***

The 217th General Assembly overwhelmingly approved an approach to Middle East peacemaking that singled out neither the Palestinian Authority nor Israel for condemnation.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) resolution as approved rejected a process of divestment that singled out the State of Israel. Instead, it encouraged affirmative investment and engagement as the most constructive means to achieve “positive outcomes” when peace and stability has returned to the region.

The goal, as approved, would result in the “creation of a socially, economically, geographically, and politically viable and secure Palestinian state, alongside an equally viable and secure Israeli state, both of which have a right to exist.”

The resolution delegated to the church’s Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) committee the task of some aspects of implementing this policy, in full recognition of the complexities and the difficulties confronting peacemakers on both sides in a rapidly evolving situation in the region.

Since then, Hamas and Hizbollah continue to advocate the destruction of Israel and continue to reject a two-state solution advocated by, among others, the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and Fatah. The prospect for an early peace in the region greatly deteriorated with tragic consequences in both Israel and Lebanon following the initiation of military combat operations by Hizbollah from its base in Lebanon, the continuation of military operations of Hamas and Fatah in Gaza against each other, and military operations of Hamas against the Israelis, the latter primarily in the form of thousands of increasingly destructive rocket attacks on Israeli cities and towns.

The cumulative effect has been one of an escalation of violence in the region, further isolation of the Gaza Strip by Israel, military retaliation strikes by Israel against terrorists, an increase of internecine Palestinian fighting, and the creation of a humanitarian and health crisis for the residents of the region. There has also been a concomitant increase in risk of life for Palestinian Christians residing in the Gaza Strip.

Any statement of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policy or action by its entities that has the appearance of unilateral alignment/and or support with either side in the Arab/Israeli conflict will be counterproductive toward achieving the positive peacemaking results we all desire. It may instead, set back the efforts of those committed to working for lasting peace in the region.

Therefore, by this action, the 218th General Assembly (2008) seeks to provide continued encouragement for all peacemakers and persons of good will who desire and support constructive efforts to achieve a negotiated peace.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-26**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-26—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 11-26 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” This is the commonly phrased moral law that is grounded for Christians in Jesus’ summary of the commandments: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

The basic truth in Palestine and Israel is that this is not happening.

The basic concern with this overture is that it seeks to split this moral perception of how a relatively powerless people is being treated from the means by which the church can help move the situation towards fairness. The overture calls for balance in a situation that is not balanced, and it seeks to silence the church’s witness for peace and the justice necessary to achieve it. At the same time, General Assemblies have since 1948 been in favor of achieving a fair balance between Palestinians and Israelis, consistently supporting the two-state solution, opposing terrorism in all its forms (using the FBI definition, in fact), and applying human rights standards in an even-handed (even Presbyterian) manner.

Like all real-life struggles for justice, the situation has complexity, which the church has never addressed in a “unilateral” manner. There are two main stories of victimization, Jewish and Arab or Israeli and Palestinian, narratives that in the minds of extremists make legitimate the taking of land, lives, and livelihoods. (The team writing this memorandum includes the son of a holocaust survivor: we understand something of the force of that experience on the U.S. Jewish community in particular as it influences support for Israel’s policies). Part of the complexity is that violence does not always involve overt force: in 1997, for example, the assembly called “for greater attention to the underlying causes of tension, conflict, and violence in the Middle East, realizing that violence will not cease until the causes are appropriately addressed.”

There are multiple political perspectives, from the support for settlements and “transfer” of all Arabs out of a claimed biblical Israel, to the denial of Israel’s right to exist and the use of terror against its occupying power. Both sides demonize each other, but this is not an adequate reason not to seek reconciliation. The overture never mentions the fundamental fact of the occupation of Palestine, nor the constant expansion of settlements and economic strangulation, nor even the “suppressive” measures of the Israeli government that contribute to further the de-Christianization of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth (example: “Christians Harassed in Jerusalem during Orthodox Easter Celebrations,” April 26, 2008, [www.miftah.org](http://www.miftah.org)).

The Presbyterian church’s long and steadfast role as a witness for justice and peace is, for some, illegitimate due to the history of Christian anti-Semitism in which we as Christians are implicated. However, it has long been the position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that the commitment “never again to participate in, to contribute to, or [insofar as we are able] to allow the persecution or denigration of Jews or the belittling of Judaism” (1987) must be joined with the commitment to seek peace and pursue it. Neither of these two commitments is optional, nor can we sacrifice one for the other. This is not one-sidedness.

The last two hundred plus years of our Reformed history, in fact, give us many examples of resisting authoritarian power and at the same time standing up for toleration and religious liberty. The fundamental role of the churches in supporting the concept of universal human rights has also been backed by prophetic action, such as investment pressure for the peaceful end of apartheid in South Africa that involved criticism of policies of Reformed people much like the majority of U.S. Presbyterians. The overture seems to posit that one cannot criticize the policies of a given nation and at the same time fully support its peace and security.

For those in Israel intent on annexing more land unilaterally, and for extremist Palestinians and their allies, it has been good to have no peace process and no unity among the Palestinians. In the eyes of most of the international community, the United States has consistently confused its support for Israel with uncritical silence on policies that have made the possibility of a “two-state” solution virtually inconceivable—especially since the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. The “land for peace” option supported by the PC(USA) and many others is fundamentally jeopardized by the virtually completed “security barrier”—fragmenting the West Bank, protecting “Israeli-only” access roads and settlements, and built predominantly on Palestinian land, according to the borders of 1967. To call for a two-state solution without addressing the real obstacles to it is hypocrisy. In this regard, the debate within Israel itself is far more vigorous and multisided than it is in the United States, and the word, “apartheid,” is increasingly used to denote the reduced situation and prospects of the Palestinians.

The overture mischaracterizes a number of positions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and interprets other developments in highly questionable ways:

1. The statement of the 217th General Assembly (2006) did not reverse the position of the 216th General Assembly (2004); it clarified the full process of corporate engagement through which any divestment recommendation would be made. That 2006 assembly clearly stated that the church would not profit from corporate activities that do not serve the cause of peace. As for “singling out” Israel, the church has since 1972 addressed corporate responsibility issues in many countries and has divested of its holdings in a variety of human rights violators, nuclear arms manufacturers, and others over the years.

2. The 217th Assembly (2006) also received a report on the very limited economic prospects of the occupied territories, given literal obstacles to regular communication, transportation, electricity, water, etc. Still, the assembly voted to pursue “positive investment opportunities,” but not at the cost of denying real obstacles, widely recognized by European nations and international bodies seeking to build up the Palestinian economy.

3. The overture suggests that Hezbollah’s capture of a Jewish soldier was cause of Israel’s invasion and massive bombing of Lebanon, disregarding previous border incursions and the large numbers of Arab combatants and noncombatants held by Israel (for which Hezbollah allegedly sought to bargain). As in that case, it can be argued that it has been the abandonment of a real peace process that has led to the increased radicalization of Muslim groups. In the case of Hamas, Israel initially helped fund the group to offset the influence of Fatah. The group’s rhetoric (and splinter group behavior) deteriorated when the results of a free election were suppressed.

4. The steady witness of the Presbyterian and other churches has not been “counterproductive,” as it has both encouraged Palestinian moderates, especially in the Christian community, and has helped prompt renewed U.S. efforts for peace, however limited they may be, despite regular allegations of anti-Semitism by defenders of Israel’s occupation.

In evaluating these real differences in approach, commissioners to the General Assembly need to weigh the church’s need for its own voice on matters of justice, the witness of Christians in the Middle East, and the heritage of Jesus and the prophets which invites us, in the Spirit, “to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace” (*The Book of Confessions*, Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, Lines 70–71).

#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-26

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-26—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s advice and counsel.

## Item 11-27

[The assembly approved Item 11-27. See pp. 46, 47.]

**The General Assembly Council, upon recommendation from Mission Responsibility Through Investment, recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:**

**1. Receive the report of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) of its engagement with corporations involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank.**

**2. Call upon all corporations doing business in the region to confine their business activity solely to peaceful pursuits, and refrain from allowing their products or services to support or facilitate violent acts by Israelis or Palestinians against innocent civilians, construction and maintenance of settlements or Israeli-only roads in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, and construction of the Separation Barrier as it extends beyond the 1967 “Green Line” into Palestinian territories.**

**3. Urge all corporations doing business in the region to seek proactive ways to promote respect for human rights, peacebuilding, and equal employment opportunity.**

**4. Direct the General Assembly Council, through its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to continue the corporate engagement process, and report on its status with any recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

#### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *Alternate Resolution to 2006 Referral: Item 11-01. On Rescinding and Modifying Certain Actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Recommendations 2.a.–d. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Ensure That Its Strategies for Engaging Corporations with Regard to Israeli and Palestinian Territories—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 44, 943–54).*

## 1. 2004–2006

The 216th General Assembly (2004) instructed the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to begin a process of “phased, selective divestment” related to corporations doing business in Israel. Following the assembly, MRTI initiated a process consistent with General Assembly policy.

First, MRTI reviewed the 196th General Assembly (1984) policy on the use of divestment as a strategy for socially responsible investing, and the criteria for consideration of any recommendation for divestment. Also reviewed was the 197th General Assembly (1985) policy describing the process of phased, selective divestment. At its first meeting following the General Assembly, MRTI identified General Assembly policy positions on the obstacles to a just peace in Israel and Palestine. These included the ongoing violence perpetrated by Israelis and Palestinians against innocent people; the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and United Nations resolutions; the presence of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories; the construction of the separation barrier; and the need for a viable Palestinian economy to enhance the possibility of a successful Palestinian state. These General Assembly policies were incorporated into criteria to focus the research into corporations that may be profiting from involvement in any of the obstacles to a just peace. The MRTI also adopted a clear statement on the process of progressive engagement of any such companies that affirmed the cycle of dialogue, shareholder resolutions and proxy voting, and more dialogue before MRTI would be in any position to consider recommending possible divestment action to the General Assembly. This was reported to the GAC, and publicized widely.

The MRTI conducted research to determine which corporations, if any, met the criteria. In August 2005, MRTI reviewed the research to select from among the identified companies an initial group to engage. These were Caterpillar, Citigroup, ITT Industries, Motorola, and United Technologies. The MRTI also maintained contact with various ecumenical partners that were committed to engaging companies on the issue of their involvement in Israel and Palestine. These included the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the United Church of Christ.

The MRTI began the process of contacting and meeting with the five companies (meetings were held with Citigroup, ITT Industries, and Motorola), communication with the presbyteries where the companies are headquartered, and continued interpretation of the process to the church and the general public. The MRTI also worked ecumenically on strategies for proactive investment in Israel and Palestine by churches and corporations in consultation with James Wolfensohn, special envoy for the Quartet (the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Russia), whose charge included helping to rebuild the Palestinian economy.

## 2. 2006–2008

The 217th General Assembly (2006) responded to numerous overtures regarding corporate engagement on Israel-Palestine issues, and approved a statement urging that “... financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal.”

The MRTI continued its work with considerable time devoted to fostering ecumenical cooperation on engagement. To that end, an informal table called the Ecumenical Action Group: Investment for a Just Peace in Israel /Palestine was created. As a result, corporate dialogues were expanded to include participation by representatives of other Protestant denominations and Roman Catholic religious orders. These have included the Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church (General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Pensions and Benefits, and the New England Conference), United Church of Canada, Mercy Asset Management, Ursuline Sisters, and the Dominican Sisters. Also participating has been KAIROS Canada and the World Council of Churches.

Additional dialogues were held with Motorola and Citigroup. These dialogues were the first step of the corporate engagement mandated by the 216th and 217th General Assemblies (2004) and (2006). Corporate engagement is a deliberate process outlined in the basic policies of the General Assembly on socially responsible investment, dating to 1971, 1976, and 1984. Elements of this process include research, correspondence, dialogue, proxy voting, and the possible filing of shareholder resolutions. Only after all other options fail to achieve the desired results, the Committee on MRTI, through the General Assembly Council, may recommend to the General Assembly divestment from particular corporations.

The Citigroup dialogue was highly productive. The primary concern with Citigroup involved an allegation that Citigroup had provided insufficient controls to prevent the transfer of funds to Palestinian organizations supporting violence. In conversation with MRTI representatives, the company provided assurance that the bank had robust controls in place to monitor and prevent questionable money transfers. There have been no subsequent reports alleging inappropriate funds transfers by Citigroup. In addition, Citigroup expressed willingness to assist the religious community with exploring how to increase micro-

credit lending in the region to address the lack of adequate investment opportunities in Palestine. Therefore, in June 2007, MRTI removed Citigroup from its focus list of companies for corporate engagement.

The Motorola dialogue focused on human rights standards and conventions, and explored the company's involvement in the occupation through sales of military communications products, fuses for bombs, and security technology for Jewish Israeli settlements on the West Bank. Motorola denied that any of its activities implicate it in the Israeli occupation, or raise human rights concerns. A shareholder resolution addressing broader human rights issues was filed by several religious shareholders in the fall of 2007. In response, Motorola requested a follow-up meeting, which occurred in January 2008. The company indicated its intent to review and amend its policies but would not specify the particular changes under consideration and made clear that its human rights policies would not be applied to their business relationships with foreign governments. This lack of clarity and limited scope led the religious investors, including MRTI representatives, to decline to withdraw their resolution, which will go before the annual shareholders meeting on May 5. Although the conversation with Motorola has been less productive than hoped, religious shareholders agree that more in-depth dialogue on corporate social responsibility and human rights may potentially create a more productive arena for analyzing the Israel-Palestine conflict and other world situations and ought to be continued.

Shareholder resolutions for consideration at the 2008 annual meetings were also filed with Caterpillar, ITT Industries, and United Technologies. The resolution at Caterpillar requests the board of directors to review the company's human rights policies and amend them where applicable. Caterpillar also received a resolution on foreign military sales from a coalition of shareholders including several Roman Catholic religious orders and Jewish Voice for Peace. The resolutions at ITT Industries requested a report on foreign military sales, and at United Technologies requested that ethical criteria be applied to foreign military contracts. The United Technologies resolution was supported by 23.8 percent of shareholders voting at the annual meeting; a very strong showing, considering resolutions of this nature submitted to major defense contractors routinely receive 3 to 5 percent of the shareholder vote. The vote was sufficient to qualify the resolution for automatic reconsideration at next year's annual meeting, should the shareholders decide to resubmit it.

In the case of Caterpillar, there were two developments. First, several religious shareholders sent a letter to the company requesting a meeting to discuss non-military sales of company products in Israel and Palestine. The company replied by letter on December 13, 2007. While not responding to the request for a meeting, the company said for the first time that "As an industry leader, Caterpillar advocates responsible use of our equipment. We expect our customers to use the products they purchase from us in environmentally responsible ways and consistent with human rights and requirements of international humanitarian law."

Secondly, the resolution submitted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Dominican Sisters produced a dialogue on January 30, 2008. Caterpillar representatives reviewed their Worldwide Code of Business Conduct. Discussion focused on the human rights dimensions of the code, what it included or omitted, and who beyond the company's employees it affected or not. Religious shareholders, including MRTI representatives, raised the need to address the end-use of company products, particularly in countries with human rights challenges. After further discussions, the shareholders agreed to withdraw the resolution from consideration at the 2008 annual meeting in exchange for an ecumenical dialogue with the company on human rights and the end use of Caterpillar products. It is hoped that this dialogue will begin in May or June 2008.

On March 4, 2008, religious shareholders, including MRTI representatives, met with ITT Industries. The company wanted to discuss its new corporate ethics program rather than foreign military sales. The position of ITT is that it will not disclose its foreign military sales claiming that all the information is publicly available. ITT had challenged the resolution at the Securities and Exchange Commission. The SEC's decision upholding the shareholders was announced later in March. The resolution will be considered at the ITT Industries annual meeting on May 13, 2008.

The Episcopal Church is the primary shareholder proponent with United Technologies, and had a brief phone conversation with company officials.

The process of corporate engagement will be evaluated by the ecumenical participants, and strategic adjustments made for the next round of engagement.

In sum, momentum has increased, participation has broadened, and issues with companies are clearer and sharper. Although major changes in corporate policies and practices remain elusive to date, MRTI believes that the engagement process is on track and ought to be continued and completed in accordance with regular General Assembly policies governing our engagement process and in response to the 2004 and 2006 mandates. The committee is not prepared to make a final recommendation at this time regarding the corporations described above but intends to pursue its assignment with all due diligence and persistence.

## Item 11-28

[The assembly approved Item 11-28 with amendment. See pp. 45, 47.]

~~[The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the General Assembly Council (GAC), working with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP),] [The 218th General Assembly (2008) requests that the Moderators of the 218th, 217th, and 216th General Assemblies (2008), (2006), and (2004) select a nine-member committee from a broad spectrum of viewpoints from PC(USA) members] to prepare a comprehensive study, with recommendations, that is focused on Israel/Palestine within the complex context of the Middle East. The study should include an evaluation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s mission and relationships, including an assessment of the future for the Christian presence and witness in the Middle East, an overview of the complex interactions among religions, cultures, and peoples that characterize the region, an analysis of U.S. policies that impact the area, and steps to be taken with our partners in the Middle East and the United States to foster justice, improve interfaith relations, and nurture the building of peace toward a secure and viable future for all, and report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010)].~~

Original Financial Implications- (2008): \$7,340; (2009): \$29,960; (2010): \$5,240 [Per Capita-GAC]  
Committee Action Financial Implications- (2008): \$8,455; (2009): \$27,925; (2010): \$5,380 [Per Capita-OGA]

### *Rationale*

Given that the last “comprehensive study” on the Middle East was approved (with background) by the 209th General Assembly (1997), *Resolution on the Middle East*, (*Minutes*, 1997, Part I, pp. 560–584) and, in order to discern what all of this means for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in our time, a process of study, reflection, and action is imperative.

## Item 11-29

[The assembly answered Item 11-29 by the action taken on Item 11-27. See pp. 46, 47.]

[This item was moved from Item 01-02, II. Final Responses to Referrals, F. General Assembly Council, 32. *Alternate Resolution to 2006 Referral: Item 11-01. On Rescinding and Modifying Certain Actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Recommendations 2.a.–d. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Ensure That Its Strategies for Engaging Corporations with Regard to Israeli and Palestinian Territories—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 44, 943–54).*]

*Response:* That this referral be answered by Item 11-27.

## Item 11-30

[The assembly approved Item 11-30 with amendment. See pp. 45, 47.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Mobilizing Presbyterians for a Significant Response to the Global Food Crisis.*

That the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) urgently take the following steps in response to the global food crisis:

1. Launch a general appeal to all Presbyterians to donate to a special fund set up by the General Assembly Council to enable the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide better support to and accompaniment of our overseas partners trying to step up their response to the global food crisis.
2. Step up and speed up mission personnel deployment, in response to overseas partners who so request, to advise and accompany them as to the kinds of actions that could be undertaken to alleviate hunger in the short term without creating new dependencies and/or compromising their countries' sovereignty and economy.

3. Invite all Presbyterians to join in the church-wide practice of spiritual disciplines, such as monthly fasting for repentance and reflection, which may lead to meaningful coordinated actions to accompany those who are poor and hungry around the world.

4. Produce relevant resources, using all available communications means, to raise the awareness of Presbyterians about the current food crisis, including the dangers for the U.S. government, the European Union, and other international entities who want to use the current food crisis as an opportunity to offer more direct food aid exports and genetically modified (GMO) seeds to affected countries, instead of offering economic and financial assistance to enable them to increase the production and marketing of their own traditional food commodities.

5. ~~[Call on the Stated Clerk and on the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council (GAC) to contact the U.S. government, the World Bank, and other relevant institutions, to call for the immediate cancellation of the foreign debt of the countries most affected by the food crisis.]~~ [Call on the Stated Clerk and on appropriate entities of the General Assembly Council (GAC) to contact the U.S. government, the World Bank, and other relevant institutions, to call for the continued pursuit of debt relief as well as an immediate increase in their financial assistance for food aid and agricultural development in developing countries.]

### *Rationale*

While people are talking about the food crisis, thousands are dying every day. Millions of children and elderly people in Africa, Asia, and South America are suffering from malnutrition and some in Haiti are literally eating dirt to try and survive. High-food-price-related riots and violence are breaking out in numerous cities around the world, compounding the sufferings of poor people.

The spread and depth of the crisis are such that important resources will need to be mobilized in order to bring a relevant response to this situation in any given country. Hopefully, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be able to provide leadership to all Presbyterians who want to help in this crisis. However, it appears that the Presbyterian Hunger Program and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program, as well as other ministry offices able and willing to act, are generally hampered by the lack of human and financial resources necessary for a significant level of response.

At the same time, PC(USA) partners around the world and some local government institutions are at a loss on how to organize an adequate response to local situations of hunger. Our partners are asking for help and we need to bring assistance in a way that will not hurt their countries further, now and in the future.

Already some aspects of this situation are the result of bad policies implemented by local governments under advisement by international institutions. It is well documented that fragile economies like Haiti, Lesotho, and others who were forced to lower tariffs could not resist the onslaught of cheap foreign commodity imports in the 1980s, 1990s, and in the first half of the 2000s. The result was the collapse of their local food production. It is important that the food production capacity of local economies be restored, as well as the food security capability of the most affected countries.

Furthermore, it is also well documented that the famous structural adjustment policies imposed on third world countries by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—with the approval of the U.S. government—have worsened conditions of poverty. Large-scale migrations from rural areas to the slums of cities have increased the pressure on local social service delivery systems, particularly schools and hospitals. The result has been the resurgence of diseases like tuberculosis and malaria, the deepening of the HIV-AIDS epidemic, and a sweeping loss of hope for the poorest people. With inflation and devaluation of local currencies, citizens see their purchasing power melt away, while prices of basic food necessities are climbing beyond their reach.

It is quite disconcerting that in this disastrous context, some major U.S. seed and agro-chemical industries are pushing GMO seeds to many affected countries in Africa and Latin America. In El Salvador, in conjunction with USAID, the local government is actively promoting a farmer's assistance program offering genetically modified seeds and technical support for their use. Yet, the impact of such GMOs on the local environment and on local indigenous seeds is not known and may be very detrimental. We know already that, if not well-managed, even well-intended agricultural experiments may lead to further food catastrophes in future years.

Jesus' disciples had to confront the inadequacy of their attitudes as well as their resources when, in Mark 6, the hour was late, the crowd large, and stomachs were empty. They insisted that Jesus send the hungry thousands away. Jesus replied with a command, "You, yourselves, give them something to eat." As disciples in this time, we are called to answer the cries of the hungry with compassion and justice.

"We who belong to the church of our Lord Jesus now pledge to become the conscious instruments of Christ's judging and renewing action, praying that God's kingdom may come, God's will may be done that all the earth's children may be

given daily bread” (Common Affirmation of Global Hunger, approved as amended by the 203rd General Assembly (1991), Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); *Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p.727).

Elder Nancy Lister-Settle, Presbytery of Des Moines  
Elder Karen Wilson, Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-30

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-30—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-30 requests the 218th General Assembly (2008) to respond to the global food crisis by setting up a special fund to support the efforts of overseas partners to address the crisis; speed up the deployment of mission personnel to work on hunger alleviation activities; invite Presbyterians to join church-wide spiritual disciplines such as monthly fasting; to raise the awareness of Presbyterians concerning the current food crisis; and call on the U.S. government, the World Bank, and similar institutions to cancel the foreign debts of countries most affected by the crisis.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-30 be approved with the following amendments:

1. Amend Recommendation 1. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Launch a general appeal to all Presbyterians to donate to a special fund set up by the General Assembly Council to enable ~~the~~ [existing] Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [programs] to provide better support to ~~[and accompaniment of]~~ our overseas partners, [most immediately in North Korea, in their efforts] ~~[trying]~~ to step up their response to the global food crises.”

2. Retain Recommendation 2. as it is.

3. Retain Recommendation 3. as it is.

4. Amend Recommendation 4. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“4. ~~[Produce relevant resources]~~ [U]sing all available communication means, to raise the awareness of Presbyterians about the current food crisis, including ~~[the dangers for the U.S. government, the European Union, and other international entities who want to use the current food crisis as an opportunity to offer more direct food aid exports and genetically modified (GMO) seeds to affected countries, instead of offering economic and financial assistance to enable them to increase the production and marketing of their own traditional food commodities.]~~ [its origins in the rising costs of petroleum products used in agricultural production and distribution, global warming which increases heat stress on crops and shifts rainfall patterns in agricultural areas, bio-fuel incentives that have reduced the food surpluses available for food aid, worldwide speculation in petroleum and commodity markets, the deficit-driven declining value of the U.S. dollar which reduces the amount of food aid that can be provided with currently budgeted programs, as well as associated justice issues such as efforts by the U.S. and other governments to link the provision of genetically modified (GMO) seeds to their direct food aid.]”

5. Amend Recommendation 5. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“5. Call on the Stated Clerk and on ~~[the Executive Director]~~ [appropriate entities] of the General Assembly Council (GAC) to contact the U.S. government, the World Bank, and other relevant institutions, to call for ~~[the immediate cancellation of the foreign debt of the countries most affected by the food crisis]~~ [the continued pursuit of debt relief as well as an immediate increase in their financial assistance for food aid and agricultural development in developing countries].”

#### *Rationale*

General Assembly concern with world hunger is longstanding, as indicated particularly by policy statements approved in 1954, 1956, 1969, 1974, 1976, 1977, 1979, 1985, 1995, 2001, 2002, and 2006. Its 1979 statement defined five priorities for the church’s response to “Global Hunger”—direct food relief, development assistance, public policy, education, and responsible lifestyle. In 1981 the Presbyterian Hunger Program was established to provide a vehicle for the church to address hunger issues at home and abroad.



As a result of the Jubilee 2000 campaign, supported by PC(USA), substantial progress has been achieved in the cancellation of the foreign debts of the poorest developing countries, especially in Africa. For example, the World Bank's Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative has so far led to the cancellation of \$96 billion in debts in forty-one countries. Bilateral debts and those owed to regional development banks have been similarly reduced. But at the same time, international financial support for agricultural development in Africa declined by 63 percent between 1992 and 2002 and has rebounded only slightly since then. Consequently, a call for an increase in donor funding for agricultural development, food processing, and storage capacities would seem an appropriate complement to the ongoing process of debt cancellation.

Item 09-10 on *The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming* is also relevant to this proposed resolution.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-30

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-30—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)*

Item 11-30 urges the 218th General Assembly (2004) to mobilize Presbyterians for a significant response to the global food crises.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises referring Item 11-30 to the General Assembly Council (GAC).

#### *Rationale*

The cost of basic food necessities has doubled and tripled in recent months, creating economic desperation for many families around the world. This has become a life and death situation, as parents, once barely (but still able) to provide sufficient food for their children are no longer able to provide the basic daily bread needed for sustenance. Referring this item to the GAC is the best way to ensure that effective action takes place to address this crucial need in our world.

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### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-30

*Comment on Item 11-30—From the General Assembly Council (GAC).*

The GAC welcomes Item 11-30 because it addresses a critical need identified by our church's global partners.

It is supportive of the 2009–2010 GAC Mission Work Plan, which states:

The General Assembly Council will join God in transforming societies to reflect God's intention for a just, peaceful, and compassionate world by:

- ❖ Equipping and supporting congregations, mission initiators, global partners, and mission personnel as they bear witness to God's intentions;
- ❖ Working to alleviate injustice, poverty, hunger, and the effects of illness, disaster and suffering;

The GAC will "step up and speed up mission personnel deployment" through short-term (up to six months) mission volunteers, that can be managed using existing budgets and would have no financial implications.

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## Item 11-31

[The assembly approved Item 11-31. See pp. 45, 47.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. Concerning Human Rights Violations in the Philippines.*

**In light of the numerous and well-documented human rights violations committed against church leaders and civil society groups in the Philippines since 2001, and to affirm new measures of solidarity with Philippine church partners, the 218th General Assembly (2008) does the following:**

**1. Calls upon the members and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to become more aware of the suffering and injustice—including murder, abduction, torture, and other gross human rights—endured by the leaders**

of churches and other civil society groups at the hands of elements of the Philippine military, and to pray faithfully for the safety, wisdom, and courage of the leadership of the Philippine churches and other civil society groups as they face state violence and oppression.

2. Calls upon the appropriate agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to encourage presbytery partnerships, joint projects, and immersion experiences in the Philippines, in cooperation with the United Church of Christ of the Philippines, providing copies of this resolution (coordinated with the resolution on human rights in Colombia and others), and requesting participants to provide updates upon returning regarding the violence and oppression aimed at church leaders and other civil society groups.

3. Directs the appropriate agencies within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to advocate that the United States Congress and the Department of State reduce U.S. funding of the Philippine military and to condition all future aid on: (a) concrete signs that the human rights of unarmed citizens and groups within civil society are respected by all levels of government, including the Philippine military; and (b) evidence that those elements of the Philippine military that are implicated in murder, abduction, torture, and other gross human rights violations are held accountable by the government.

4. Calls upon the members and churches of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to help provide, through special offerings, for the material needs of church leaders and their families who suffer because of murder, abduction, torture, and other gross human rights violations, channeling such aid through the appropriate offices of the United Church of Christ of the Philippines.

5. Directs the appropriate agencies within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to advocate with committees and delegates of the United Nations to review, continually and diligently, through the proper agencies of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, the improvement or decline of respect for human rights by all branches of the Philippine government.

6. Directs the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to write the president of the Philippines about these concerns, urging her to use her authority as commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Philippines to stop the abuse of human rights by elements of the Philippine military and encouraging her to give greater energy and resources to ensure that all branches of the government honor human rights in every sector of Philippine society.

#### *Rationale*

“If one member suffers, all suffer together with it ...” (1 Cor. 12:26).

“American Christians, who live under the mandates of the gospel and who share the rights and privileges of constitutional government and the freedoms attached thereto, must speak out to defend human rights everywhere, particularly when their taxes and their leaders support oppression and tyranny...” (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1974, Part I, p. 595).

Most Americans believe that human rights abuses in the Philippines ended with the fall of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship in 1986. But, unfortunately, human rights violations have reemerged as a major issue under the presidency of Gloria Arroyo, who took office in 2001. Since that time, hundreds of cases of extrajudicial murder, abduction, illegal detention, and torture have been documented. The victims are members of civil society, such as labor leaders, land reform activists, journalists, judges, lawyers, and church workers, including pastors. Credible evidence compiled by both Filipino and international human rights organizations indicates that elements within the Philippine military are responsible for these abuses. The United Nations special investigator for extra-judicial killings and the United States Department of State have also expressed concern over these abuses and have attributed most of them to the Philippine military.

Different organizations list different numbers for the victims of extrajudicial murder, according to the varying levels of evidence required by reporting agencies to meet the definition of extrajudicial murder. Some list, for instance, 300 murder victims, and others as many as 900. No matter which number is correct, the evidence points to an overwhelming abuse of human rights by the Philippine military.

Among the victims of human rights abuses by the Philippine military since 2001, more than thirty church workers and pastors have been killed, abducted, or tortured. The majority of these are from the United Church of Christ of the Philippines (UCCP), but also included are members of the United Methodist Church and the Independent Philippine Church.

The UCCP has had a long-standing partnership with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Through the Young Adult Volunteers Program and other mission arrangements, the UCCP has helped to train leaders in our denomination. Individual

churches and presbyteries have had partnerships with churches and conferences in the UCCP, which have further developed and strengthened the connection between our two churches.

The killing and abduction of pastors and church workers in the Philippines has had a profound impact on churches and individuals in our denomination who have known and worked with many of the victims through the years. The 217th General Assembly (2006) responded with a resolution expressing its deep concern for the UCCP and its leaders who have been killed, calling upon the Philippine government to “bring to justice the killers of the pastors, other church workers, and other Filipinos similarly executed and/or tortured by military forces.”

Presbyterian churches in the Presbytery of Sacramento were responsible for bringing the general secretary of the UCCP to the United States in 2007 to speak out against these human rights abuses and to testify before a hearing on human rights abuses in the Philippines conducted by California Senator Barbara Boxer, chair of the Senate Foreign Relations East Asia and Pacific Islands Concerns Committee.

Earlier this year, the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship’s Philippine Solidarity Project sponsored a nine-person delegation to the Philippines, February 19–27, which was hosted by the UCCP. Asked how Presbyterians in the U.S. could be most helpful to the UCCP, five suggestions were offered:

- Tell the stories of the victims of empire to churches and communities in the U.S.
- Pray and stand strongly with the UCCP as we exercise our prophetic ministry in the Philippines.
- Lobby your country and government for fairer and more humane policies toward the Philippines.
- Join in the movement toward global peace and against U.S. interventionist wars.
- Organize regular and frequent immersion trips to the Philippines for pastors and leaders of the PC(USA).

This resolution presented to the 218th General Assembly (2008) builds on a long history of standing with our brothers and sisters in the Philippines who are being oppressed and abused.

The government of the United States gives millions of dollars every year to the Philippine military. This has increased dramatically since 2001. In 2000, the Philippines was the 47th largest recipient of U.S. military aid in the world; in 2006 it was the 11th largest. While some of this money is meant to help the Philippine military fight terrorism and insurgency, it is more often used to silence those elements in society who call for land reform, labor rights, and fair treatment of indigenous peoples. Pastors and church workers often become victims when they stand up on behalf of church members who are being oppressed.

Last year members of church and human rights groups in the U.S.A. attempted to limit the money going to the Philippine military until certain human rights conditions were met. The efforts were partially successful in getting, for the first time in Philippine-American relations, human rights conditions placed on appropriations to the Philippine military. It was, however, attached to only a small part of the appropriated money.

This year the U.S. State Department has reduced the amount of money it is asking for the Philippine military and has channeled some of the funding into human rights training for military personnel. This is a welcome change. However, the murders and abductions continue, and the Philippine military refuses to cooperate with investigations into human rights violations by those in authority over the military. It is imperative that the Philippine government know that the American people do not support the killing of unarmed civilians and that the United States Congress restrict all military aid given to the Philippines under the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill with the human rights conditions that were only applied to part of the money in last year’s bill.

Meanwhile, church leaders in the UCCP and other churches are under siege. While maintaining a faithful witness to biblical principles of justice for the poor and the oppressed, the churches in the Philippines are faced with threats of violence. As long-time partners of the UCCP and its ministry, we are called to stand with them in solidarity through our faithful prayers, financial support, political advocacy, and continual encouragement.

The Reverend Richard Williams, Presbytery of Chicago

The Reverend Roger Powers, Presbytery of Baltimore

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-31**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-31—From the Advisory on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-31 be approved.

*Rationale*

Over the last thirty years, the Presbyterian church has consistently expressed concern and compassion for our sisters and brothers in the Philippines. The General Assembly has expressed support for the Philippine people and their quest for democracy and human rights (*Resolution on the United States and Its Asia-Pacific Relations, Minutes, 1994, Part I, p. 310*).

The 217th General Assembly (2006) expressed its concerns for the denial of human rights in the Philippines and insisted on the maintenance of the rule of law and an open civil society in the Philippines (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 17, 585*). The proposed report on Human Rights in Colombia, Item 11-18, includes a section reflective of this concern.

**Item 11-32**

[The assembly approved Item 11-32. See pp. 45, 47.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Emergency Food Aid to North Korea.*

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) resolve that the General Assembly Council, through its appropriate offices, be instructed to provide immediate food assistance to alleviate the sufferings of the people in North Korea.**

*Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Korean peninsula more than a century ago through our missionaries, and our partner churches in South Korea have grown and continue to grow.

There existed a strong Christian community in North Korea, once known as “Jerusalem of the East” because of its strength in witness and service; since the division of Korea into North and South and the tragic war in Korea in the 1950s, the Christian presence in North Korea had been drastically decreased.

There has been a reemergence of Christian communities in North Korea since the 1980s, and there are two Protestant churches and one Catholic church in the capital city of North Korea, Pyongyang. Our church has assisted them in many ways, particularly when they faced severe food crisis in 2007 because of damaging floods.

During the harvest season of 2007, a devastating rainstorm and floods again destroyed 75 percent of the crops, farmlands, and houses in Hwanghae Province of North Korea, a major farm sector in the nation, and created a severe food crisis. The news of death by starvation in North Korea is increasing and there will be at least three months before the harvest season in North Korea.

Many people of North Korea now live on eating water-like porridge once or twice a day, and many of them cannot even go to work nor to school. Unless they are helped right away, many more face death by starvation. They need immediate food assistance.

The Reverend Sung Man Kim, Presbytery of Cascades  
The Reverend Timothy Chon, Presbytery of Lake Michigan

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-32**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-32 —From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 11-32 be answered by the action taken on Item 11-30.

## Item 11-33

[The assembly approved Item 11-33 with amendment. See pp. 46, 47.]

*Commissioners Resolution. On Peace with Iran.*

[~~That the 218th General Assembly (2008) resolves:~~]

**[The 218th General Assembly (2008) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following resolution to the president of the United States of America and the United States Congress:]**

1. That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) supports a peaceful, diplomatic means to resolve the tensions developing as a result of Iran's pursuit of its nuclear program, between the United States and Iran.
2. That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls for direct, unconditional negotiations between the United States and Iran with the goal of finding and implementing a peaceful resolution.
3. [~~That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is opposed to military action against Iran.~~] **[That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is opposed to preemptive military action by any nation against Iran.]**
4. That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls for a renewed effort at all levels—people-to-people, interfaith groups, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and government—to help the United States and Iran eliminate the tensions that have existed between our two nations and to unite the American and Iranian people in a common effort to solve the problems of poverty, illness, and climate change.

### *Rationale*

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has called upon us to be peacemakers: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Mt. 5:9).

The people of the United States and Iran want to live in peace. They do not want war. A visit last year by a citizen peace delegation showed that there is much goodwill on the part of Iranians toward Americans.

A war between the United States and Iran could quickly spin out of control, causing the deaths of millions.

United States or Israeli military action against Iran would likely cause increased terrorism throughout the world, including here in the United States.

War with Iran could result in a partial or complete shutdown in the flow of Persian Gulf oil, causing a massive increase in the price of fuel and a major economic crisis.

With a weakened economy and consumer and investor confidence already shaken by a series of financial crises, another major shock such as war with Iran and the shutdown of Persian Gulf oil could be the straw that breaks the camel's back and sends the world into a prolonged recession or even a depression. Millions of people would suffer greatly if this comes to pass.

A successful peaceful, diplomatic solution to the U.S.-Iran issues would give humanity renewed hope that lasting peace and justice are indeed possible and plant the seeds of future peacemaking endeavors all over the world.

The Reverend Renato Alvarez—Presbytery of Grand Canyon  
The Reverend Eric Ledermann—Presbytery of Western New York

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-33

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-33—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) generally supports Item 11-33. The ACSWP advises that Recommendation 3. be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“3. That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is opposed to [preemptive] military action [by any nation] against Iran.”

The ACSWP offers the following points of rationale in addition to those given in the commissioners' resolution:

1. This commissioners' resolution is in harmony with the peacemaking principles of the PC(USA) as recognized by the 210th General Assembly (1998), including "the promotion and preferential use of nonviolent means for conflict resolution and age," "the strengthening of international cooperation through the United Nations, including its peacemaking and peace-keeping roles;" "the use of unilateral peacemaking initiatives to reduce risks of conflict;" and the importance of self-examination and repentance in international relations as steps in the healing of conflict and the promotion of reconciliation (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, pp.75, 457).

2. We are convinced that collateral damage and loss of innocent civilian life would be severe and unjustified in any such attack, let alone the possible deaths of "millions" of civilians should the war escalate or become nuclear.

3. Such a war would likely cause Iran to strike against U.S. interests in the Middle East and especially in Iraq, thereby indefinitely delaying the withdrawal of our troops from the latter country.

4. Such a war could lead to moves by Iran through its surrogates Hamas and Hezbollah that would greatly complicate the process of finding a basis for peace in Israel-Palestine.

5. We are not confident, judging from past experience, that the U.S.A. has given sufficient thought and planning to the consequences of such an attack in Iran itself and across the Middle East.

6. Such an attack, and military actions following upon it, would further overstretch our armed forces. In short, we may not have the military means to open up or sustain another "front."

It is our prayer that the present U.S. administration will not embark on a further military adventure likely to make peacemaking even more difficult for the next administration than it already will be.

## Item 12-01

[The assembly approved Item 12-01. See p. 12.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the *Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations* from the Task Force to Develop a Strategy for African American Church Growth Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and do the following:

1. Approve the report on “Developing an African American Church Growth Strategy” within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. Encourage the General Assembly Council (GAC), specifically the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry areas, to appoint a task force to monitor the progress of African American Church Growth and report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).
3. Encourage the General Assembly Council to partner with the National Black Presbyterian Caucus, presbyteries, and synods so that the strategies outlined below for African American Church Growth become a reality in the church at large. These strategies were approved at the 39th Annual Convention of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC), held in Society Hill, Philadelphia, on July 11–15, 2007.
4. Encourage presbyteries and synods to help the church to reach the goals established by the 1998 Racial Ethnic Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy.

### *Rationale*

The above recommendations are in response to the 2004 Referral: *Item 10-01. Recommendation 8. To Direct Racial Ethnic Ministries to Assist the National Presbyterian Black Caucus to Develop a Strategy for Church Growth For African American Congregations—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 56, 683).*

In light of the General Assembly mandate to increase racial ethnic membership in the PC(USA) by 20 percent by the year 2010,<sup>1</sup> the National Black Presbyterian Caucus recognizes the critical necessity to take the lead in developing a strategy for African American evangelism and church growth.

We recognize that a disservice is done when focusing on models from the “mega-church” movement and trying to make those models adaptable and relevant for smaller churches. We also recognize that models which are successful for Anglo American congregations and for non-African American congregations of color are not applicable to the African American church context.

For these reasons, it is crucial that NBPC, working in concert with the Office of Black Congregational Enhancement (BCE), take the initiative and provide the impetus for transformation and growth of Black Presbyterian congregations.

Despite the issuance of the aforementioned mandate, we have not realized significant net growth in African American membership in the PC(USA).

African Americans have been a strong witness in the Presbyterian church for more than 200 years, which is testimony to our strength, resolve, and commitment in spite of seemingly insurmountable odds.

African Americans have given voice and shape to the denominational structure. As it strives to do what God requires of us: “to do justice, [love mercy], and to walk humbly with [our] God” (Mic. 6:8), and in light of our Christian witness, the task force, on behalf of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus, invites the 218th General Assembly (2008) to partner with us as we continue to celebrate our faith journey within our denomination.

Following are strategies that we encourage presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly offices to implement in order to ensure that the 1998 Racial Ethnic Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy achieve the objective of increasing African American membership in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.:

1. *New Church Development and Transformation: Create a congregational-based educational resource and initiative.*

Rationale: This initiative will be designed to assist African American congregations to develop alternative ways of initiating and promoting New Church Developments and Transformation churches. This will include churches in transition in their respective presbyteries, with an emphasis on restoring what we perceive as a lost connection with our communities.

2. *Leadership Development*

- a. *Create an evangelism and missional church institute for African American pastors and congregational members to train and equip pastors for a missional approach to church growth.*
- b. *Develop a uniform standard for training commissioned lay pastors.*
- c. *Sponsor annual discernment events with prospective African American youth and young adult inquirers.*
- d. *Establish teaching congregations.*

Rationale: Missional theology maintains that the mission of the church is the mission of God. God is a missionary God Who sent Jesus Who sends us to carry out the missio dei. The evangelism and missional church institute will serve as a repository of talent and knowledge for pastors and congregational leaders. The institute will provide workshops, lectures, and seminars in the missional approach to church growth.

The future of African American Presbyterians is dependent upon a deep reserve of talented and gifted pastors, clergy, and lay profession. Discernment events will allow young and old alike to explore the various ministry tracks in which they may serve the church and fulfill God's call in their lives.

An emersion experience in a nurturing environment would provide pastors a fresh and challenging transformational setting for both a spiritual and vocational encounter. It is a sabbatical event and an opportunity to fine-tune old skills and learn new insights for personal, community, and ecclesiastical transformation. Such a sabbatical experience will allow pastors to retool, refresh, and provide creative time to envision innovative strategies.

3. *Youth and Young Adults*

- a. *Provide leadership development institutes.*
- b. *Host annual gatherings to help shape their Christian witness within the Body of Christ, i.e., education and discipleship training.*
- c. *To develop youth and young adult networks.*
  - (1) *Encourage the use of electronic media.*
  - (2) *Exchange of youth and young adult ministry models.*

Rationale: Without the youth and young adults, the church will die. Youth and young adults will only stay with the church if they have a meaningful leadership voice and role, positions where they are able to see where their decisions take effect.

The institute needs to establish a future leaders component of the institute to help those who hear God's call and are inquiring of next steps. Youth and young adults need a place beyond the church's immediate environment to explore and nurture their sense of call. They need a place where the approach is realistic and practical.

Fellowship and training opportunities are needed for young adults who have already answered the call to serve God. Many of our churches have a small segment of young adults for whom these gatherings will also create opportunities for networking with the larger body of Christ. As a vital part of the church today, youth and young adult options and dreams must be explored.

Youth and young adults communicate through electronic media. Their gifts in this area can be used as the vehicle to network and promote Christian witness in intergenerational ministry.

4. *Clergy Women:*

- a. *Develop an accountability strategy for the calling of African American women as senior pastors.*
- b. *Promote the call of women to viable and validated ministries.*
- c. *Design and create resources to emphasize and enhance awareness of the gifts of African American clergy women in the PC(USA).*



Rationale: The PC(USA), for the last thirty-three years, has acknowledged the gifts of Black women in ministry and has authenticated the call of Black women to serve in validated calls. However, the church still does not have an organized and systematic means to address the entrenched resistance in presbyteries and congregations to call Black women to validated ministries.

In several cases where females have been called to African American congregations, they are offered minimal salary, poor working conditions, and have to prove themselves in ways that are unthinkable by male pastors. Women pastors still have to settle for small, disgruntled congregations who, in many instances, only extend the call to a woman because a male pastor was not available.

The above reasons have resulted in a disparity in the number of women called to validated ministries. Resources are needed (i.e. pamphlets) to highlight successful African American ministry models that can be used by presbyteries, committees on preparation for ministry (CPM), committees on ministry (COM), and pastor nominating committees (PNC) for the purpose of supporting clergywomen in their call.

5. *Evangelism:*

a. *Design creative ministries that attract our target population and encourage the development of a relationship with our faith community.*

b. *Provide gatherings for ministers of music and worship leaders.*

c. *Encourage partnerships between African Heritage Presbyterian Association of Musicians and congregations.*

Rationale: There is a need to create a network to research and develop creative ministry ideas to be shared among congregations. Each of these ministries will be designed to provide opportunities to share the gospel with the persons who participate in these ministries. The focus is to move beyond the expectation that new persons will primarily enter our faith communities through traditional ministries (i.e. worship, Bible study, Sunday school, and special events).

Equipping congregations with resources to deepen their appreciation for music ministry, and the diversity of options that are available to them, is the by-product of this effort.

Endnote

1. 210th General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), June 12–20, 1998, Charlotte, North Carolina.

## Item 12-02

**[In response to Item 12-02, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See p. 12.]**

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) Grow God's Church—Deep and Wide by

1. Declaring a church-wide commitment to participate in God's activity in transforming the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) during the 2009–2010 biennium.

2. Encouraging synods, presbyteries, sessions, and all agencies, entities, and networks of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to commit to grow the church deep and wide in the following areas:

a. Grow the Church: Invite persons to attend. Baptize children and adults. Increase our congregations.

b. Grow in Discipleship: Rediscover Scripture. Nurture spirituality. Affirm our Reformed heritage. Embrace Stewardship in all of life.

c. Grow into Diversity: Welcome everyone. Learn from others. Reflect the world.

3. Encouraging the General Assembly Council to support the whole church's commitment to grow God's Church—Deep and Wide in its ministries and mission.

4. Inviting the whole church to commit their prayers, gifts, resources, and time during 2009–2010, to discern God's call to grow the church.

**Alternate Resolution Approved**

**In response to this recommendation, that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following resolution:**

**The 218th General Assembly (2008) strives to help Christ's Church Grow Deep and Wide under the guidance of the Holy Spirit by:**

**1. Declaring a churchwide commitment to participate in God's activity through Jesus Christ in transforming the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) during the 2009–2010 biennium in keeping with Jesus words, "... Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me" (John 15:4) and the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18–20, "... All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

**2. Encouraging synods, presbyteries, sessions, and all agencies, entities, and networks of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to commit to foster the growth of Christ's Church Deep and Wide in the following areas:**

**a. Grow in Evangelism: Share the good news of Jesus Christ. Invite persons to join in the church's worship and fellowship. Baptize children and adults.**

**b. Grow in Discipleship: Rediscover Scripture, including daily reading and study. Nurture relationships with Jesus Christ in the context of our Reformed heritage.**

**c. Grow in Servanthood: Stand alongside the wider community to promote the well-being and love of neighbor. Embrace stewardship in all of life.**

**d. Grow in Diversity: Welcome everyone. Learn from others. Reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of God's peoples in the world.**

**3. Encouraging the General Assembly Council to support the whole church's commitment to foster the growth of Christ's Church Deep and Wide in its ministries and mission.**

**4. Inviting the whole church to commit their prayers, gifts, resources, and time during 2009–2010, to discern God's call to foster the growth of Christ's Church.**

***Rationale***

The persistent decline in membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) over the past forty years is a concern to the church at large and to the General Assembly Council. While membership has declined, many congregations and PC(USA) ministries are flourishing. As Christians, we are called to "make disciples of all peoples." Rather than give in to a climate of decline, the General Assembly Council believes that a more faithful stance is to take affirmative steps that renew our commitment to advance Christ's gospel in word and deed in our churches, our communities, and throughout the world.

In addition, it is important that we keep all aspects of church growth in biblical and theological perspective. In this regard, it is worth noting that if the opposite of our current situation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) were true—if we were growing exponentially in attendance and members—our situation might be no more satisfying. This is because church growth for its own sake is never the aim of the Christian Church. Instead, our growth as Christians, whether quantitative or qualitative, is to take place so that God may be glorified as the body of Christ is drawn into ever-closer communion with God. ("But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen" 2 Peter 3:18.)

Growth is the natural consequence of the Christian life. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul identifies growth in the church as the necessary process of spiritual health: "... we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love" (Eph. 4:15b–16).

Rightly understanding growth in the life of the church is as important as the growth itself. When growth occurs in any aspect of the church, we may be tempted to take credit for it. Scripture makes clear, however, that God is the ultimate giver of growth and life. Jesus said, "Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me" (John 15:4b). Being a part of God's family and abiding in Christ is a necessary aspect of spiritual growth. A multiplicity of human ministries contributes to spiritual growth in people's lives, thus emphasizing God's ultimate role in the gift of spiritual life. Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth" (1 Cor. 3:6).

Conversely, history has shown that religious organizations or groups may experience rapid and large growth in adherents, even though the wider Church may not affirm that God was behind that growth or that the growth was based on dubious theological motivations.

Finally, growth is a central aspect of our Reformed heritage. Together with the Scots Confession, “We most surely believe that God preserved, instructed, multiplied, honored, adorned, and called from death to life his Kirk in all ages ...” (*The Book of Confessions*, The Scots Confession, 3.05). Thus, although we are unable to determine growth, and unable to affirm in all circumstances exactly where and when God will cause growth, we do have a role in the healthy, spiritual growth of our members, attendees, churches, and programs. Indeed, in the same way that we feed our children and ourselves to engender greater physical health and growth, the Scriptures are filled with examples and admonitions urging us to nurture, foster, and cultivate spiritual health and growth within the community of Christ’s church (1 Sam. 2:26; Mt. 13:31–33; 2 Cor. 10:15; Col. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:18). Stating our desire and intention to nurture healthy spiritual growth is the first step in contributing toward that result.

## \*Item 12-03

[The assembly approved Item 12-03. See pp. 11, 12.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the following named individuals to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Board of Directors:

1. Nominated by the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly Council at the February 2008 meeting:

### Class of 2012

LaVert Jones      BME      Cherokee      SA      Re-nomination

2. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly Council at the February 2008 meeting:

### Class of 2010

William Nelson      WMO      56–65      The Cascades      PAC      AL      New Nomination

### Class of 2012

Kim I. Williams      WFC      46–55      Maumee Valley      CovS      Re-nomination  
 Nancy Muth      WFC      46–55      Philadelphia      TRIAL      Re-nomination  
 Stephen Bacon      WMC      65+      Greater Atlanta      SA      AL      New Nomination  
 Catesby Woodford      WME      56–65      Transylvania      LWAL      New Nomination

3. Nominated by the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and elected by the General Assembly Council at the February 2008 meeting:

### Class of 2010

Alice Okazaki      AFE      65+      San Francisco      PAC      AL      New Nomination  
 Jim Dave Wilson      BME      65+      Newark      NE      AL      New Nomination

### Class of 2012

Agnes Young      BFE      65+      Boston      NE      AL      New Nomination

### Key to Report:

WFC=White Female Clergy      AL=At Large  
 WMC=White Male Clergy      S=Synod Representative  
 WME=White Male Elder  
 WMO=White Male Other  
 BME= Black Male Elder  
 BFE=Black Female Elder  
 AFE=Asian Female Elder

### *Rationale*

The Deliverance\* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., assigns to the General Assembly Council responsibility for election of directors to the PC(USA) Investment and Loan Program’s Board of Directors,

subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Directors are nominated by various agencies, i.e., the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the General Assembly Council Nominating Committee, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, and by the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.\*

\*Note: Nominations are pending the General Assembly approval of the Presbyterian Deliverance Sections 2.(b) (ii) and (vi).

#### *Short Bios for New Nominees*

*Stephen Bacon:* A retired seminary development officer and a fund raising consultant, Stephen Bacon serves part time as a director of the Lilly Pastoral Residency Program. Bacon has had pastoral experience as well as a background as an interim presbytery executive.

*William Nelson:* Before his retirement, Nelson was a commercial banker for almost thirty years. He worked as a relationship manager to commercial banking customers in his beginning career and for the last seventeen years served in credit and risk management capacities, approving commercial loans among other duties.

*Catesby Woodford:* A lawyer, Mr. Woodford has been involved in a variety of ways at the congregational, presbytery, and General Assembly levels of the church. He has a great knowledge of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and as a former member of the General Assembly Council served as the chairperson of the Mission Support Services Committee.

*Agnes Young:* A retired social worker, Agnes Young served as the director of the Hearing Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Welfare Department. She has experience in administrative law, working in labor relations and the rights of persons with disabilities. Young has chaired the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Boston and has served on the Synod Mission Council and the Board of Trustees of the Synod of the Northeast.

*Alice Okazaki:* Alice Okazaki is a retired quality control and forms supervisor for California Casualty Insurance Company. She has been the moderator of the Presbytery of San Francisco and a member of the General Assembly Council.

*Jim Dave Wilson:* Jim Dave Wilson is a retired public school teacher and administrator. He has been the moderator of the Presbytery of Newark and is a member of General Assembly Council.

## Item 12-04

[The assembly approved Item 12-04. See pp. 12, 13.]

**The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the election of James L. Hudson to the office of president of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., for a four-year term.**

#### *Rationale*

The 1995 Deliverance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), as well as its bylaws, provide that its board of directors elect the president to a four-year term subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. On July 31, 2003, the board of directors elected James L. Hudson to a four-year term as president of the corporation, effective September 2, 2003. The 216th General Assembly (2004) confirmed his election.

During 2007, the Personnel/Nominating Committee of the PILP Board of Directors undertook an extensive end-of-term review working with the Human Resources Office of the General Assembly Council. Upon review of the president's performance and comments from staff, officers, and directors, as well as colleagues from other General Assembly agencies, middle governing bodies, and churches, the Personnel/Nominating Committee recommended that the president should be reelected to a new four-year term. The PILP Board of Directors elected Hudson president on October 27, 2007.

Hudson is a resident of Prospect, Kentucky, and worships as part of the congregation at Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Chicago and has served congregations in River Forest, Illinois, and Springfield, Missouri. He served on the staff and as co-executive of the Synod of Lincoln Trails during twenty-two years.

Hudson earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Grove City College in Pennsylvania, a Masters of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, and a Masters of Business Administration degree from Indiana University.

During his tenure as president and chief executive officer, Hudson has worked with the PILP Board of Directors to grow the program to meet the financing needs of Presbyterian congregations and entities to expand and improve their facilities, while meeting all of the guidelines of the North American Securities Administrators Association. He has led the staff in coordinating the Church Loan Program and PILP into a seamless program for borrowers.

## **\*Item 12-05**

[The assembly approved Item 12-05. See pp. 12, 13.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following revisions to the 1995 Deliverance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., as amended by the 209th General Assembly (1997) and the 215th General Assembly (2003), to be effective on the date of such approval.

1. Shall the 1995 Deliverance be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown in italics.]

“Section 1. (a) Corporation established—There shall be established at the close of business on July 31, 1995, as a separate corporate agency of the General Assembly a corporation, which shall be incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and shall be known as Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (‘the Corporation’). The Corporation shall be a membership corporation and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation shall hold the sole membership (which shall be nonvoting) in the Corporation.

“(b) Forms of Articles—The articles of incorporation of the Corporation shall be in substantially the form submitted to and approved by the 207th General Assembly (1995), with such changes therein as may be approved by the General Assembly Council or by an authorized committee thereof. The initial board of directors shall consist of six directors, who shall serve as the board of directors of the Corporation until another board is chosen under the provisions of Section 2(b) herein below.

“Section 2. (a) Corporate charter—The articles of incorporation of the Corporation shall provide for its governance and subordination to the General Assembly Council to substantially the following effect:

“The management and disposition of the affairs and property of the Corporation shall be vested in directors, who shall be selected from time to time in such number and manner and for such terms as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the ‘General Assembly’) may determine. All the business and affairs of the said corporation shall be conducted by the directors under and subject to the direction of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or any agency thereof thereunto duly authorized, so far as such direction shall be lawful and in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and of the United States of America. No material change shall be made in these articles of incorporation without the prior approval of the General Assembly.

“(b) Governing board—(1) Until further action of the General Assembly or of any officer or agency thereof thereunto duly authorized, the board of directors of the Corporation shall consist of fifteen members. Employees and staff of General Assembly-level entities are ineligible to serve on the board of directors. The board shall be selected as follows:

“(i) Six at-large members shall be nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly Council. Such at-large members shall be elected by the General Assembly Council for a four-year terms, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Each person so elected shall be eligible to serve up to a maximum of two terms. No director may serve more than two terms, full or partial.

“(ii) ~~Four~~ *Two* members shall be elected by the General Assembly Council from among its own membership. *One member shall be selected from the membership of the Stewardship Committee and one member shall be selected from the membership of the Evangelism Committee.* Such members shall be elected by the General Assembly Council for *one, four-year, non-renewable* terms, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Each person so elected shall be eligible to serve ~~up to a maximum of two terms~~, so long as such person continues to serve as a member of the General Assembly Council *on the above-specified committees.* No director may serve more than ~~two~~ *one* terms, full or partial. Membership on the board of directors shall in any event end at the end of the term of service on General Assembly Council *and/or on the above-specified committees.*

“(iii) Two members shall be nominated by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation and ~~shall be~~ elected by the General Assembly Council. *Such members shall be elected by the General Assembly Council* for a four-year term, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Each person so elected shall be eligible to serve up to a maximum of two terms. No director may serve more than two terms, full or partial.

“(iv) One member shall be nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee from among the synods of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and ~~shall be~~ elected by the General Assembly Council. *Such member shall be elected by the General Assembly Council* for a four-year term, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Each person so elected shall be eligible to serve up to a maximum of two terms. No director may serve more than two terms, full or partial.

“(v) One member shall be nominated by the General Assembly Nominating committee from among the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and ~~shall be~~ elected by the General Assembly Council. *Such member shall be elected by the General Assembly Council* for a four-year term, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Each person so elected shall be eligible to serve up to a maximum of two terms. No director may serve more than two terms, full or partial.

“(vi) *Upon recommendation of the Corporation’s Personnel/Nominating Committee, three* ~~One~~ *at large* members shall be nominated by the ~~National Ministries Division Committee of the General Assembly Council or its successor board of directors of the Corporation~~ and ~~shall be~~ elected by the General Assembly Council. *Such at large members shall be elected by the General Assembly Council* for a four-year term, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Each person so elected shall be eligible to serve up to a maximum of two terms. No director may serve more than two terms, full or partial.

“(c) By-laws—The by-laws of the Corporation shall state that in making selections and nominations, consideration shall be given to the need for individuals having experience and skill relevant to the purposes and activities of the Corporation. The by-laws will contain a mechanism for the General Assembly Council to coordinate the review and selection of members of the board of directors.

“(d) Executives—As provided by G-9.0703 of the Book of Order, the board of directors of the Corporation, ~~with the concurrence of the General Assembly Council,~~ shall elect a president for a term of four years, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. ~~With the concurrence of the General Assembly Council,~~ The board of directors may elect vice presidents, a treasurer, and a secretary for terms of up to four years. The board of directors may elect other assistant executives. Such executives shall be eligible for reelection. The board of directors of the Corporation shall cause the president, who shall be the chief executive officer of the Corporation, to be accountable to the board of directors for carrying out its policies and directives, and for maintaining an effective partnership with ~~Corporate and Administrative Services and National Ministries Division~~ *Shared Services and Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry* as set out in this Deliverance, particularly Section 2.(e)(3). The board of directors of the Corporation shall ensure that the president maintains an appropriate partnership with the General Assembly Council through the Office of its Executive Director.

“(e) Functions—Subject to any inconsistent provision of the Articles of Agreement or the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and subject to the lawful directions from time to time of the General Assembly or the General Assembly Council or of any agency thereof thereunto duly authorized, the Corporation shall:

“(1) Sell and issue certificates, notes, or any other financial instruments approved by its board of directors in order to raise capital for the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“(2) As to the investment funds received by the Corporation, set the underwriting standards and loan criteria for loans to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations, governing bodies, theological institutions, and educational institutions related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to enable them to acquire or improve real property. ~~All such loans shall be processed and administered by the National Ministries Division, pursuant to such underwriting standards and loan criteria as may be established from time to time by the board of directors of the Corporation.~~

“(3) Contract with existing Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) entities, or outside parties, for various services. These include, but are not limited to, marketing of investments, management of assets, *and* record keeping, and processing and servicing of loans. In so doing, a collaborative relationship shall be maintained with ~~Mission Support Services Shared Services, and the National Ministries Division and its associate director for Evangelism and Church Development~~ *Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry* to avoid the duplication of services already performed by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) entities.

“(4) Train and orient volunteers, committees, employees, and others within synods and presbyteries who have responsibilities related to the work of the Corporation.

“(5) Provide accounting and reporting with respect to all of the foregoing.

“(6) Provide such other mission, finance, and related services as the General Assembly or the General Assembly Council may direct or approve.

“(f) Personnel policies—The board of directors shall develop position descriptions and personnel procedures for all positions. In so doing, the General Assembly Churchwide Compensation Guidelines ~~and the Personnel Policies for General Assembly Entities and Guidelines for Governing Bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)~~, or successors to such documents, shall apply.

“(g) Reporting responsibility—The Corporation shall report to the General Assembly through the General Assembly Council.”

### *Rationale*

The 1995 Deliverance that created the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (Corporation), sets forth the board of director’s nomination and election process as well as length and number of terms. Modifications to the GAC’s size and procedures will result in a reduction in the number of board members to be nominated from among the GAC’s membership. Additional revisions are recommended to clarify GAC committee and ministry area names and otherwise update the 1995 Deliverance. A change in the 1995 Deliverance must be approved by the GAC and the General Assembly.

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## Item 12-06

[The assembly approved Item 12-06 as amended. See pp. 12, 13.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Approve the following list of colleges and universities as those related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Ga.; Alma College, Alma, Mich.; Arcadia University, Glenside, Pa.; Austin College, Sherman, Tex.; Barber-Scotia College, Concord, N.C.; Belhaven College, Jackson, Miss.; Blackburn College, Carlinville, Ill.; Bloomfield College, Bloomfield, N.J.; Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa; Carroll College, Waukesha, Wis.; Centre College, Danville, Ky.; Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho; College of the Ozarks, Point Lookout, Mo.; The College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio; Cook School for Christian Leadership, Tempe, Ariz.; Davidson College, Davidson, N.C.; Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, W.Va.; Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Fla.; Grove City College, Grove City, Pa.; Hampden-Sydney College, Hampden-Sydney, Va.; Hanover College, Hanover, Ind.; Hastings College, Hastings, Nebr.; Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill.; Jamestown College, Jamestown, N.Dak.; Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, N.C.;

King College, Bristol, Tenn.; Knoxville College, Knoxville, Tenn.; Lafayette College, Easton, Pa.; Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Ill.; Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, N.C.; Lindenwood University, St. Charles, Mo.; Lyon College, Batesville, Ark.; Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn.; Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, Va.; Maryville College, Maryville, Tenn.; Millikin University, Decatur, Ill.; Missouri Valley College, Marshall, Mo.; Monmouth College, Monmouth, Ill.; Montreat College, Montreat, N.C.; Muskingum College, New Concord, Ohio; Peace College, Raleigh, N.C.; Pikeville College, Pikeville, Ky.; Presbyterian College, Clinton, S.C.; Queens University of Charlotte, Charlotte, N.C.; Rhodes College, Memphis, Tenn.; Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Mont.; St. Andrews Presbyterian College, Laurinburg, N.C.; Schreiner University, Kerrville, Tex.; Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka, Alaska;

Sterling College, Sterling, Kans.; Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex.; Tusculum College, Greeneville, Tenn.; Universidad InterAmericana de Puerto Rico, San Juan P.R.; University of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa; University of the Ozarks, Clarksville, Ark.; University of Tulsa, Tulsa, Okla.; Warren Wilson College, Asheville, N.C.; Waynesburg University, Waynesburg, Pa.; Westminster College, Fulton, Mo.; Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.; Westminster College, Salt Lake City, Utah; Whitworth University, Spokane, Wash.; Wilson College, Chambersburg, Pa.

2. Approve the following list of secondary schools as those related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

**Bachman Academy, McDonald, Tenn.; Blair Academy, Blairstown, N.J.; Chamberlain-Hunt Academy, Port Gibson, Miss.; French Camp Academy, French Camp, Miss.; [Goodland Academy, Hugo, OK;] Menaul School, Albuquerque, N.Mex.; Presbyterian Pan-American School, Kingsville, Tex.; Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School, Rabun Gap, Ga.; Thornwell Home & School for Children, Clinton, S.C.; Wasatch Academy, Mt Pleasant, Utah.**

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## Item 12-07

[The assembly disapproved Item 12-07. See pp. 12, 13.]

*On Encouraging the Observation of Children's Day on the Second Sunday in June—From the Presbytery of Blackhawk.*

The Presbytery of Blackhawk overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take specific steps to encourage the promotion and observation of *Children's Day* on the second Sunday in June, instructing the General Assembly Council, Congregational Ministries Division, and all other appropriate entities of PC(USA) to do the following:

- Encourage PC(USA) churches to adopt a *Children's Day* observation.
- Promote *Children's Day* by print publications, video, Internet, and all other communication means on an annual basis.
- Align with other individuals, groups, organizations, and denominations promoting the second Sunday in June as *Children's Day*.

### *Rationale*

Our denomination has a history of caring for children and the observation of *Children's Day*.

Children are our future and they need our Christian love and nurture. Jesus said, "... 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs'" (Matt. 19:14).

A special day for children helps accent the needs of children: education, health care, spiritual guidance, adoption, protection, and love.

Children are in need of their own special day, as parents have their own days, i.e. Mother's Day and Father's Day.

*Children's Day* can be used by the church for the promotion and recognition of youth and those who are in ministry to youth. The church is a great source of encouragement for youth.

*Children's Day* confirms PC(USA) witness to the world and to its most vulnerable.

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### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 12-07

*Comment on Item 12-07—From the General Assembly Council.*

Item 12-07 calls on the PC(USA), through the General Assembly Council, to encourage the promotion and observance of *Children's Day* on the second Sunday in June.

As part of the programmatic work of the PC(USA), the General Assembly Council participates in the ecumenical observance of "Children's Sabbath," usually the third Sunday in October.

The addition of "Children's Day" in June would have financial and programmatic implications depending on the level of promotion. A listing on the program calendar and Web-based promotion would require minimal financial investments. The annual creation of print and video resources would require significant staff and financial resources.



It is not clear what the GAC would be required to do in order to “align with other individuals, groups, organizations, and denominations” regarding Children’s Day. Currently, the two denominations that promote Children’s Day are the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Church of the Nazarene.

## Item 12-08

[The assembly approved Item 12-08 with comment. See pp. 12, 13.]

*On Directing the GAC to Produce Adolescent Human Development Resources—From the Presbytery of Grace.*

**The Presbytery of Grace overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the General Assembly Council to produce adolescent human development resources based upon Scripture and the Reformed theological tradition. These resources would explore all facets of adolescent development including human sexuality.**

***Comment:* We choose to plant the seed of peace. We set aside our individual desires to “win” and to further our own agendas and put our faith in God, and send this overture on without trying to advocate one position or another, trusting not only God, but our fellow Presbyterians to do what is right not only for our children but for our denomination. We send this overture on in the hope that the next step of the process will cultivate the seed we have planted, faithfully stepping out in mutual trust.**

**[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$108,495; (2010): \$0 (Mission)]**

### *Rationale*

Due to the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006), our denomination currently offers no sexuality curriculum at all for our youth. If we take no action to provide such curriculum, our youth will be deprived of guidance to help them navigate, with the eyes of faith, the challenging waters of our culture.

We live in a culture that constantly bombards its young people with confusing messages through the media and music about sex and sexuality. The issues of sexual activity among teens, teen pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases are vital ones to discuss with our youth. It is incumbent upon the church to speak to and educate our youth in this area of life, offering them sound teaching that is faithful to our biblical understanding, faithful to our Reformed heritage, and relevant to their lives today.

One of the basic struggles of youth is identity formation. Families and the church help Christian youth wrestle with “Who am I?” and “To whom do I belong?” These identity questions cannot be separated from their sexuality. Yet currently the church has no voice, with respect to curriculum, that will equip youth to deal with the reality that sexuality is a major developmental factor of adolescence as teens come to know who they are and what it means to be responsible as one who belongs to God.

Through the ages the Reformed church has dealt with important issue of the day, asking what the Holy Spirit would have us see and do about it. The 21st century is no different. Sexuality curriculum needs to be available to help the youth become informed people, as life and faith collide in their day-to-day world. It is imperative to address this important issue so that the church can empower our youth in the process of maturing faith and wisdom as they continue to develop into Christ’s beloved and responsible disciples.

### **ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 12-08 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the General Assembly Council to produce adolescent human development resources based upon Scripture and the Reformed theological tradition. These resources would explore all facets of adolescent development including human sexuality.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be approved as amended: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Grace overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the General Assembly Council to produce adolescent human development resources based upon Scripture and the Reformed theological tradition. These resources would explore all facets of adolescent development, including [~~human sexuality~~] [comprehensive, culturally proficient instruction about the full range of human sexuality issues].”

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC welcomes Item 12-08 calling for development of a sexuality curriculum. The PC(USA) currently has no denominational materials to provide adolescents and their families with information and guidance about their development as maturing sexual persons in the context of our faith tradition. Reliable studies make us aware that young people live in a sexually saturated society in which their decisions and behaviors make them vulnerable to a number of emotional and physical challenges. Data on teenage sexuality also reflect gender, racial, and ethnic differences that must be addressed in culturally appropriate materials.

The data is sobering. According to “Facts on American Teens’ Sexual and Reproductive Health,” (September 2006) Guttmacher Institute:

- Most young people have sex for the first time at about age 17, but do not marry until their middle or late 20s. This means that young adults are at risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for nearly a decade.
- By their 18th birthday, 6 in 10 teenage women and more than 5 teenage men have had sexual intercourse.
- A sexually active teen who does not use contraceptives has a 90% chance of becoming pregnant within a year.
- Of the approximately 750,000 teen pregnancies that occur each year, 82% are unintended. More than one-quarter ends in abortion.
- Young African American women have the highest teen pregnancy rate, followed by Latinas and non-Latina whites.
- The pregnancy rate among black teens decreased 40% between 1990 and 2000, more than the overall U.S. teen pregnancy rate declined during the same period (36%).
- The majority of the decline in teen pregnancy rates is due to more consistent contraceptive use; the rest is due to higher proportions of teens choosing to delay sexual activity.
- Despite a decline in teen pregnancy rates between 1995 and 2002, the United States teen pregnancy rates are twice as high as those in England, Wales, and Canada, and 8 times as high as The Netherlands and Japan.

The Center for Disease Control reported in March 2008 that:

- At least 1 in 4 teenage girls in the U.S. has a sexually transmitted disease, or 3 million teens.
- The HPV (Human Papillomavirus) that causes cervical cancer is by far the most common sexually transmitted infection in teen girls aged 14 to 19, with the highest overall prevalence among black girls (nearly 50%). That rate is 20 percent among both whites and Mexican American teens.

However, studies also show that the availability and the quality of sexuality education are important factors in the decisions that young people make about their health and sexuality. A September 2007 resource, “Facts on Sex Education in the United States” (Guttmacher) reports that:

- By 2002, one-third of teens had not received any formal instruction about contraception.
- There is currently no federal program dedicated to supporting comprehensive sex education that teaches young people about both abstinence and contraception.
- More than 9 in 10 teachers believe that students should be taught about contraception, but 1 in 4 are prohibited from doing so.
- Despite years of evaluation in this area, there is no evidence to date that abstinence-only education delays teen sexual activity. Moreover, recent research shows that abstinence-only strategies may deter contraceptive use among sexually active teens, increasing their risk of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Evidence shows that comprehensive sex education programs that provide information about both abstinence and contraception can help delay the onset of sexual activity among teens, reduce their number of sexual partners and increase contraceptive use when they become sexually active. These findings were underscored in “Call to Action to Promote Sexual Health and Responsible Sexual Behavior,” issued by former Surgeon General David Satcher in June 2001.

The ACWC lifts up Item 12-08’s rationale that states a “sexuality curriculum needs to be available to help the youth become informed people, as life and faith collide in their day-to-day world.” The data on teenage sexuality reflect the lives of American teens that are struggling to understand the development of their bodies and make decisions about their sexuality. Presbyterian teens are a diverse population and they look to their church for resources that will help them know God’s love and guidance as their bodies develop and they grow into mature adults.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the General Assembly Council (Congregational Ministries Division) and all other PC(USA) entities to use the biblical and confessional teachings that sexual relationships belong only within the bond of marriage of a man and a woman as the standard for the development of any future materials or recommendations for materials. It added that the curriculum should include information on reproductive health to allow for an open discussion between teachers and youth in light of our understanding of God's plan for sexuality. Given the data on teenage sexual behavior, there is a need for an adolescent curriculum on sexuality that provides comprehensive information and encourages the open conversation between leaders and youth in diverse communities.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

Item 12-08, on directing the General Assembly Council to produce adolescent human development resources.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) concurs with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)'s advice and counsel.

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**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 12-08**

*Comment on Item 12-08—From the General Assembly Council.*

Item 12-08 asks the General Assembly to direct the General Assembly Council (GAC) to produce resources that would explore all facets of adolescent development including human sexuality.

Congregational Ministries Publishing previously produced a human sexuality curriculum that was withdrawn at the direction of the 216th General Assembly (2004). Currently, the PC(USA) does not produce, promote, or make available curricular resources that address issues of human sexuality.

Development of new adolescent development resources that deal with human sexuality would be a multiyear process, necessitating significant additional staff and funds beyond those included in Congregational Ministries Publishing's current staffing rationale and budget.

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## **Item 12-B**

[The Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education approved Item 12-B. See pp. 12, 13.]

### **A. *Sam and Helen Walton Awards for 2007***

The General Assembly Council reports the recipients of the Sam and Helen Walton Awards for 2007 for outstanding new church developments:

- 1. Montgomery Ministries, Presbytery of New Brunswick, Synod of the Northeast;**
- 2. Kaw Prairie Community Church, Presbytery of Heartland, Synod of Mid-America;**
- 3. Word of Life Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Santa Barbara, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii;**
- 4. Dripping Springs Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Mission, Synod of the Sun;**
- 5. Spanish Springs Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Nevada, Synod of the Pacific;**
- 6. Presbyterian Church of the Springs, Presbytery of Salem, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic;**
- 7. Iglesia de la Comunidad, Presbytery of San Fernando, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii;**
- 8. Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community, Presbytery of Pittsburgh, Synod of the Trinity.**

**B. *Sam and Helen Walton Awards for 2008***

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) recognize the recipients of the 2008 Sam and Helen Walton Awards:

- **Sherwood Presbyterian Church, Synod of the Pacific, Cascades Presbytery; Sherwood, Oregon;**
- **First United Presbyterian Church of Lackawanna Valley, Synod of the Trinity, Lackawanna Presbytery; Olyphant, Pennsylvania;**
- **Nuevo Amanecer Hispanic New Church Development, Synod of the Pacific, San Joaquin Presbytery; Bakersfield, California;**
- **Mission Bay Community Church, Synod of the Pacific, San Francisco Presbytery; San Francisco, California.**

***Rationale***

In late December 1991, Sam and Helen Walton made a generous gift through the Presbyterian Foundation of \$6 million dollars that included \$3 million to be used for new church developments that have placed an emphasis on site acquisitions. All nominees meet the qualifications as set forth in the application. The General Assembly Council Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the General Assembly between meetings, approved the above recipients during its conference call meeting of June 12, 2007.

**Item 12-C**

[The Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education approved Item 12-C. See pp. 11–12.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) recognize the following Women of Faith award recipients at the 218th General Assembly (2008):

**The Reverend Magdalena I. Garcia**

**The Reverend Ann L. Hayman**

**Theodora Jackson**

***Rationale*****Women of Faith Awards “Her-Story”**

The Women of Faith awards were established in 1986 to honor female members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) whose lives exemplify their Christian commitments.

Each year a theme is designated. Nominations are received from throughout the church and honorees are selected by a committee of representatives from groups officially related to the Women’s Ministries area.

Awards are presented at the Women of Faith Breakfast during the General Assembly. This breakfast is an annual celebration of God’s activity in the lives of women and their response to God’s presence.

The theme for the 2008 Women of Faith Awards is “Visionary Women Transforming the Church and Society.”

The 2008 selection committee included Cynthia Joe, Presbyterian Women Gathering Committee, moderator; Monica Ajak, National Network of Presbyterian College Women; Sarah Colwill, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns; Ann Moe, General Assembly Council; Ruth-Aimée Belonni-Rosario, Racial Ethnic Young Women Together; and Florence Vargas, Presbyterian Women.

Selection committee members were instructed to consider the following in reviewing the thirty nomination forms and in making their selection of three women to receive this award:

- How have the women transformed the church?

- How have the women transformed society?
- Strive for racial ethnic diversity in selecting the three women.
- Strive for geographic diversity in selecting the three women.
- The women must be living.
- GAC staff members are ineligible.
- This is a once-in-a-lifetime award; a woman cannot be selected more than once.

It was the responsibility of the General Assembly Council Leadership and Vocation Goal Area Committee to approve the selection of these three women to be the recipients of the 2008 Women of Faith awards.

Biographical sketches of these three women are as follows:

1. *The Reverend Magdalena I. Garcia*

The Reverend Magdalena I. García is a member of the Presbytery of Chicago where she has lived for more than thirty-five years and where she was ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in 1993.

García is pastor of Ravenswood Presbyterian Church, a multicultural and bilingual congregation in Chicago. The church is one congregation with two ministries and one pastor. It has combined boards (session and deacons) and committees. There are language-specific worship services and Bible studies. She is also a member of the presbytery's Multicultural Church Committee and the Hispanic Ministries fellowship.

The Coordinating Team of Hispanic Latin National Presbyterian Women says that Rev. Garcia is certainly a positive role model for this generation of Hispanic women and for generations to come.

Formerly, García was managing editor for *¡Exito!*, a Spanish-language weekly published by the *Chicago Tribune*, which was replaced by the daily *Hoy*. She was previously associate director of Funds Development at McCormick Theological Seminary, where she received a master of divinity degree in 1989. García has served as preacher, keynote speaker, and worship leader for several national and regional church events, including the Presbyterian Women Gathering (2000) and Encuentro—the national conference of Hispanic Latin Presbyterian Women (1998, 2001, and 2007). During academic year 2007–2008, she is serving as adjunct faculty for a ministries course at McCormick Theological Seminary, and teaching pastor at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

García is the author of the compendium *Toward a Liberating Faith: Introduction to Mujerista Theology*, published by the Women's Ministries program area of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She also has served as a freelance writer and translator for denominational resources.

Born in Cuba, García has been married to Augusto Torres, from Ecuador, for seventeen years, with whom she shares the joy and challenge of raising their ten-year-old son, Miguel Ángel.

2. *The Reverend Ann L. Hayman*

The Reverend Ann L. Hayman is the director of development (formerly the program director) of the Mary Magdalene Project, which is a long-term residential program that provides alternatives to women involved in street prostitution in southern California. She founded this program.

Born and raised in Caldwell, Idaho, Ann Hayman graduated from the College of Idaho in 1971 with a B.A. in music education and German. Following college, she taught typing and journalism for a year at Wasatch Academy in Mount Pleasant, Utah, and managed a retirement community (the PEO Chapter House, Caldwell, Idaho) for three years. She attended San Francisco Theological Seminary, graduating in 1978. Hayman was ordained a Presbyterian minister on Epiphany Sunday, January 6, 1979. She served as an assistant pastor at First Presbyterian Church, El Centro, California, from 1978 to 1980.

In June 1980, Ann accepted the position of program director for the Mary Magdalene Project (MMP), a long-term residential program that provides alternatives to women involved in street prostitution in Southern California. She served in that capacity until July 2006 when she became director of development for the MMP.

3. *Theodora G. Jackson*

Theodora G. Jackson (Thea) was born on October 25, 1923, in Richmond, Virginia. In 1943, she graduated from Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia, and married the day after graduation. Jackson founded the Jamaica Service Project in Queens, New York. The adult center is named for her. She visits numerous women in the local women's prisons.

Jackson has been the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions, including the 2002 New York State Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award. Jackson was the designer and director of the Older Adult Program in the First Presbyterian Church in Jamaica, New York, from 1969 until 1972. The Jamaica Service Project became one of two "Administration on Aging" national models for developing comprehensive and coordinated systems of services for the aging. Thea Jackson served as executive director of that multi-service agency until 1980, when she was appointed deputy director of the New York State Office for the Aging.

After leaving state service in 1991, Jackson served as consultant on a variety of aging and educational projects. She also became a volunteer at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in the children and parenting programs. In 1996, she provided the community, civilian leadership for the re-establishment of a college degree program at that facility.

Jackson and her husband, Bailey W. Jackson, became the proud parents of three children and now have seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

## Item 12-Info

### ***Report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. for the Years 2006 and 2007 to the 218th General Assembly (2008)***

In gratitude for God's bounty, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Investment and Loan Program, Inc (PILP), promotes the growth of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by bringing together the dreams of church developers and the resources of Presbyterian investors and financial partners. The PILP offers investments providing a competitive financial return plus the opportunity to participate in the expansion of the Kingdom of God through Presbyterian congregations, governing bodies, and mission agencies. The PILP offers loans to Presbyterian congregations and middle governing bodies to purchase, renovate, and expand worship and mission space and to promote the growth of the church. Guided by the best practices of the financial industry, PILP is committed to faithful stewardship of the resources entrusted to us for the support of the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The PILP began 2006 with a disbursed loan portfolio of \$47.9 million and an additional \$8.8 million in commitments pending close and construction loans not yet disbursed. At the end of 2007, PILP had a disbursed loan portfolio of \$56.3 million and an additional \$8.4 million in commitments pending closing and construction loans not yet disbursed. That represents growth of 14 percent over the two-year period. In 2006, PILP disbursed \$10.6 million in new loans from investor funds; in 2007 PILP disbursed \$7.1 million. We began 2006 with just under \$50 million in investments from individual Presbyterians, Presbyterian congregations, middle governing bodies, and General Assembly agencies. We ended 2007 with \$61.8 million in investments. That is a 23.6 percent increase in two years.

In 2007, PILP experienced its seventh consecutive year with an annual surplus. The surplus of \$467,895 in 2007 was our largest annual surplus and represents a 42 percent increase over the 2006 surplus of \$330,340. The combined surpluses from 2006 and 2007 have given us a significant push toward our goal of rebuilding our capital base back to the \$5 million we were given as start-up capital.

The Uniform Securities Act determines who regulates PILP's investment products. The North American Securities Administrators Association establishes program guidelines for denominational investment and loan programs. The PILP is expected to maintain a capital adequacy ratio of net worth to total assets of 5 percent. At the end of 2007 our capital adequacy ratio was 6.2 percent. The PILP is expected to maintain a liquidity ratio of liquid assets to Term Notes and Denominational Account Receipts ("DARs") of at least 8 percent. At the end of 2007 our liquidity ratio was 19.1 percent. The PILP is required to limit senior secured debt to no more than 10 percent of total assets. At the end of 2007 PILP had no senior secured debt.

Some commercial lenders may offer low rates or waive certain fees, but PILP is the only lender who gives money back to borrowing congregations. Through the "Get the Point" program, borrowing congregations earn rebates based on supporting investments. For 2007, PILP returned \$194,330 to borrowing congregations. The PILP provides consulting services to congregations and presbyteries to help them determine the timing, size, construction plans, fundraising, and fi-

nancing requirements for capital projects. Each congregation benefits from the experience of the PILP staff in working with hundreds of congregations.

Also, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program administers the Church Loan Program (CLP) for the General Assembly Council. The CLP is the result of many gifts, campaigns, and bequests to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since 1840. The total endowment for church loans has grown to almost \$200 million. The Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., is working with the General Assembly Council to explore a capital grant program to supplement the existing loan program. As part of a larger discussion between the General Assembly Council and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, concerning endowment funds, we are engaged in conversations with the Foundation staff regarding changes in expectations, use of funds, administration, and reporting. We have made recommendations that would make new capital grant programs available for church development, as well as securing Mission Program Grants for the foreseeable future.

The CLP began 2006 with a disbursed loan portfolio of \$96.7 million and an additional \$9.2 million in commitments pending close and construction loans not yet disbursed. At the end of 2007, CLP had a disbursed loan portfolio of \$98.5 million and an additional \$12.4 million in commitments pending closing and construction loans not yet disbursed. That represents growth of 4.7 percent over the two-year period. In 2006, PILP disbursed \$13.6 million in new loans from endowment funds and in 2007, PILP disbursed \$12.8 million from endowment funds.

Together PILP and CLP represent the Coordinated Loan Program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Coordinated Loan Program is dedicated to providing low cost loans to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and mission agencies. At the beginning of 2006, the Prime lending-rate was 7.5 percent. The base interest rate for existing congregations was 6.7 percent from investor funds and 5.7 percent from endowment funds. By the end of 2007 the Prime lending-rate had dropped to 7.25 percent. The base interest rate for existing congregations was 7.0 percent from investor funds and 6.0 percent from endowment funds. Interest rates for new church developments are even lower. Rates are further reduced for congregations with strong mission giving to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The PILP has remained competitive in an interest rate environment that has experienced large increases and decreases.

The maximum loan from CLP is currently \$450,000. The maximum project in which CLP participates is \$2.5 million. Larger loans are funded by investor funds or participations with synod loan programs or banking partners. Many loan applications received by PILP qualify for funds from both PILP and CLP. These loans are offered to churches as one loan with a blended rate.

The following are just four examples of how endowment and investor funds are helping the church grow:

- Fountain Park Presbyterian Church in Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania in Beaver Butler Presbytery purchased and renovated an existing building from an Episcopal church with the proceeds of a loan from PILP.
- In 2007, Project Vida in El Paso, Texas, purchased a building to house the Project Vida Health Center using funds from PILP. Project Vida is a mission supported by the churches of Tres Rios Presbytery. The health center is a full-service medical complex serving the immigrant community.
- With the help of Presbyterian investors, the Korean Presbyterian Church of Boston, Massachusetts, will be breaking ground on a new education and cultural community center. This congregation is a valuable link between new immigrants and the established citizens of the area.
- Crosswinds Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, Arizona, is building a new facility to enhance their music ministry and outreach to the community with a loan from PILP.

The PILP collaborates with the four synods that maintain their own investment and loan programs. We administer the investment and loan program of the Synod of Lincoln Trails and we are in a multi-year process of transferring this ministry of the synod into the Coordinated Loan Program of the General Assembly.

The Board of Directors of PILP is elected by the General Assembly Council and confirmed by the General Assembly. The 2007 Board of Directors was John H. Shannahan, chair; Nancy Muth, vice chair; Frank R. Adams III; Mary C. Baskin; Frank Fisher Jr.; Lavert Jones; Douglas Kenney; Carolyn Knight; Marcy M. Moody; Alice Okazaki; James B. Rea Jr.; Connia Watson Jr.; Kim I. Williams; Jim Dave Wilson.

The officers of the corporation in 2007 were James L. Hudson, president and CEO; James G. Rissler, senior vice president and treasurer; Ben W. Blake, vice president, sales and marketing; Martha E. Clark, secretary; Eric J. Graninger, assistant secretary.





**\*Item 13-01**

[The assembly approved Item 13-01. See pp. 18, 19.]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the new trustees elected by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theological institutions in 2006–2007:

1. **Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary: Karen Anderson, Thomas L. Are, Jr., Susan Beird, Elizabeth Christian, Joseph Clifford, Marvin Cooper, Richard Gillham, Walter Harris, Lydia Hernandez, Norman Huneycutt, B. W. Payne, John Van Osdall, Sallie S. Watson, and Elizabeth Williams.**
2. **Columbia Theological Seminary: Richard Oglesby, Buz Wilcoxon, and Sue Williams.**
3. **University of Dubuque Theological Seminary: Charles Daoud.**
4. **Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary: Tyler Allen, Elaine Barnett, Lant Davis, Daniel Ellinor, Bridgett Green, Jill Hudson, Anna James, Walk Jones IV, Charles Larsen III, Rick Nutt, Robert Orders Jr., Larry Palmer, and Paul Schaap.**
5. **McCormick Theological Seminary: Jocelyn C. Cadwallader, Anna Case-Winters, Christine Chakoian, Eric J. Edwards, Sunok Chun Pai, Laura Brookens Reason, Christopher Valentine, and Gordon Zerkel.**
6. **Pittsburgh Theological Seminary: Kimberly Merrell, Bryan Miller, Sue Sterling Montgomery, and Jack vanHartesvelt.**
7. **Princeton Theological Seminary: William Bowers, Craig Huff, and Max Reddick.**
8. **San Francisco Theological Seminary: George Abdo, Esther Aguilar, Browne Barr, Rosario de Lugo Battle, Jerilynn Blackstone, Janet Doak, Bernie Hindman, Matthew Lin, Earle Robbins, Bill Saul, Marion Stanton, and Joanne Whitt.**
9. **Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary: None.**
10. **Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education: Brian Blount.**

*Rationale*

A list of the entire board of trustees of each of the ten seminaries, as well as biographical information about trustees to be approved will be made available by COTE for review by the appropriate committee during the 218th General Assembly (2008). Similar information will also be made available about those currently serving on the boards of Auburn Theological Seminary and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico that are related to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through covenant agreements.

As required by vote of the 209th General Assembly (1997), the following information is offered in regard to racial ethnic, gender, and clergy/lay representation on the various seminary boards.

Ten PCUSA Seminaries	Total on Board	Cauc.	Hisp.	Black	Asian	Native American	Other Ethnic	Male	Fem.	Clergy	Lay
Austin	33	31	1	1	0	0	0	20	13	13	20
Columbia	37	35	0	1	1	0	0	29	8	11	26
Dubuque	32	31	0	1	0	0	0	23	9	1	31
Louisville	33	29	0	4	0	0	0	21	12	10	23
McCormick	51	41	1	8	1	0	0	30	21	18	33
Pittsburgh	37	34	0	3	0	0	0	26	11	14	23

Princeton	37	34	1	2	0	0	0	27	10	17	20
SFTS	41	27	4	5	5	0	0	26	15	12	29
J.C. Smith	24	10	0	14	0	0	0	15	9	8	16
Union-PSCE	32	28	0	4	0	0	0	20	12	12	20
<b>TOTALS</b>	357	300	7	43	7	0	0	237	120	116	241
Covenant Part- ner Schools											
Auburn	23	22	0	1	0	0	0	11	12	8	15
ESPR	26	0	26	0	0	0	0	19	7	17	9
<b>Overall TOTALS</b>	406	322	33	44	7	0	0	267	139	141	265

### \*Item 13-02

[The assembly approved Item 13-02. See pp. 16, 18, 19.]

**The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve Brian K. Blount as president of Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education.**

#### *Rationale*

General Assembly approval of Dr. Blount's appointment as president of Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education is required by "A Plan for the Governance and Funding of the Theological Institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);" approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) and by the seminary's current bylaws.

The Reverend Brian K. Blount was named president of Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education, becoming the first African American to head Union or the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. Blount, an ordained minister in the PC(USA), will be the second president since the two schools were joined in 1997. Blount, 50, assumed the presidency July 1, 2007. The seminary's board of trustees announced the selection of Blount, the Richard J. Dearborn Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Princeton Theological Seminary, on March 30, 2007. He succeeded the Reverend Louis B. Weeks.

A native of Smithfield, Virginia, Blount served as pastor of Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church in Newport News, Virginia, from 1982 to 1988. He taught New Testament at Princeton Seminary from 1992–2007. Rev. Blount is the author, co-author, editor or associate editor of nine books, including *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, *Can I Get A Witness? Reading Revelation Through African-American Culture*, and *Struggling with Scripture*.

Blount holds a bachelor of arts degree in religion and psychology from the College of William and Mary, a master of divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary and doctor of philosophy degree from Emory University.

### \*Item 13-03

[The assembly approved Item 13-03. See p. 18, 19.]

**The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) grant permission to the following theological institutions to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in 2009–2010: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in**

cooperation with the Inter-denominational Theological Center, and Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education.

### *Rationale*

Beginning in 1989, the General Assembly became the governing body that grants permission to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Presbyterian theological institutions. The 217th General Assembly (2006) granted permission for celebrations in 2007–2008.

## Item 13-04

[The assembly answered Item 13-04 by the action taken on Item 13-06. See p. 19.]

*On Restoring the Heidelberg Catechism to Its Historic Form—From the Presbytery of Northern Kansas.*

The Presbytery of Northern Kansas, in accordance with G-18.0200, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take appropriate steps toward the following amendment of *The Book of Confessions*, and to appoint a committee to fulfill the requirement of G-18.0201b:

To restore The Heidelberg Catechism to an authentic and reliable English version of the historic document by replacing the 1962 translation, *The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563--1963. 400th Anniversary Edition. Copyright 1962. United Church Press*, with a translation that more faithfully renders the original text.

**[Original Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$28,050; (2010): \$3,050 (Per Capita-OGA)]**  
**[Committee Action Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$0; (2010): \$0 (Per Capita-OGA)]**

### *Rationale*

The Heidelberg Catechism was formally adopted as a confessional document of the UPCUSA when the denomination adopted *The Book of Confessions* in 1967. The version of the Heidelberg Catechism approved at that time was a 1962 translation prepared for and published by United Church Press. However, according to the later recollections of Professor Edward Dowey of Princeton Theological Seminary, who chaired the committee of the General Assembly that drew together the confessions, thorough checking of this version was never undertaken and certain “illicit” changes made to the text of the Heidelberg in this translation went undetected.<sup>1</sup> A comparison of the text of the Heidelberg Catechism in the version included in *The Book of Confessions* with the original German and the early Latin version reveals five passages in which the original text is not faithfully rendered and key theological meanings are obscured:

1. **4.019:** “... the holy gospel, which God himself revealed in the beginning in the Garden of Eden, afterward proclaimed through the holy patriarchs and prophets and foreshadowed through the sacrifices and other *rites of the Old Covenant*, and finally fulfilled through his own well-beloved Son” [emphasis added]. The phrase “rites of the Old Covenant” is a loose translation that is not well supported by either the German or the Latin; “ceremonies of the law” is a traditional rendering which is well supported by the German (*ceremonien des gesetzes*) and the Latin (*ceremoniis legis*).<sup>2</sup> This flawed rendering is significant for three reasons. First, substituting “Old Covenant” for law obscures a traditional Reformed interest in biblical law *per se*. Second, it misleadingly suggests to readers and students that the catechism’s writers invoked here an explicitly covenantal image. Third, it suggests that the writers were working with a scheme of biblical interpretation that contrasted Old Covenant to New Covenant, a hermeneutic which is not very well represented in the Reformed theological tradition and not supported by the text of the catechism in its original form.

2. **4.033:** “... Christ alone is God’s *own* eternal Son, whereas we are *accepted* [by God] for his sake as children of God by grace” was traditionally rendered “Christ alone is the eternal *natural* Son of God, but we are *adopted* to be children of God through grace for His sake” [emphasis added]. The significance of this change is that it obscures the authors’ use of the image of adoption—an important theme in Reformed reflection on Christ, Christ’s work, and the justifying and regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. The translation “adopted” is very well supported by the original German (*angenommen*) and the Latin (*adoptati*).

3. **4.055:** “...believers one and all, as partakers of the Lord Christ, and all his treasures and gifts, *shall share* in one fellowship. ...” [emphasis added]: The future tense is not indicated in the original text, which has the present tense. This translation differs from traditional versions which indicate that sharing or fellowship with Christ is a present reality.

4. **4.074:** "... This was done in the *Old Covenant* by circumcision. In the *New Covenant* baptism has been instituted to take its place" [emphasis added]. The original German supports "Old Testament" and "New Testament." The Latin has *in Veteri foedere* and *in Novo foedere*, which could support "Old Covenant" and "New Covenant," although the German has generally been preferred as the text from which translations are to be made. (The German text was the basis of the translation of 1962.) The difference between "covenant" and "testament" may seem subtle or insignificant to some readers. But in fact there was a significant difference in connotation through theological use in the sixteenth century. The Reformed tended to emphasize the singularity and antiquity of God's covenant with God's people; thus they tended not to emphasize a distinction between two *covenants*. On the other hand, they emphasized that a single covenant had somewhat different applications in two distinct *times* or epochs: the time of the law and the time of the gospel, or (to use an alternative designation) the time of the Old Testament and the time of the New Testament. The use of the word "Testament," then, resonates with other Reformed allusions to a distinction in times, which is not the same thing as a distinction in covenants.

5. **4.087:** Two elements in the answer to Question 87 are supplied by the translators and do not appear in the original text (nor in any translations produced prior to 1962). Neither the original German nor the Latin have texts corresponding to the following phrases:

"Surely you know that the unjust will never come into possession of the kingdom of God. Make no mistake:"

and

"or of homosexual perversion."

The remaining items in the vice list supplied in the answer to Question 87 have equivalents or rough equivalents in the original text (although some singular nouns have been rendered as plural nouns). This innovation was created by the translators' decision to ignore a portion of the Heidelberg Catechism Answer 87 and instead to replace it with the New English Bible translation of 1 Corinthians 6:9–10. In 1997, one of the translators, Professor Eugene Osterhaven, disclosed that this replacement was entirely intentional. In light of the sexual revolution of the 1960s, "it would be well to be more specific [about sexual practice] ... than [the author of the Heidelberg Catechism] had been in his day."<sup>3</sup> This "amendment" to a traditional Reformed document was the creation of two translators and was never deliberated upon by a body of the church before *The Book of Confessions* was adopted.<sup>4</sup>

Every ordained minister, elder, and deacon is required to answer in the affirmative the following question: "Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do?" (*Book of Order*, W-4.4003c). In so doing, church leaders trust that the translated versions of the historic confessions are, as far as humanly possible, authentic transmissions of the faith of our forbearers and reliable expositions of what they understood Scripture leading them to believe and do. That the 1962 translation of The Heidelberg Catechism has proven to be unreliable casts a shadow on all the translations in *The Book of Confessions*. Trust in all these historic documents can be restored by replacing that translation of The Heidelberg Catechism with a version that is more authentic and reliable. The 1988 translation in *Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions* (CRC Publications) is one such version.<sup>5</sup>

#### Endnotes

1. The Special Committee on a Brief Contemporary Statement of Faith presented a report to the 1965 General Assembly of the UPCUSA to include the 1962 translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in a Book of Confessions. Presumably the committee chose this translation because it was the most recent edition. Professor Dowey acknowledged (in a letter to Professors Christopher Elwood and Johanna Bos of Louisville Seminary, dated October 21, 1996) that both he and the committee as a whole were "guilty of negligence": "there should have been thorough editorial work on all the documents" but, because of time pressures, the committee settled for some brief spot-checking of the translation.
2. All references to the German and Latin texts come from *Catechismus oder Christliche Unterricht, wie der Kirchen und Schulen der Churfürstlichen Pfaltz getrieben wirdt* (Heidelberg: Johannes Mayer, 1563) and the first Latin edition of 1563: *Catechesis religionis Christianae: quae traditur in ecclesiis et scholis Palatinatus*. These have been published together in a facsimile edition published by Theologischer Verlag of Zurich in 1983. The German original has been compared with the modern critical edition by Wilhelm Niesel in *Bekanntnisschriften und Kirchenordnungen der nach Gottes Wort reformierten Kirche* (Zurich, 1938).
3. Professor Osterhaven's letter to the editor of *Monday Morning*, dated November 25, 1996, which appeared in edited form in *Monday Morning*, vol. 62, no. 4.
4. Professor Dowey expressed in 1996 that he was "dumbfounded that I and such careful scholars as [Leonard J.] Trinterud, [George S.] Hendry, [James D.] Smart, et al. failed to discover the illicit change."

5. Other reliable English translations may be found in the following texts: *The Heidelberg Catechism in German, Latin and English, with an Historical Introduction* (New York: Scribner, 1863); *Reformed Standards of Unity*, ed. Leroy Nixon (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Society for Reformed Publications, 1957); Thomas F. Torrance, *The School of Faith* (London: James Clark, 1959).

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**Concurrence to Item 13-04 from the Presbyteries of Chicago, New York City, and Pittsburgh.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 13-04**

*Advice on Item 13-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that, if the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the intent of Item 13-04 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

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**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 13-04**

*Comment on Item 13-04—From the General Assembly Council.*

Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-06 seek to restore the Heidelberg Catechism to its “historic form” by substituting a more recent translation for the translation currently in *The Book of Confessions*.

Section G-2.0100a describes the role of our confessions in the life of the Presbyterian Church:

- a. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ in the creeds and confessions in *The Book of Confessions*. In these confessional statements the church declares to its members and to the world
- who and what it is,
  - what it believes,
  - what it resolves to do.

The verbs in this section are all present tense. The confessions, rooted in particular historical contexts, declare our contemporary church’s identity, belief, and action. Thus the confessions are more than historical documents. While they grow out of particular contexts and speak to them, they have been adopted into *The Book of Confessions* because the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes that they are authoritative for the church’s current faith and life.

The confessions are not static documents, but living witnesses to our theological tradition. Therefore, the constitutional form of each confession is that which is printed in *The Book of Confessions*, not the texts in their original forms and in their original languages. The clearest example of this is the Westminster Confession, amended over time by both northern and southern streams of the church. Nevertheless, Presbyterians have a long history of appreciation for historical and textual scholarship. Questions about translations are appropriate in determining the church’s confessional stance.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has the right to determine its confessional stance and can consider amendments to *The Book of Confessions*, guided by “The Assessment of Proposed Amendments to *The Book of Confessions*” (BOC, xxxi-xxxvi) and following the process outlined in the *Book of Order* (G-18.0200).

However, because the confessions constitute a living tradition that expresses the church’s beliefs, the decision to amend *The Book of Confessions* is a normative decision, not simply a historical decision. The primary purpose of the confessions is not to enshrine a historical perspective, but to shape the ongoing faith and life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Therefore, the question before the General Assembly is whether a different translation of the Heidelberg Catechism would better declare to its members and the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do.

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**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 13-04**

*Comment on Item 13-04—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).*

That should the 218th General Assembly (2008) determine that it is wise and timely to create a special committee (G-18.0201b) to consider whether to recommend approval of the Belhar Confession and a new translation of the Heidelberg

Confession, the COGA urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to utilize one special committee to undertake the required study of both potential confessional documents.

None of these requests require the process of creating an entirely new confession, nor the drafting of new language amending a current confession. The requested study of Belhar would focus on whether it should be included in *The Book of Confessions* as it has been by a number of our Reformed ecumenical partners. Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-06 ask the PC(USA) to approve a different translation of the Heidelberg Confession, and again do not request any significant redrafting of the confession itself.

Further, the COGA concurs with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the use of one special committee would be entirely constitutional. The COGA also believes it wise to consider these two proposed changes to *The Book of Confessions* jointly and concurrently, as each proposal would each affect both the content and tone of our current *The Book of Confessions*. Finally, the COGA notes that the tasks required are different in kind than creating an entirely new text, which the PC(USA) last undertook in creating and approving A Brief Statement of Faith following reunion. The cost saving of one, rather than two committees would be substantial. (See financial implication.)

## Item 13-05

[The assembly answered Item 13-05 by the action taken on Item 13-06. See p. 19.]

*On Restoring the Heidelberg Catechism to Its Historic Form—From the Presbytery of Boston.*

The Presbytery of Boston respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to do the following:

1. Request permission from the Christian Reformed Church in North America to print their 1988 translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in *The Book of Confessions* of the PC(USA).
2. If such permission is granted, to use that text as the official text of the Heidelberg Catechism until such time as directed otherwise by the General Assembly.
3. If such permission is not granted, to make a recommendation to the 219th General Assembly (2010) regarding the choice of an appropriate translation of the Heidelberg Catechism to be the official text in *The Book of Confessions*.

### *Rationale*

Our Form of Government, in G-1.0501, specifies the documents that are to form *The Book of Confessions* and in G-2.0500b expresses that these “creeds and confessions of this church reflect a particular stance within the history of God’s people.” Thus, the precise original text of these documents should be respected and understood in the context of their place in history.

And, indeed, we would not seriously consider “fixing” the texts of native English documents to adapt them to current insights or circumstances. They were written in English and can be understood with reasonable study.

That is not the case with documents that have their origins in foreign languages. To make these accessible they need to be translated into English first. But, in order to treat them with the same respect that, for instance, the Westminster or the Scots Confessions command, such translations should follow as closely as possible the original texts, without embellishment or adaptation. Regrettably, this is not the case with the translation<sup>1</sup> of the Heidelberg Catechism that is printed in *The Book of Confessions*. One or two other overtures enumerate in their rationales the shortcomings of this translation. Suffice it here to quote one of the translators, Professor Eugene Osterhaven, and the chair of the committee that redacted *The Book of Confessions*, Professor Edward Dowey. Professor Osterhaven, commenting in 1997 on the changes in the text of the answer to Question 87, asserted that that change had been entirely intentional. In the light of the sexual revolution of the 1960s, “it would be well to be more specific [about sexual practice] . . . than [the author of the Heidelberg Catechism] had been in his [sic!] day.”<sup>2</sup> Professor Dowey expressed in 1996 that he was “dumbfounded that I and such careful scholars as Trinterud, Hendry, Smart, et al., failed to discover the illicit change.”

As indicated above, our Form of Government specifies that the Heidelberg Catechism is to be included in *The Book of Confessions*. However, it does not specify a particular translation and neither does the 1967 action of the General Assembly that established the UPCUSA *Book of Confessions* nor any subsequent action of the General Assembly, including the Articles of Agreement, which established the current version of *The Book of Confessions*. What this indicates is that, although the

addition or deletion of a confessional document would clearly be considered an amendment to the Constitution, the choice of a specific translation (and in particular when a translation is chosen that is more faithful to the original text) should be considered an editorial matter that the General Assembly has authority to decide.

There are various translations available that would constitute a marked improvement over the current one. For a reliable and dependable choice, we may turn to a sister denomination that is to be counted among those that most respect the Heidelberg Catechism, the Christian Reformed Church. In their own words:

The 1968 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church appointed a committee to prepare “a modern and accurate translation ... which will serve as the official text of the Heidelberg Catechism and as a guide for catechism preaching.” A translation was adopted by the Synod of 1975, and some editorial revisions were approved by the Synod of 1988.

The English translation follows the first German edition of the catechism except in two instances explained in footnotes to questions 57 and 80. The result of those inclusions is that the translation therefore actually follows the German text of the third edition as it was included in the Palatinate Church Order of November 15, 1563. This is the “received text” used throughout the world.

This translation is faithful and reliable, providing the text of the first, second, and third editions of the Heidelberg Catechism as they have been used in the Reformed churches for more than four centuries. Alternatively, one might consider adopting the translation authorized by the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, as posted on the website of Westminster Theological Seminary.

#### Endnotes

1. *The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563–1963, 400th Anniversary Edition*. Copyright 1962, United Church Press.
2. Professor Osterhaven’s letter to the editor of *Monday Morning*, dated November 25, 1996, which appeared in edited form in *Monday Morning*, Vol. 62, No. 4.

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#### Concurrence to Item 13-05 from the Presbytery of Winnebago.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 13-05

*Advice on Item 13-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 13-05 with its response to Item 13-04.

#### *Rationale*

As noted in its response to Item 13-04, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that the alteration or replacement of the English translation of one or more of the statements in *The Book of Confessions* constitutes an amendment to *The Book of Confessions* and requires the use of the process outlined in G-18.0201a–b. This may have been the intent of the Presbytery of Boston in its overture, but the text of the overture is not clear on this point.

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#### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 13-05

*Comment on Item 13-05—From the General Assembly Council.*

Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-06 seek to restore the Heidelberg Catechism to its “historic form” by substituting a more recent translation for the translation currently in *The Book of Confessions*.

Section G-2.0100a describes the role of our confessions in the life of the Presbyterian Church:

a. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ in the creeds and confessions in *The Book of Confessions*. In these confessional statements the church declares to its members and to the world

- who and what it is,
- what it believes,
- what it resolves to do.

The verbs in this section are all present tense. The confessions, rooted in particular historical contexts, declare our contemporary church's identity, belief, and action. Thus the confessions are more than historical documents. While they grow out of particular contexts and speak to them, they have been adopted into *The Book of Confessions* because the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes that they are authoritative for the church's current faith and life.

The confessions are not static documents, but living witnesses to our theological tradition. Therefore, the constitutional form of each confession is that which is printed in *The Book of Confessions*, not the texts in their original forms and in their original languages. The clearest example of this is the Westminster Confession, amended over time by both northern and southern streams of the church. Nevertheless, Presbyterians have a long history of appreciation for historical and textual scholarship. Questions about translations are appropriate in determining the church's confessional stance.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has the right to determine its confessional stance and can consider amendments to *The Book of Confessions*, guided by "The Assessment of Proposed Amendments to *The Book of Confessions*" (BOC, xxxi-xxxvi) and following the process outlined in the *Book of Order* (G-18.0200).

However, because the confessions constitute a living tradition that expresses the church's beliefs, the decision to amend *The Book of Confessions* is a normative decision, not simply a historical decision. The primary purpose of the confessions is not to enshrine a historical perspective, but to shape the ongoing faith and life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Therefore, the question before the General Assembly is whether a different translation of the Heidelberg Catechism would better declare to its members and the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do.

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### COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 13-05

*Comment on Item 13-05—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).*

That should the 218th General Assembly (2008) determine that it is wise and timely to create a special committee (G-18.0201b) to consider whether to recommend approval of the Belhar Confession and a new translation of the Heidelberg Confession, the COGA urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to utilize one special committee to undertake the required study of both potential confessional documents.

None of these requests require the process of creating an entirely new confession, nor the drafting of new language amending a current confession. The requested study of Belhar would focus on whether it should be included in *The Book of Confessions* as it has been by a number of our Reformed ecumenical partners. Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-06 ask the PC(USA) to approve a different translation of the Heidelberg Confession, and again do not request any significant redrafting of the confession itself.

Further, the COGA concurs with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the use of one special committee would be entirely constitutional. The COGA also believes it wise to consider these two proposed changes to *The Book of Confessions* jointly and concurrently, as each proposal would each affect both the content and tone of our current *The Book of Confessions*. Finally, the COGA notes that the tasks required are different in kind than creating an entirely new text, which the PC(USA) last undertook in creating and approving A Brief Statement of Faith following reunion. The cost saving of one, rather than two committees would be substantial. (See financial implication.)

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## Item 13-06

[The assembly approved Item 13-06. See pp. 18–19.]

*On Correcting Translation Problems of the Heidelberg Catechism—From the Presbytery of Newark.*

**The Presbytery of Newark overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to correct translation problems in five responses of the Heidelberg Catechism as found in *The Book of Confessions* and to add the original Scripture texts of the German Heidelberg Catechism. The following changes are proposed: [The process to amend *The Book of Confessions* can be found in the *Book of Order*, G-18.0200.]**

**1. Amend the answer to 4.019 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**



“A. From the holy gospel, which God himself revealed in the beginning in the Garden of Eden, afterward proclaimed through the holy patriarchs and prophets and foreshadowed through the sacrifices and other ~~rites of the Old Covenant ceremonies of the law~~, and, finally, fulfilled through his own well-beloved Son.”

2. Amend the answer to 4.033 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A. Because Christ alone is God’s ~~own eternal Son~~ *natural son*, whereas we are ~~accepted~~ *adopted* for his sake as children of God by grace.”

3. Amend the answer to 4.055 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A. First, that believers one and all, as partakers of the Lord Christ, and all his treasures and gifts, ~~shall~~ *share* in one fellowship. Second, that each one ought to know that he is obliged to use his gifts ~~freely~~ *willingly* and with joy for the benefit and welfare of other members.”

4. Amend the answer to 4.074 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A. Yes, because they, as well as their parents, are included in the covenant and belong to the people of God. Since both redemption from sin through the blood of Christ and the gift of faith from the Holy Spirit are promised to these children no less than to their parents, infants are also by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, to be incorporated into the Christian church and distinguished from the children of unbelievers. This was done in the Old ~~Covenant~~ *Testament* by circumcision. In the New ~~Covenant~~ *Testament* baptism has been instituted to take its place.”

5. Amend the answer to 4.087 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A. ~~Certainly not! Scripture says, “Surely you know that the unjust will never come into possession of the kingdom of God. Make no mistake: no fornicator or idolater, none who are guilty either of adultery or of homosexual perversion, no thieves or grabbers or drunkards or slanderers or swindlers, will possess the kingdom of God. Certainly not; for as Scripture says no unchaste person, idolater, adulterer, thief, greedy person, drunkard, slanderer, robber, or anyone like that shall inherit the kingdom of god.”~~

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$28,050; (2010): \$3,050 (Per Capita-OGA)]

#### *Rationale*

Concerns have been raised regarding five answers in the present translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in *The Book of Confessions*. We believe these four responses can be amended in a way that makes them both more accurate and faithful to the original text of the catechism. We believe this will satisfy concerns that have been raised by the Presbytery of Pittsburgh and others without the need of a major redoing of the present translation. As the original German text included Scripture texts, we ask that those also be included in *The Book of Confessions*.

Drawing on the German and Latin original texts of the Heidelberg Catechism, we propose the above changes.

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#### GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 13-06

*Comment on Item 13-06—From the General Assembly Council.*

Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-06 seek to restore the Heidelberg Catechism to its “historic form” by substituting a more recent translation for the translation currently in *The Book of Confessions*.

Section G-2.0100a describes the role of our confessions in the life of the Presbyterian Church:

- a. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ in the creeds and confessions in *The Book of Confessions*. In these confessional statements the church declares to its members and to the world
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The verbs in this section are all present tense. The confessions, rooted in particular historical contexts, declare our contemporary church's identity, belief, and action. Thus the confessions are more than historical documents. While they grow out of particular contexts and speak to them, they have been adopted into *The Book of Confessions* because the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes that they are authoritative for the church's current faith and life.

The confessions are not static documents, but living witnesses to our theological tradition. Therefore, the constitutional form of each confession is that which is printed in *The Book of Confessions*, not the texts in their original forms and in their original languages. The clearest example of this is the Westminster Confession, amended over time by both northern and southern streams of the church. Nevertheless, Presbyterians have a long history of appreciation for historical and textual scholarship. Questions about translations are appropriate in determining the church's confessional stance.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has the right to determine its confessional stance and can consider amendments to *The Book of Confessions*, guided by "The Assessment of Proposed Amendments to *The Book of Confessions*" (BOC, xxxi–xxxvi) and following the process outlined in the *Book of Order* (G-18.0200).

However, because the confessions constitute a living tradition that expresses the church's beliefs, the decision to amend *The Book of Confessions* is a normative decision, not simply a historical decision. The primary purpose of the confessions is not to enshrine a historical perspective, but to shape the ongoing faith and life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Therefore, the question before the General Assembly is whether a different translation of the Heidelberg Catechism would better declare to its members and the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do.

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### COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 13-06

*Comment on Item 13-06—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).*

That should the 218th General Assembly (2008) determine that it is wise and timely to create a special committee (G-18.0201b) to consider whether to recommend approval of the Belhar Confession and a new translation of the Heidelberg Confession, the COGA urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to utilize one special committee to undertake the required study of both potential confessional documents.

None of these requests require the process of creating an entirely new confession, nor the drafting of new language amending a current confession. The requested study of Belhar would focus on whether it should be included in *The Book of Confessions* as it has been by a number of our Reformed ecumenical partners. Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-06 ask the PC(USA) to approve a different translation of the Heidelberg Confession, and again do not request any significant redrafting of the confession itself.

Further, the COGA concurs with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the use of one special committee would be entirely constitutional. The COGA also believes it wise to consider these two proposed changes to *The Book of Confessions* jointly and concurrently, as each proposal would each affect both the content and tone of our current *The Book of Confessions*. Finally, the COGA notes that the tasks required are different in kind than creating an entirely new text, which the PC(USA) last undertook in creating and approving A Brief Statement of Faith following reunion. The cost saving of one, rather than two committees would be substantial. (See financial implication.)

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## Item 13-07

[The assembly approved Item 13-07 with amendment. See p. 19.]

*Resolution to Study the Belhar Confession for Inclusion in the Confessional Documents of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

**The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends the 218th General Assembly (2008) take the following actions:**

1. **Direct the Moderators of the 216th, 217th, and 218th General Assemblies (2004, 2006, and 2008)—in consultation with the Stated Clerk, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Office of Theology and Worship—to initiate the process described in G-18.0201b by appointing a committee[, separate from any committee assigned to the Heidelberg Catechism,] to consider amending the confessional documents of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to include the Belhar Confession in *The Book of Confessions* and to report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

2. Urge all Presbyterians in congregations, middle governing bodies, and other entities related to the PC(USA) to engage in study, prayer, reflection, and discernment, of the Belhar Confession and the Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations, utilizing the following resources:

- *A Study Guide of The Belhar Confession and Its Accompanying Letter*, Eunice T. McGarahan. Published by the Office of Theology and Worship, General Assembly Council, PC(USA), 2008. Available online at: <http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/confession.htm>

- *Report of the Task Force on Reparations (216th General Assembly (2004)). Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 701–20.* This report includes the full text of the Belhar Confession. Available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/reparations/>

- *A Study Guide for the Report of the Task Force on Reparations, Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, 2008.* Available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/>

[Financial Implications: (2008): \$0; (2009): \$28,050; (2010): \$3,050 (Per Capita-OGA)]

### *Rationale*

The Belhar Confession speaks to the persistent reality of racism today—in its call for unity and reconciliation as marks of faithfulness in the church, and its challenge to make manifest the unity of God’s people in the prophetic witness of the gospel by confronting the sin of racism, working for justice in the church and in society.

The 216th General Assembly (2004) called all Presbyterians to confront the sin of racism—to confess a heritage of injustice that continues to distort human relationships in the church and in our nation. The assembly commended the Confession of Belhar to the church as a resource for beginning a transformative dialogue, “a means of deepening the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to dealing with racism and a means of strengthening its unity” (*Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 701*).

Despite decades of prophetic witness in policy and proclamation for racial justice and reconciliation, the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) remains overwhelmingly white and middle class. As the U.S. culture in which we are called to minister becomes increasingly diverse, the church today must learn to confront the barriers to change within itself.

The Belhar Confession speaks to the global realities of racism. It calls the church to a deeper appreciation of the values of unity in diversity in relation to the divisions of race and culture and many other facets of the human condition. In the U.S. and around the world, the divisions of race too often determine who receives the greatest benefits in employment, education, housing, healthcare, criminal justice, and civil rights. At the core of almost every militarized conflict in the world today are divisions of race, ethnicity, and religion.

Including the Belhar Confession in *The Book of Confessions* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would also make an important witness to the unity of the global church and a global ecumenical movement. The Belhar Confession makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the unity of the church, honoring God’s gift of diversity in the human family and speaks to a hunger in the church for deep theological reflection on matters that have a direct impact on our lives.

As the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to become a multiracial, multicultural community of faith, the Belhar Confession adds an important voice to the expressions of our faith contained in our *Book of Confessions*, one that does not come through the historical experience of European and North American Church life. With the center of Christianity now being in the global south, and as Christians from the global south migrate to the U.S. and seek fellowship in our midst, adding the Belhar Confession to our confessional documents would reflect a new awareness of the global nature of our faith and our unity with the global church.

At its 2007 General Synod, the Reformed Church in America voted to adopt the Belhar Confession on a three-year provisional basis. Speaking to the General Synod, Piet Naude of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa said,

You have taken a small voice from the South seriously enough to say: “We see in your faith our faith too.” Thank you for doing that, and therewith strengthening the church in South Africa.

If the churches in the world do not demonstrate that we are counter-societies where there is no longer Jew and Greek, man and woman, boss and slave, how will the world believe in the power of reconciliation in Christ?

The proclamation of Belhar that reconciliation is possible in Christ and that cultural and other “natural” differences are gifts for the upbuilding of church and society should be heard loudly and clearly all across America. (<http://www.rca.org/NETCOMMUNITY/Page.aspx?pid=3037&srcid=2552>)

Including Belhar in the confessional documents, in the worshipping life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would provide a strong prophetic witness to the world. It would connect us in a tangible way to the global Reformed movement, strengthening the witness of the church in the U.S., in South Africa, and everywhere racism divides peoples and nations.

The *Book of Order* defines the process by which the confessional documents of the church may be amended:

- The first step, if approved at this assembly, is the appointment of a committee of elders and ministers to consider the proposal and report its recommendation to the next ensuing General Assembly (G-18.0201(b)) which would be the 219th General Assembly (2010).
- If the committee recommends to the 219th General Assembly (2010) that the confessional documents of the church be amended to include the Belhar Confession, and if the assembly approves that recommendation, it would go the presbyteries for a vote.
- Two-thirds of the presbyteries would be required to approve the recommendation. Approval would become effective at the 220th General Assembly (2012).

#### *An Introduction to the Belhar Confession*

The Belhar Confession was born in a climate of racial hatred, social upheaval, political turmoil, xenophobia, ideological terrorism, economic exploitation, and intense violence. Apartheid, the political system adopted by the South African government in 1948, mandated racial division that resulted in the creation of unjust laws, an exploitative economy, and rapacious violence against people of color. Sadly, the Dutch Reformed Church (DMC) laid the moral and spiritual foundation for the formation of an apartheid form of government both by being quietist on the question of slavery that was introduced to South Africa by the Dutch in 1652 and later, by mandating separate services for white and “coloured” congregants in 1857. Even when the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) was formed in 1881 the DRC retained the right to veto all decisions made by the DRMC. There was no real effort to embrace racial unity until after 1951 when the Dutch Reformed Bantu Churches (DRBC) began to unite with DRMC congregations. For nearly three hundred years many Christians of the Reformed theological tradition looked the other way as racial injustices were visited on millions of people—many of whom themselves were adherents to the Reformed tradition. Worse still is the reality that there were some people in the Reformed tradition, both clergy and lay, who attempted to justify racial separation spiritually and morally, biblically and theologically.

By 1986, when the Belhar Confession was written and adopted by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, the apartheid government of South Africa was feeling the full weight of the pressure being applied by liberationists within South Africa, sanctions levied by the international community, and countless rallies, boycotts, and protest marches by advocates for justice around the world. Simultaneously, denominations of the Reformed tradition were looking for ways to unify under a common denominational banner and to join the righteous endeavor to break the back of the apartheid government. Dr. Allan Boesak, a black South African minister and theologian of the DRMC wrote, “it is not the perpetrators of injustice, but those who resist it, who are the true representatives of the Reformed tradition.”<sup>1</sup> Boesak’s assertion reveals the attitude and commitment of many communicant members of the Reformed family in South Africa at that time. There was a Spirit driven righteous indignation coupled with a soulful weariness that gave rise to an ecclesial call for unity and reconciliation.

The reader might ask what all of this has to do with the American context and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In the General Assembly’s *Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations*, which was received by the 216th General Assembly (2004), two statements were made that bear repeating here. The first has to do with Native Americans.

While it is appropriate to remember and to celebrate our Presbyterian witness in America, it is also appropriate to remember and acknowledge that our witness has not always been honorable. The “New World” was already inhabited when the Puritans from England, some of whom were Presbyterians, arrived on the northeast coast of the North American continent. They, along with other Europeans, participated in the displacement and slaughter of thousands of native peoples. Furthermore, in our efforts to reach native peoples with the gospel of Jesus Christ, we also pursued programs and policies which contributed to the virtual destruction of Native American and Alaskan Native cultures.

The second statement pertains to African Americans. Both statements lend insight into the ways that the Presbyterian church, like the DRC, has been quietist about and sometimes participated in, racial injustice.

Indeed, Portugal began to transport enslaved Africans to Europe as early as 1492.<sup>2</sup> The European slave trade lasted for more than 400 years. During that time Africa lost nearly forty million people. Approximately twenty million of those women and men were brought to the “New World.” Millions more died during capture, at sea, or soon after arrival.<sup>3</sup> Families were torn asunder, cultures were destroyed, whole nations were decimated, women, children, and men were forced to spend their lives as chattel in the homes and fields of good Christians all over Europe and the Americas, yet our Presbyterian fore-parents made no definitive statements about such sordid and inhumane activities until 1818.<sup>4</sup> Even then, Presbyterians made strong condemnatory statements against the sin of slavery, but invoked no sanction against members of its constituency who owned slaves.<sup>5</sup>

There is evidently a sense in which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), like the DRC, needs to adjust its moral and spiritual compass. The Belhar Confession is an instrument God is providing to help guide the church back onto the path of true justice and righteousness where unity and reconciliation can be found.

While it is true that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has acted benevolently and graciously toward aggrieved groups of peoples within and outside of the church, and often in very practical ways, it is also true that such actions rarely served to repair and restore relationships with those groups in any meaningful way.

We Presbyterians sing songs written in Native American languages, Spanish, and Korean; we have included Negro spirituals in our primary hymnbook; and in our prayers of confession we often rehearse our sins of racism, sexism, social and economic injustice, and political collusion with the dominate consciousness of the country. Yet statements about our “common” Scotch-Irish heritage are repeatedly made in governing bodies, conferences, workshops, committee and commission meetings throughout the church as if no other ethnic heritages were represented at the table. Our congregations remain racially divided due in no small part to the yawning cultural divide that continues to separate “whites” from “coloureds” and whites and peoples of color from the poor. We choose to live not in racially mixed, but in racially segregated communities and neighborhoods; and in our meetings we typically fail or refuse to truly struggle with the real life political, economic, social, and military policies that negatively impact people of color and the poor. Is it possible that we have grown all too comfortable with a paternalistic way of being in relationship with aggrieved groups of people—a relationship based on a “doing for” rather than a “doing with” mentality?

The unity and reconciliation called for in the Belhar Confession require the confessor(s) to actively engage the struggle for moral and spiritual transformation; to get into the personal and communal fight against deeply embedded racial attitudes and behaviors; to at least acknowledge, accept, and confess, our sinful history in regard to race and racial attitudes as together we push forward to repentance, reconciliation, and unity.

#### Endnotes

1. Boesak, Allan. *Black and Reformed: Apartheid, Liberation and the Calvinist Tradition* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1986), p. 94.
2. Bennett, Lerone, Jr. *Before the Mayflower: A History of the Negro in America, 1619–1946*. (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., 1964), p. 34.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
4. Wilmore, Gayraud S., *Black and Presbyterian: The Heritage and the Hope* (Louisville: Witherspoon, 1998), p. 30.
5. *Ibid.*

#### *Confession of Belhar* September 1986<sup>1</sup>

1. **We believe** in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.
2. **We believe** in one holy, universal Christian church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family.

#### **We believe**

- that Christ’s work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;
- that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God’s Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain;
- that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted;
- that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another; that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; that we share one faith, have one calling, are of one soul and one mind; have one God and Father, are filled with one Spirit, are baptized with one

baptism, eat of one bread and drink of one cup, confess one name, are obedient to one Lord, work for one cause, and share one hope; together come to know the height and the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ; together are built up to the stature of Christ, to the new humanity; together know and bear one another's burdens, thereby fulfilling the law of Christ that we need one another and upbuild one another, admonishing and comforting one another; that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness; pray together; together serve God in this world; and together fight against all which may threaten or hinder this unity;

- that this unity can be established only in freedom and not under constraint; that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God;
- that true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this church;

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

- which absolutizes either natural diversity or the sinful separation of people in such a way that this absolutization hinders or breaks the visible and active unity of the church, or even leads to the establishment of a separate church formation;
- which professes that this spiritual unity is truly being maintained in the bond of peace while believers of the same confession are in effect alienated from one another for the sake of diversity and in despair of reconciliation;
- which denies that a refusal earnestly to pursue this visible unity as a priceless gift is sin;
- which explicitly or implicitly maintains that descent or any other human or social factor should be a consideration in determining membership of the church.

### 3. We believe

- that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ; that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells.
- that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world;
- that the credibility of this message is seriously affected and its beneficial work obstructed when it is proclaimed in a land which professes to be Christian, but in which the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity;
- that any teaching which attempts to legitimate such forced separation by appeal to the gospel, and is not prepared to venture on the road of obedience and reconciliation, but rather, out of prejudice, fear, selfishness and unbelief, denies in advance the reconciling power of the gospel, must be considered ideology and false doctrine.

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

- which, in such a situation sanctions in the name of the gospel or of the will of God the forced separation of people on the grounds of race and color and thereby in advance obstructs and weakens the ministry and experience of reconciliation in Christ.

### 4. We believe

- that God has revealed himself as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;
- that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged

- that God calls the church to follow him in this; for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;
- that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;
- that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;
- that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;
- that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;
- that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;
- that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

**Therefore, we reject any ideology**

- which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.

**5. We believe** that, in obedience to Jesus Christ, its only head, the church is called to confess and to do all these things, even though the authorities and human laws might forbid them and punishment and suffering be the consequence. Jesus is Lord.

To the one and only God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be the honor and the glory for ever and ever.

Endnote

1. This is a translation of the original Afrikaans text of the confession as it was adopted by the synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa in 1986. In 1994 the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa united to form the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). This inclusive language text was prepared by the Office of Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 13-07**

*Advice on Item 13-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that Item 13-07 from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns presents an issue that the assembly should consider. If the 218th General Assembly (2008) believes that the intent of Item 13-07 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

*Rationale*

Item 13-07 was in response to the following referrals:

*2004 Referral: Item 10-03. Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations, Recommendation 4.d., That the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, Receive Responses, Prepare a Summary, and Report Results to the 218th General Assembly (2008), Together with Possible Recommendations for Further Engagement with the Belhar Confession—From the General Assembly Council Task Force to Study Reparations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 701).*

*2004 Referral: Item 10-03. Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations, Recommendation 4.b., That the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship Prepare Materials to Facilitate Churchwide Reflection and Study of the Belhar Confession—From the General Assembly Council Task Force to Study Reparations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 701).*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution offered the following advice to the 198th General Assembly (1986) as it considered a proposal to include the “Declaration of Faith” in *The Book of Confessions*:

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that clarity with regard to these options will be helpful to the Assembly as it considers the proposal to amend the confessional documents presented in Overture 84-86. These options depend upon the judgment of the Assembly in relation to a proposed amendment and are as follows:

1. The General Assembly may decide that the proposal to amend the confessional documents presented in an overture, communication, report, or resolution does not merit further consideration. In this case, the Assembly should respond to the proposal in the negative or with no action.

2. The General Assembly may be unsure about the merit of a proposal. It is not ready to answer in the negative or to proceed toward amendment as described in action three (3) to follow. In this case, the Assembly should refer the proposal to some group for further study and report to the next Assembly. Good stewardship suggests that this group be a committee or agency already in place with meetings scheduled and budgeted. Whereas a special committee is not precluded for this purpose, it would not be the committee described in G-18.0201.

3. The General Assembly may determine that the proposal for amendment merits adoption strongly enough to trigger the steps of G-18.0201. In this case, the Assembly must “appoint a committee of elders and ministers, numbering not less than fifteen, to consider the proposal, of whom not more than two shall be from anyone synod. . .”(G-18.0201).” (*Minutes*, 1986, Part I, p. 807)

The process of the adoption of “A Brief Statement of Faith” was somewhat more direct than that outlined in the 1986 advice. In 1984, the General Assembly created a committee to draft a new confessional statement. That statement was delivered to the 202nd General Assembly (1990), which then formed a new special committee of fifteen to consider the delivered statement under the provisions of G-18.0201b (see *Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp. 68 and 216, paragraph 15.008).

In light of the church’s recent practice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that it has two pathways by which it may proceed. It may find the recommendation of its Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Office of Theology, Worship, and Education sufficient to ascertain its readiness to proceed toward amendment of *The Book of Confessions* by the process outlined in G-18.0201. If so, it should create or authorize the creation of the special committee contemplated in G-18.0201b. If not, it should refer the proposal to amend *The Book of Confessions* to another committee or entity already in place.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that Item 13-04 from the Presbytery of Northern Kansas and Item 13-05 from the Presbytery of Boston recommend that the General Assembly initiate the process to amend *The Book of Confessions* by replacing the current English translation of the Heidelberg Catechism with a different translation. Both the present action and that contemplated with regard to the Heidelberg Catechism would require the composition of a special committee of at least fifteen persons to consider the action (G-18.0201b). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that it may wish to appoint a single special committee to consider both actions, and that such a committee might be larger than the minimum fifteen to allow for adequate personnel for both tasks.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 13-07 asks to study the Belhar Confession.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises Item 13-07 be approved with amendment.

The ACWC is concerned about the excluding language used for God in Section 4 of the Belhar Confession. God is not male nor female and ascribing God a gender erroneously puts human limits on who God is. In order to give credence to all qualities and characteristics of God and not just those that are masculine, we advise amending to using expansive language for God in Section 4 of the Belhar Confession so it would read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“4. We believe

“● that God has [been] revealed [~~himself~~] as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;

“● that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;



“● that God calls the church to follow [~~him in this~~]; for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry; [the rest of Section 4 remains unchanged]”

*Rationale*

The church has a wonderful opportunity to enhance and deepen our understanding of who God is and how God is at work in the world by experiencing different cultural expressions of worship and praise. Our growing racial and cultural diversity in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is truly a gift from God that helps the church be faithful to its calling. We rejoice that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) claims a commitment to being a fully inclusive body of Christ. The church stands as a faithful witness in the midst of global crises. Faith statements also lift up this witness.

The ACWC supports this overture to study the Belhar Confession. Within this confession is an honest reflection of the sin of racism that has plagued the Christian church. What is most helpful is how it recognizes the urgent need to act for justice as evangelism. Studying this confession gives our church the opportunity to recognize that diversity is a gift and that we have failed to live this out. When we fall and fail as a body, we need to confess our brokenness.

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**GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 13-07**

*Comment on Item 13-07—From the General Assembly Council.*

Item 13-07 recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) initiate the process to include the Belhar Confession in *The Book of Confessions*, and commends the Belhar Confession to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for further study.

The recommendation from the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns suggests that the Belhar Confession, in its powerful words that emerge from a difficult context, may be able to help Presbyterians live out the unity of the church while confronting issues of race.

Section G-2.0100a outlines and describes the role of our confessions in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ in the creeds and confessions in *The Book of Confessions*. In these confessional statements the church declares to its members and to the world

who and what it is,  
what it believes,  
what it resolves to do.

The verbs in this section are all present tense. The confessions, rooted in particular historical contexts, declare our contemporary church’s identity, belief, and action. Thus, the confessions are more than historical documents. While they grow out of particular contexts and speak to them, they have been adopted into *The Book of Confessions* because the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes that they are authoritative for the church’s current faith and life. The confessions are not static documents, but living witnesses to our theological tradition.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has the right to determine its confessional stance and can consider amendments to *The Book of Confessions*, guided by “The Assessment of Proposed Amendments to *The Book of Confessions*” (*The Book of Confessions*, pp. xxxi–xxxvi) and following the process outlined in the *Book of Order* (G-18.0200).

A principle question will be whether Belhar’s powerful witness, embedded in the South African narrative, can aid the North American church in confronting our own racism. There are remarkable similarities and significant differences between the two situations. The Theological Declaration of Barmen has served the Presbyterian church in an analogous way in regard to the confessing church’s mixed struggle against National Socialism. Can Belhar become our confession in the same way that Barmen has become our confession?

Because the confessions constitute a living tradition that expresses the church’s beliefs, the decision to amend *The Book of Confessions* is an identity-forming decision. The primary purpose of the confessions is to shape the ongoing faith and life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Therefore, the question before the General Assembly is whether the Belhar Confession declares to our members and the world who and what we are, what we believe, and what we resolve to do.

**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 13-07**

*Comment on Item 13-07—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).*

That should the 218th General Assembly (2008) determine that it is wise and timely to create a special committee (G-18.0201b) to consider whether to recommend approval of the Belhar Confession and a new translation of the Heidelberg Confession, the COGA urges the 218th General Assembly (2008) to utilize one special committee to undertake the required study of both potential confessional documents.

None of these requests require the process of creating an entirely new confession, nor the drafting of new language amending a current confession. The requested study of Belhar would focus on whether it should be included in *The Book of Confessions* as it has been by a number of our Reformed ecumenical partners. Items 13-04, 13-05, and 13-06 ask the PC(USA) to approve a different translation of the Heidelberg Confession, and again do not request any significant redrafting of the confession itself.

Further, the COGA concurs with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the use of one special committee would be entirely constitutional. The COGA also believes it wise to consider these two proposed changes to *The Book of Confessions* jointly and concurrently, as each proposal would each affect both the content and tone of our current *The Book of Confessions*. Finally, the COGA notes that the tasks required are different in kind than creating an entirely new text, which the PC(USA) last undertook in creating and approving A Brief Statement of Faith following reunion. The cost saving of one, rather than two committees would be substantial. (See financial implication.)

**Item 13-08**

[This item has been move to 12 Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education as Item 12-07.]

**Item 13-09**

[This item has been move to 12 Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education as Item 12-08.]

**Item 13-10**

**[The assembly answered Item 13-10 by the action taken on Item 13-06. See p. 19.]**

*Changes to Translated Documents in The Book of Confessions—From the Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Winnebago.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer Item 13-10 with the following response:

With respect to the question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question does not present a question requiring interpretation of the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution agrees with the reasoning advanced in the request in defense of the position that a change in the translation of a confession or creed is a substantial change in *The Book of Confessions*. As such, a change in the English translation of a confession or creed requires the use of the amendment process in G-18.0200 of the *Book of Order*.

The approval of a new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism would not be the first time that the General Assembly has employed the amendment process outlined in G-18.0201 to consider the approval of a confessional translation. The 209th General Assembly (1997) approved an action

to direct the Stated Clerk to initiate the process described in G-18.0201b to appoint a committee to consider proposing to the 210th General Assembly (1998) that it act to send the following proposed amendment to *The Book of Confessions* to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes: "Shall *The Book of Confessions* be amended so that the 'Ecumenical Version' of the Nicene Creed be included (*Minutes*, 1997, Part I, p. 42, *Overture* 97-20)."

At no time since the adoption of *The Book of Confessions* have the original Greek, Latin, or German versions of the various confessional statements been regarded as authoritative for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The English versions of the

Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Second Helvetic Confession, and the Theological Declaration of Barmen, as presented in the current edition of *The Book of Confessions*, are the authoritative versions for constitutional purposes.

The committee is aware that translation from one language to another is, at best, an inexact art and subject to difference of opinion. Languages are not static. Not only does our understanding of the source language change over time, but English usage itself is in transition. It is thus essential for both our ecclesiology and our polity that creedal and confessional statements be rendered into English as accurately and understandably as possible, and that from time to time reviews and revisions of the translations in *The Book of Confessions* be conducted. Such reviews are beneficial to the theological health of the church. Changes that result from such reviews should receive the widest possible and most careful discussion on the part of the church before they are received as authoritative. It is precisely this broad and careful discussion that the amendment procedures outlined in G-18.0200 are designed to provide.

### *Question Received*

Item 13-10 from Stated Clerk Michael Lukens of the Presbytery of Winnebago presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

Is a change in the translation of a confession or creed a substantial change in the nature of the Constitution/*The Book of Confessions* or is it rather only a derivative change in the communication or medium of the document in the Constitution?

## **\*Item 13-11**

[The assembly approved Item 13-11. See pp. 18, 19.]

**In regards to the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) call upon the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and all of its governing bodies and congregations to actively participate in the Calvin Jubilee in 2009 and to do the following:**

- 1. Use this occasion to rediscover and reclaim Calvin's theological vision so that we may more faithfully be a church reformed and reforming in our own time.**
- 2. Participate in conferences and study events around the Calvin Jubilee including the North American Calvin Jubilee conference to be held at Montreat at the time of Calvin's birthday in July of 2009.**
- 3. Respond positively to the call of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to make a fresh commitment to three causes that were central to Calvin's vision and ministry—the unity of the church, the honoring of creation, and the commitment to justice.**
- 4. Make use of the resources made available from Reformed churches around the world through the Calvin Jubilee Patronage Committee and its Website, [www.calvin09.org](http://www.calvin09.org).**
- 5. Focus on Reformation Sundays in 2008 and 2009 to lift up to our churches the gifts and challenges of sharing in Calvin's legacy and vision for faithful witness.**
- 6. Encourage all appropriate PC(USA) agencies, institutions, and governing bodies to take advantage of this jubilee to lift up John Calvin's heritage for the contemporary church.**

### *Rationale*

One of the great treasures of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is our Reformed heritage and theological tradition.

The year 2009 is the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, who in so many ways is the "father" of the Reformed tradition and one of its greatest theologians.

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches has called upon Reformed churches all around the world to join in a celebration of the Calvin Jubilee with an eye toward what it means to be a church "reformed and always reforming" in our own time and place.

This celebration is not only an occasion to look backward but also an occasion to discover anew with Reformed churches around the world the unique gifts and insights of the Reformed tradition for the renewal of our churches and our world in the 21st century.

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## \*Item 13-12

[The assembly approved Item 13-12. See pp. 18, 19.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve the following nominees to the Mountain Retreat Association, Inc.'s Board of Directors:

### Class of 2010:

1. John W. Smith T—Synod of the Living Waters (New)
2. Margaret Corbin Scheu—Synod of South Atlantic (New)
3. Brandon Wert—Synod of the Southwest (Re-nomination)
4. Kaye Eggleston—Synod of Lincoln Trains (Re-nomination)
5. David Quattlebaum—Synod of South Atlantic (Re-nomination)
6. Gilmour Lake—Synod of Mid Atlantic (Re-nomination)

### Class of 2011:

- LaVert Jones—General Assembly Council  
Manley Olson—General Assembly Council
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## Item 13-13

[The assembly approved Item 13-13 with comment. See p. 19.]

The General Assembly Council recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) commend for study in PC(USA) congregations a study guide and accompanying DVD for “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing.”

*Comment:* It is the desire of the assembly committee that future resources on theological issues include leaders and teachers that fully represent the diversity of the church (G-4.0403).

### *Rationale*

This is in response to *Alternate Resolution to 2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing. Recommendation 3. Instruct the Office of Theology and Worship, and Congregational Ministries Publishing and Christian Education, to Prepare Study Materials for “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing”—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

The reception and commendation for study of “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing” by the 217th General Assembly (2006) caused concerns in some parts of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Therefore, the Office of Theology and Worship developed a more robust study process than might ordinarily be used. The Office of Theology and Worship has made available a video resource as a general introduction to the Trinity with a comprehensive study guide for “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing” to assist churches in deepening their understanding of and practices in response to the Trinity.

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## Item 13-Info

### *Committee on Theological Education Agency Summary*

1. *Assigned Responsibilities*

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) has the responsibility for developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for theological education from the perspective of the whole church. The committee seeks to identify, develop, and propose strategies for a denomination-wide approach to theological education. The committee serves as an advocate for theo-

logical education, seeking to support the seminaries and to strengthen them for their mission in the world. The Committee on Theological Education can be seen as a two-way communication link between the denomination and its graduate theological institutions. Voting members of the committee include thirteen people elected to represent the church at large and a representative from each of the ten seminaries related directly to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Corresponding members of COTE, who serve with voice but no vote, include representatives from Auburn Theological Seminary and from the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico (both institutions related to the General Assembly through covenant agreements negotiated every five years); a representative of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation; and representatives of two non-Presbyterian seminaries.

## 2. *Accomplishments*

### a. *Interschool and Seminary/Church Cooperation*

#### (1) *Seminary-Church Conversations*

Lead staff persons and representative elected members of the COTE, the General Assembly Council, and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly have met with senior staff and boards of eight of the ten PC(USA) seminaries beginning in April of 2006. These themed conversations, coordinated by COTE, have sought to foster partnership in particular areas of common mission including passing on the Reformed tradition, world mission, Christian education, pastoral formation, spiritual development, multicultural leadership, and commissioned lay pastor training. The academic deans of the Presbyterian-related seminaries and elected members of COTE met jointly with the GAC and COGA in February of 2008 to continue these conversations, especially around the issues of pastoral formation and leadership needs for the future church. The COTE continues to welcome two members of GAC as liaisons on COTE and COTE continues to send an institutional representative/seminary president to each of the GAC meetings as a way of fostering communication and cooperation.

#### (2) *Cooperative Courses*

The Office of the General Assembly, San Francisco Theological Seminary, and COTE continue to sponsor a class for seminarians entitled “Presbyterianism: Principles and Practices” during General Assembly. Each January COTE sponsored, in cooperation with Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and the General Assembly Council, a January-term course for seminarians entitled “Leaders for a Connectional Church: Congregations and the General Assembly.” With the help of presbyteries and seminaries, the Office of Theological Education has encouraged committees on preparation for ministry to urge candidates under their care to take advantage of these opportunities to learn firsthand about our denominational program and polity. Course tuition for courses may be paid via the committee’s Presbyterian Seminary Exchange Program.

#### (3) *Staff and Faculty Cooperation*

Some of the groups of faculty and staff representing the various schools that have come together for mutual planning and information sharing each academic year including the institutions’ presidents, deans of student affairs, financial aid officers, development officers, placement officers, communication directors, admission officers, field education directors, ethics and social witness faculty, mission professors, and academic deans.

#### (4) *Other Cooperative Projects*

► COTE, through Theological Education Fund special project funds, sponsored a grant request for a May 2008 gathering of Presbyterian theological scholars around the theme of “Pedagogies of African-American Presbyterians.”

► COTE endorsed a 2007–2008 Lilly Endowment funded project that matches three PC(USA) seminaries with three Presbyterian-related colleges to work with congregations on “Globalization and Cultural Diversity.”

► COTE encouraged and participated in a March 2008 gathering of the presidents of PC(USA) seminaries and the presidents of Rabbinical Schools in the Conservative, Reform, and Orthodox Jewish Movements.

### b. *Funding for Seminaries Related to the PC(USA)*

Implementation and interpretation of the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan), which is the sole source of denomination-wide support for the ten PC(USA) seminaries and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, continues to be an important task for COTE and the Office of Theological Education. The fund was established by the 198th General Assembly (1986). In 2006, approximately 20 percent of PC(USA) congregations made voluntary contributions to the Theological Education Fund (TEF). As a result, \$2,374,492 in TEF moneys were distributed to eligible schools in 2007 according to a formula developed and monitored by the COTE Institutional Review Sub-committee on which only members-at-large sit. In 2007, giving declined as just over \$2,000,000 was received and sent to support our schools in 2008. We anticipate receiving and distributing

a similar amount in 2008. The TEF helps underwrite quality theological education at our seminaries for students who return to serve our churches in desperate need of pastors equipped for service.

“Seminaries and Churches Together—For Generations to Come” is the theme for interpretation of the seminaries on behalf of the Theological Education Fund. A Seminary Support Network includes more than 140 enthusiastic volunteers and representatives from presbyteries and synods that advocate on behalf of the seminaries. Participation at annual network training conferences continues to grow. The 2007 event was held in conjunction with the stated meeting of the COTE to foster communication and cooperation. Sixteen network synod-level representatives continue to work on a contract basis to make possible improved regional coordination for the Seminary Support Network. Pastors, clerks of sessions, and designated contact persons in PC(USA) congregations received interpretive materials about our seminaries and requests for support of the Theological Education Fund.

In cooperation with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, active promotion of the Theological Schools Endowment Fund has continued to grow at a modest pace. The Theological Schools Endowment Fund provides opportunity for individuals to contribute moneys to benefit our Presbyterian seminaries through gifts and bequests. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation manages this fund.

c. *Charter Changes in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Theological Institutions*

One of the governance functions assigned to COTE by the Report of the Special Committee on Theological Institutions approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) is the reporting of charter changes by the individual schools to the General Assembly. Two seminaries reported changes in their charter or other constitutional documents since the 217th General Assembly (2006).

(1) *Princeton Theological Seminary*

On May 16, 2006, the Board of Trustees of Princeton Theological Seminary approved the following changes to the institutional charter in their “Amendment and Restatement of the Certificate of Incorporation” printed in full below.

ARTICLE I. The name of this Corporation (“Corporation”) shall be PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (“Seminary”). An alternative name by which the Corporation sometimes has been and is recognized is THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

ARTICLE II. The Corporation is organized to provide graduate, graduate professional, and continuing education programs in such fields and disciplines of Christian ministry and theological scholarship as the Board of Trustees (“Board”) may from time to time determine; and to promote the advancement of knowledge through the conduct and nurture of theological research.

ARTICLE III. The corporation shall have no members.

ARTICLE IV. The geographic address of the registered office of the Corporation shall be 64 Mercer Street, in Princeton, in the State of New Jersey. The postal designation of the Corporation's registered office shall be Box 821, Princeton, NJ 08542-0803. The current registered agent of the Corporation is John W. Gilmore.

ARTICLE V. The officers of the Corporation shall be a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such others as the Board may from time to time determine. The terms and procedures of their appointment, and the use of alternative titles for any of them, shall be specified in the by-laws. The President of the Corporation shall be an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

ARTICLE VI. Unless otherwise limited by this certificate, the Corporation shall have all of the general powers granted to not-for-profit corporations by Title 15A of the Revised Statutes of the State of New Jersey, and such other powers as the laws of the State of New Jersey may confer, except those that are expressly inapplicable to corporations without members.

ARTICLE VII. There shall be a Board of Trustees ordinarily consisting of between twenty-five (25) and thirty-five (35) persons, with the actual number serving at any particular time to be determined by the Board. Approximately one-half of the trustees shall be ordained ministers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and approximately one-half shall be communicant (lay) members of that Church. If, however, a lay member of the Board should change his or her place of residence, creating in the judgment of the Board an undue hardship for him or her to retain participatory membership in a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Board at its discretion may permit that person to retain membership on the Board, provided he or she shall assume and continue affiliation with a congregation of another reformed denomination in correspondence with the General Assembly of said Church; but not more than two (2) persons shall serve simultaneously under this exception. The number, names and addresses of the Trustees constituting the current Board are as set forth on Schedule A, attached hereto.

ARTICLE VIII. The Board shall be divided into classes approximately equal in size, and the term of office of one such class shall expire each year. Other qualifications for the office of Trustee, procedures for the election and removal of Trustees and for their assignment to classes, and provisions for the selection of officers of the Board and for the conduct of the business shall be specified in the by-laws.

ARTICLE IX. When a person is elected President of the Seminary, or when a Trustee is first elected to the Board of Trustees, his or her name shall be presented for endorsement to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). If the General Assembly to which this presentation is made votes not to endorse the person so elected, and provides in writing reasons for its judgment, the Board of Trustees, at its next meeting, shall review those reasons and report its response thereto to the next said General Assembly.

## 13 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND INSTITUTIONS

ARTICLE X. Trustees, together with the President, Secretary, Treasurer, Deans, Vice Presidents, and Head Librarian of the Corporation, shall not be personally liable to the Seminary for damages for breach of any duty owed to the Seminary, except to the extent the New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended from time to time, otherwise requires.

ARTICLE XI. The Corporation is not organized for profit and is to be operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, and in the promotion of the Corporation's purpose as set forth in Article II hereof. The net earnings of the Corporation shall be devoted exclusively to educational and charitable purposes and shall not inure to the benefit of any private individual. No trustee or person from whom the Corporation may receive any property or funds shall receive or shall be entitled to receive any pecuniary profit from the operation thereof, and in no event shall any part of the funds or assets of the Corporation be paid as salary or compensation to, or distributed to, or inure to the benefit of any member of the board of trustees; provided, however, that (a) reasonable compensation may be paid to any trustee while acting as an Agent, including consultant, contractor or employee of the Corporation for services rendered affecting one or more of the purposes of the Corporation; and (b) any trustee may, from time to time, be reimbursed for her or his actual and reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the administration of the affairs of the Corporation.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, the Corporation shall not engage in any activities that are not permitted (1) by a non-profit corporation exempt from federal corporate tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or (2) by a non-profit corporation, contributions to which are tax deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE XII. This Corporation may be voluntarily dissolved upon adoption of a plan of dissolution, which plan must receive an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the Board of Trustees at two successive stated meetings of the Board, or meetings specially called for the purpose, in accordance with Title 15A of the Revised Statutes of the State of New Jersey. In the event this Corporation should be dissolved, either voluntarily or involuntarily, any assets of the Corporation thus dissolved shall be disposed of by the Board in a manner that it deems consistent with the purpose of the Corporation as set forth in Article II above.

ARTICLE XIII. Amendments to this certificate may be made by the Board of Trustees of the Corporation pursuant to Title 15A of the Revised Statutes of the State of New Jersey. Any amendment so enacted shall be promptly reported to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### (2) *Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico*

#### (a) *Number of members of the Board of Directors*

Former composition of the Board:

- 30 Directors
- 1 Ex officio—President of the Seminary
- 1 Alumni Representative
- 1 Student Representative
- 1 Faculty Member
- Total 34 Members of the Board of Directors

New composition of the Board

- 22 Directors
- 1 Ex officio—President of the Seminary
- 1 Alumni Representative
- 1 Student Representative
- 1 Faculty Member
- Total 26 Members of the Board of Directors

#### (b) *Work Committees' mergers*

There was a reduction on work committees from nine committees to four, including the Executive Committee.

#### d. *Reports from Individual Institutions*

The Committee on Theological Education brings to the assembly a narrative report from each of the ten seminaries related to the PC(USA), Auburn Theological Seminary, the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, and the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation.

#### (1) *Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

With more than \$8.8 million raised from generous supporters of Austin Seminary, charitable foundations, and friends of longtime Presbyterian leaders John and Nancy Anderson, for whom the building is named, groundbreaking on the first of a new generation of student housing took place November 12, 2007. Construction, which began in early spring, will take approximately one year. When completed, the four-story Anderson House will accommodate students and their families in twenty-four 1-, 2-, and 4-bedroom apartments. A committee comprised of administrators, trustees, and students worked with the contractor on various energy-saving strategies and earned a one-star rating from Austin Energy's Green Building program. In other news, the Lilly Endowment Inc. awarded a continuance grant of \$781,803 to the College of Pastoral Leaders,

and president's colloquia were held each spring and fall on topics such as the requirements of church membership, immigration, and the church's struggle with homosexuality.

(2) *Columbia Theological Seminary*

Three distinguished pastor/scholars have joined the faculty: Paul Huh, assistant professor of worship and director of Korean American ministries; Kim Long, assistant professor of worship and coordinator of worship resources for congregations; and Jeffery Tribble, assistant professor of ministry. Brian Wren retired and has been named professor emeritus. Educational and information technology systems are being upgraded to enhance the classroom experience, streamline administrative processes, and facilitate communication on campus and with alumni/ae and lifelong learners. Planning is underway for a new energy-efficient residence hall for single students. The library now includes a special section devoted to collections of manuscripts, books, and artifacts received from the Montreat branch of the Presbyterian Historical Society. A new program in Presbyterian and Reformed history and theology is being developed.

(3) *University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (UDTS)*

On Saturday, August 4, 2007, a full cohort of students representing three denominations and twelve presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) enrolled as the inaugural class of the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary's Distance Master of Divinity degree program. The UDTS is the first seminary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to offer a Master of Divinity distance education program. This five-year program allows participants to take the majority of classes via the Internet. Two-thirds of the courses are taught online, while the remaining credits are earned in residency at the Dubuque campus. The combination of online and residential instruction enables the close integration of theological education and congregational life. For more information please visit [www.udts.dbq.edu](http://www.udts.dbq.edu).

(4) *Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (LPTS)*

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary began its 155th academic year in a process of campus renewal. Our commitment to theological excellence has been enriched by the contributions of five new faculty: Douglas Gragg, library director, professor, and coordinator for our current re-accreditation process; Johnny B. Hill, who is teaching theology constructed on a framework of reconciliation; Elizabeth Johnson Walker, who is helping us expand pastoral care and counseling in multicultural contexts; Debra Mumford, who is leading students to develop their voices for progressive and relevant preaching; and Claudio Carvalhaes, whose global understanding of worship is energizing many aspects of theological education at LPTS. In a similar fashion, the seminary is renewing its campus infrastructure through board redevelopment, new student housing, classrooms, faculty offices, a student lounge, and a \$5 million overhaul of the forty-year-old campus mechanical networks, the most comprehensive project since the campus was established in 1963. In many ways, Louisville Seminary is experiencing a renaissance as we seek to help reshape theological education for the twenty-first century.

(5) *McCormick Theological Seminary*

McCormick Theological Seminary's academic progress since the 217th General Assembly (2006) was highlighted by the appointment of the Reverend Dr. Jennifer Ayres as assistant professor of Christian ethics. The Office of Student Affairs has been reconfigured to focus more resources and attention on spiritual formation for and pastoral presence to seminarians. The Reverend Dr. Christine Vogel was appointed as the new dean of students and vice president of student affairs. Both are ministers of Word and Sacrament. Philanthropic achievements since 2006 included a \$165,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation for the Center for the Study of Latino/a Theology and Ministry, a grant of \$200,000 from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations for information technology enhancements, and a gift of \$1,000,000 from Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago for the general endowment fund.

(6) *Pittsburgh Theological Seminary*

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary has adopted the following mission statement: "On a dynamic and challenging global stage Pittsburgh Theological Seminary plays its part in God's redemption of the world through Jesus Christ by preparing leaders who proclaim with great joy God's message of good news in both word and deed!" This mission statement is providing the platform upon which the seminary has developed a new vision statement and a long-range plan that grows out of the mission and vision. The plan includes strategies for new facilities, strengthening an already excellent faculty, enhancements for special programs, increased emphasis on lifelong learning and spiritual formation, and additional funding for scholarships and financial aid.

(7) *Princeton Theological Seminary*

Since June 2006, Princeton Theological Seminary has agreed to a revised curriculum and a changed academic calendar, providing for both a January and a May term. The belief is that this will provide completely new opportunities for teaching



and learning and improve diversity in the seminary as a whole. The seminary has developed a full program for commissioned lay pastors and appointed a full-time director of Hispanic lay leadership. The seminary has committed to a new Office of Multicultural Relations. The seminary has increased its field education staff and appointed a full-time pastor as minister of the chapel. The seminary has, for the first time, granted tenure to an African American woman scholar.

(8) *San Francisco Theological Seminary*

San Francisco Theological Seminary is consolidating its mission of “preparing whole leaders for the whole church” through a number of exciting new emphases. Spiritual, theological, and practical formation for ministry are intentionally integrated in a curriculum that emphasizes learning both in and beyond the classroom. Southern California students from a variety of cultures earn their degrees through evening and Saturday coursework in several languages. The majority of San Anselmo students live on campus with professors in an intentional community of Christian formation, and share together in daily worship. Both campuses are now significantly focused on ministry preparation for 1.5 and second generation leaders for immigrant congregations, notably from Pacific Rim cultures. New faculty include the Reverend Stan Wood, Ford Associate Professor of Congregational Leadership and Evangelism; the Reverend Dr. Sam Hamilton-Poore (Programs in Christian Spirituality); the Reverend Laurie Garrett-Cobbina (Clinical Pastoral Education); the Reverend Dr. Scott Sullender (director of the Lloyd Pastoral Counseling Center); Dr. Annette Schellenberg (Old Testament); and Dr. Annette Weissrieder (New Testament).

(9) *Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary*

The Reverend Dr. Gary Reynolds, a Christian Church Disciples of Christ pastor with significant experience in development, joined the Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary’s staff in November 2006. The Reverend Dr. David Wallace resigned as dean of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary during the April meeting of the board of trustees. His tenure ended June 30, 2007. The board of trustees appointed the Reverend Dr. Mark A. Lomax to serve as interim dean. His work began on July 2, 2007. Founder’s Day for the seminary was celebrated April 3–10, 2008.

(10) *Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education*

The Reverend Dr. Brian Blount was named president of Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in March 2007. He succeeds Louis Weeks, who served from 1994–2007. A powerful preacher and leading New Testament scholar, Dr. Blount returns to Virginia after fifteen years as a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary. He previously served as a pastor and director of youth. An exciting renovation is under way at Union-PSCE. The Allen and Jeannette Early Center for Christian Education and Worship will enhance teaching through advanced technology classrooms. A new chapel will permit students to lead and participate in worship in non-traditional settings. Growth continues at Union-PSCE’s extension campus in Charlotte, North Carolina. Nearly 100 students are enrolled in the weekend theological program serving the Carolinas.

(11) *Auburn Theological Seminary*

In the face of escalating conflict in the church, country, and world, Auburn has placed special emphasis on its bridge-building programs. It has expanded its effort to teach teenagers from diverse religious traditions about each other’s religious faith. One version of the program works with participants from zones of conflict around the world in a yearlong program and another is offered for New York City young people. In response to the controversy over possible divestment in Israel, Auburn and the New York Chapter of The American Jewish Committee convened a group of Presbyterian and Jewish leaders to explore issues of land and covenant and to travel to Israel and the West Bank. A forthcoming program, Repairers of the Breach, will bring groups from presbyteries to explore ways to live together with continuing difference.

(12) *Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico*

Some of the most significant events in our institution during 2006–07 academic year includes the beginning of a new program on theological education training (in partnership with the New Immigrants Office of the PCUSA) for a diverse group of twelve immigrants originally from Africa (Sudan, Ghana, and Liberia), Asia (China and Pakistan), Latin America and the Caribbean (Colombia, Venezuela, and Haiti); the appointment of the Reverend Dr. José R. Irizarry, dean of doctor of ministry programs and associate professor of cultural studies in religion and education now at McCormick Theological Seminary at Chicago as our new academic dean and professor of Christian education; and the appointment of a new professor of theology as faculty member, Dr. Javier Goitia.

(13) *Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation (OPSF)*

The Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Omaha, which closed at the request of the General Assembly’s Committee to Study Theological Institutions in 1943, continues as the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation in 2008. The purpose is

similar to that of the former teaching seminary, though OPSF has no resident faculty, student body, or campus. The foundation provides grants and scholarships for Presbyterian seminary students, sponsors continuing education programs for clergy, commissioned lay pastors, and other leaders in the Presbyterian church. The foundation also conducts an annual School for Pastors at Hastings College (NE) and is exploring new avenues such as distance education in cooperation with our seminaries. The mission of the foundation remains to seek, develop, and support excellence in Christian leadership through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

In 2007, the foundation continued to contribute significant funds to leadership development programs for the broader church. Continuing education programs sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) totaled \$140,000. In addition, students attending Presbyterian seminaries received \$115,000; grants to seminaries and other church entities were \$4,000; for a total of \$259,000.

For most of its history the foundation funded its programs with income derived from its endowment. Those funds are now supplemented with mission gifts from local congregations and the generous donations of individuals. Our hope is to expand the ministries of the foundation with an increasing financial base to ensure the vitality of the Presbyterian church in our region and beyond.

## Item 14-01

The Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008)

[The assembly approved Item 14-01, Recommendation 1., with amendment. See p. 36.]

**1. Approve the following descriptions of each of the ordination examinations:**

“(1) *Bible Content*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s knowledge of the form and content of the Bible.

“(2) *Open Book Bible Exegesis*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s ability to interpret an assigned passage of Scripture by demonstrating attention to the original language of the text, an understanding of the text’s historical [and literary] context, and an ability to relate the text effectively to the contemporary life of the church in the world.

“The candidate shall have access to Hebrew and Greek texts, translations, commentaries, and other exegetical tools.

“(3) *Theological Competence*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s capacity to make effective use of the Reformed theological heritage, including the church’s confessional documents, in relating the gospel to the church and the world today.

“(4) *Worship and Sacraments*. 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 worshipping communities.

“(5) *Church Polity*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined.”

### *Rationale*

[See also the PCCEC Self-Study, Section V.A.] The *Book of Order* directs the General Assembly to approve descriptions of the ordination examinations (G-14.0432). The following language (formerly G-14.0310d in the *Book of Order*, until condensation of Chapter 14 in 2007) currently guides the PCC:

(1) *Open Book Bible Exegesis*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s ability to find and state the meaning of an assigned passage of Scripture, demonstrating working knowledge of the original language of the text and ability to understand its historical situation.

The candidate shall have access to any or all of the following:

Hebrew and Greek texts, translations, commentaries, and other exegetical tools, including those which presuppose knowledge of the biblical languages. Using these, he or she shall be asked to state the meaning of the passage, show how he or she arrived at this interpretation, and suggest how this passage might be used in the contemporary life of the church.

(2) *Bible Content*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s knowledge of the form and content of the Bible.

(3) *Theological Competence*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s capacity to make effective use of the classical theological disciplines and of the confessional documents of the church in relating the gospel to the faith of the church in the contemporary world.

(4) *Worship and Sacraments*. 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 worshipping communities.

(5) *Church Polity*. This examination shall assess the candidate’s working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined.

The PCCEC suggests that

- the description of the Bible Content Examination be placed first, since it is normally the first examination that candidates take;
- the description of the Bible Exegesis Examination be revised to move the emphasis away from finding “the meaning” of the text (a term not widely used in seminaries today), to interpreting the text for the sake of the church and the world;

- the description of the Theological Competence Examination be revised to remove unclear language about “the classical theological disciplines” and to emphasize that the purpose of the examination is interpretation of the church’s shared theology in the Reformed tradition, for the sake of relating the gospel to the church and the world;
- descriptions of the other examinations remain identical to those in earlier versions of the *Book of Order*.

[The assembly approved Item 14-01, Recommendation 2. See p. 36.]

**2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:**

**Amend the first paragraph of G-14.0431 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

**“G-14.0431 Five Ordination Exams**

~~“Inquirers or candidates are encouraged to take the Bible Content Examination in their first year of seminary. The other four examinations may be taken by inquirers or candidates after completion of two full years of theological education. These four examinations shall only be taken upon approval by the committee on preparation for ministry of the inquirer’s or candidate’s presbytery. Inquirers and candidates are encouraged to take the Bible Content Examination in their first year of seminary. The other four examinations shall ordinarily be taken by inquirers or candidates only after completion of two full years of theological education, or its equivalent, and shall be taken only upon approval by the committee on preparation for ministry of the inquirer’s or candidate’s presbytery, which shall first attest that the inquirer or candidate has completed adequate academic preparation in each examination area and adequate supervised experience in the practice of pastoral ministry. The areas of examinations are:”~~

#### *Rationale*

[See also the PCCEC Self-Study, Section V.C.] The PCCEC is concerned that many candidates take the examinations before they are sufficiently prepared. Too often the result is unsatisfactory grades and unnecessary frustration with the examination process. The examinations are meant to be comprehensive and integrative, and for this reason, the PCCEC encourages candidates to take them together (rather than one by one at different times of year) and in the middle of the senior year of seminary or later.

The PCCEC, however, affirms the need for presbyteries to have flexibility in determining when candidates take the examinations, given candidates’ diverse circumstances and in order to guard against imposing undue burdens on candidates (especially in their senior year of seminary when many wish to receive a call). The *Book of Order* currently provides this flexibility in the following way:

Inquirers and candidates are encouraged to take the Bible Content Examination in their first year of seminary. The other four examinations may be taken by inquirers or candidates after completion of two full years of theological education. These four examinations shall only be taken upon approval by the committee on preparation for ministry by the inquirer’s or candidate’s presbytery. ... (G-14.0431)

The PCCEC believes that this language should be revised so as to retain presbytery flexibility, while emphasizing that the examinations are best taken after candidates’ completion of necessary academic work and supervised ministry experience.

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 14-01**

*Advice on Item 14-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly regarding Item 14-01 with the following comment.

Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates submitted two items for approval by the 218th General Assembly (2008). Both items result from the group’s self-study being reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008). The first item reflects the fact that the revision to Chapter XIV of the Form of Government removed specific provisions regarding ordination examinations and instead directs the General Assembly to approve descriptions of the ordination examinations (G-14.0432). The request is consistent with this revision to the Form of Government.

In its second request, the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) send to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote an amendment modifying the current language of G-14.0430 in two ways.

First, the amendment would replace "may" with "shall ordinarily" in the sentence describing when the Open Book Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Church Polity examinations are taken. In the context of this sentence, which modifies "only be taken," the proposed amendment increases the flexibility of the presbyteries' committees on preparation for ministry in determining when such examinations are appropriately taken.

Second, the recommendation sets a new standard for the approval of candidates to take these examinations by replacing the requirement that committee on preparation for ministry give approval to a candidate to take the examinations with requirement that it "attest that the inquirer or candidate has completed adequate academic preparation in each examination area and adequate supervised experience in the practice of pastoral ministry."

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 218th General Assembly (2008) that the proposed language is clear and accomplishes the stated intent of the recommendation.

*Impact of the proposed revisions to the proposed revised Form of Government before the assembly: To the extent the 218th General Assembly (2008) wishes to make amendment to the current G-14.0430, the comparable provision in the proposed Form of Government is found at G-2.0407d. The 218th General Assembly (2008) may place this proposal before the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes as alternative language to the proposal in the proposed revised Form of Government.*

## 14-Self-Study ACREC

### *Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) Self-Study Report for the 218th General Assembly (2008)*

In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. (*The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, lines 65–71)

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), along with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), was created by the 205th General Assembly (1993) to ensure representation and an active voice for advocacy at the General Assembly level for people of color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The goal of this committee is to ensure the full access and participation of people of color within the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the maintenance of a strong prophetic witness of the church on issues of racial justice in our nation and the world.

In each time and place, there are particular problems and crises through which God calls the church to act. The church, guided by the Spirit, humbled by its own complicity and instructed by all attainable knowledge, seeks to discern the will of God and learn how to obey in these concrete situations. ... (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.43; the inclusive language version can be found at the following Web site: <http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/confession/confess67.pdf>)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decisions making of the church (G-9.0104a). (*Book of Order*, G-4.0403)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a deep commitment to the work of racial justice as an expression of our Christian witness in the world. The church also recognizes that as an institution where the vast majority of its members are white, it continues to seek to be inclusive with equity, as it also seeks to increase the diversity of its members. The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns was created in response to these hard realities. We are not yet where we want to be.

The first class of ACREC members was elected by the 207th General Assembly (1995) and met for the first time in the fall of the same year. Its charter is large—to be a vigilant voice for racial justice in the church, and in the world. Throughout its life, the committee has worked hard to carry both mantles.

## II. WHO WE ARE

The ACREC has twelve voting members nominated and elected through the General Assembly Nominating process, with the exception of one, who is elected by the General Assembly Council (GAC). Members are elected to four-year terms and may serve a total of eight years. The composition of the committee is outlined in the (GAC) Manual of Operations, as follows:

- 2 African Americans
- 2 Asian Americans
- 2 Hispanic/Latino Americans
- 2 Middle Eastern Americans
- 2 Native Americans
- 1 Member-at-Large elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic communities, geographic diversity, and ethnic balance.
- 1 General Assembly Council Executive Committee member

The General Assembly Council member is ordinarily nominated to serve a two-year term, as long as they continue to serve as a member of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee. They serve as a voting member on ACREC and fulfill the responsibility of liaison between the General Assembly Council Executive Committee and the advocacy committee.

Members of the five racial ethnic caucuses recognized by the General Assembly select a member from their caucus to be nominated through the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) process. The remaining six vacancies are filled through at-large nominations from the GANC—with one representative in each of the five racial ethnic groups identified above. Additionally, ACREC works with the caucuses and the GANC to try to maintain gender balance and diversity in age and geographic representation. The racial ethnic caucuses that nominate members to ACREC are:

- National Asian Presbyterian Council
- Native American Coordinating Council
- National Black Presbyterian Caucus
- National Hispanic/Latino Caucus
- National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus

The ACREC receives liaisons from other entities to provide for communication, coordination, and representation. Liaisons serve on the committee with full voice, but not vote. These include the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), and Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT). The ACREC sends liaisons to ACWC and ACSWP.

The ACREC also appoints one member to sit on the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) committee. That person is a full voting member of MRTI.

## III. MISSION AND PARTNERSHIPS

In order to respond to its mandate, the committee is designed to have direct access to the General Assembly (GA) and the General Assembly Council (GAC) to provide advice and counsel on matters it deems appropriate. This access is provided for in a number of ways:

- ◇ The chair of ACREC sits as a corresponding member of both GA and GAC.
- ◇ The committee provides advice and counsel on new business.
- ◇ The committee provides reports and resolutions to introduce new business.
- ◇ The committee holds regular consultations with the executives of the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly.

The ACREC works in close partnership with the ACWC and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly through written comments on overtures and reports to the General Assembly and a briefing session for commissioners at the assembly. The committee has advocated on critical issues impacting communities of color on a wide range of issues, including:

- ◇ Voting Rights and Election Reform
- ◇ Affirmative Action, Equal Employment, and Minority Vendor policies
- ◇ Reparations
- ◇ Public Education

- ◇ Immigration policy
- ◇ Farm Worker Rights and Labor rights

The committee has urged the church to examine its own policies and practices, such as:

- ◇ Employment
- ◇ Purchasing
- ◇ Developing cultural proficiency
- ◇ Representation and leadership in governance
- ◇ Candidacy, examination, call, and ordination processes
- ◇ Response to the Women of Color consultation
- ◇ Antiracism training and other strategies

The ACREC's chairperson attends the GAC meetings as a corresponding member to provide similar advice and counsel. The ACREC provides a written report to the GAC on an annual basis and directs written correspondence to the council as needed.

#### A. *Racial Ethnic Constituencies*

The ACREC is structured through its membership, to ensure that the racial ethnic constituencies that it represents in the church have a voice at the General Assembly level, through the nomination of members to the committee by the racial ethnic caucuses. The at-large positions on the committee also allow the committee, in partnership with the GANC, to recruit members who reflect the interests and perspectives of the various racial ethnic communities, with particular expertise in the wide array of social justice issues about which the committee is concerned.

The committee has further sought to develop and maintain relationships with the racial ethnic caucuses, to educate and inform committee members of the diverse experiences, issues, and concerns of the constituencies it represents, and to communicate its work through:

- Joint meetings with the National Cross Caucus;
- Forum on Church and Race at the ecumenical multicultural event;
- Meeting in diverse locations and including opportunities for education and dialogue in its meetings;
- Regular consultation with Washington Office, Project Equality, ACWC, ACSWP, and MRTI;
- Forum on Church and Race, July 11, 2007, as a pre-conference event at the National Multicultural Ecumenical Event in Los Angeles, California; and
- meeting with various staff offices as it monitors the work of the church in particular areas of interest or concern to people of color in the church.

#### B. *General Assembly Committees*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns meets jointly at least annually with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and the Advisory Committee for Social Witness Policy. The advice and counsel teams of the three committees meet prior to each General Assembly to coordinate their work in providing advice and counsel to the General Assembly.

The ACREC and the ACWC formed a joint working group to respond to the Women of Color Consultation report and other issues where the interests of the two committees intersect. At the 217th General Assembly (2006), ACREC and ACWC submitted a joint resolution on the Women of Color Consultation to the assembly, which was approved. This resolution created a joint task force that included representation from both committees, along with representatives from Presbyterian Women and the National Cross Caucus. The report of the task force to this assembly is recommending the Joint ACREC/ACWC working group become a permanent entity, incorporated in their Manual of Operations, with funding to include additional representatives and/or consultants for an annual consultation.

Through its relationship with MRTI, ACREC has examined issues of predatory lending and divestment, and will be working in partnership to address concerns about exorbitant fees charged to persons who wire money to their families outside the U.S.

## IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

The ACREC has worked on a wide variety of issues during the review period, addressing critical social justice issues in our nation and focusing attention on the need for change within our denomination as well. In 2001, the committee sent a resolution to the 213th General Assembly (2001) requesting the GAC to create a task force to *Study the Disenfranchisement of People of Color in the U.S. Electoral System*, and to consider whether the church should make a policy statement on this matter. The assembly approved this action. The task force, formed in 2002 with representation from ACREC, worked in consultation with the committee. It reported to the 216th General Assembly (2004).

The 2004 report included a recommendation directing ACSWP to develop a resolution to address the need for electoral reform and present options for practical engagement to ensure greater participation, equality, and fairness in the electoral process. A study team was created in consultation with ACREC, and is presenting its report, *Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform* to 218th General Assembly (2008).

A second action submitted by ACREC to the 2001 assembly called for the creation of a Task Force to Study Reparations. The committee asked that the task force examine the issue as it related to all racial ethnic communities, with a theological framework. The assembly approved this recommendation. The task force, formed in consultation with ACREC and staffed by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, reported to the 216th General Assembly (2004). The report called for the creation of a study guide on their report and a Website, to further assist Presbyterians in learning about and engaging this issue. The report originally called for the creation of a new confession. This recommendation was amended by the General Assembly. The amendment called for Presbyterians to study the Belhar Confession, directing the Office of Theology and Worship to prepare a study guide for this purpose. The ACREC has consulted with both Peacemaking and Theology and Worship on the implementation of these recommendations.

The ACREC has studied the Belhar Confession itself and is sending action to the 218th General Assembly (2008), recommending the assembly initiate process to include it in *The Book of Confessions* by creating a committee to study it and make a recommendation to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

In a third recommendation from ACREC to the 213th General Assembly (2001), the assembly created the Task Force to Examine General Assembly Entities. This task force examined the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity (AA/EEO) and Minority Vendor policies and programs of the Board of Pensions, the General Assembly Council, the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. The task force reported to 216th General Assembly (2004). The recommendations approved by the assembly:

- ◇ initiated the implementation of the tools of cultural proficiency, or similar program, in all six entities related to the General Assembly;
- ◇ implemented a process of regular, recurring face-to-face consultations between ACREC and the corporate executives of the six entities; and
- ◇ called for renewed effort in developing nationwide recruitment strategies to develop a more diverse pool of candidates for employment.

Even before the task force reported to the General Assembly in 2004, their work led to the implementation of cultural proficiency in the GAC. Cultural proficiency is an approach to diversity in organizations that provides language to describe, and standards to assess, both healthy and nonproductive policies, practices, and behaviors. It acknowledges that change does not happen overnight, that people and organizations move on a continuum from highly exclusive and oppressive organizations and behaviors to highly inclusive organizations and behaviors. It is built on a foundation that aligns the principles of inclusivity in diversity with the core values and mission of the organization. It also acknowledges that organizations are resistant to change and that the causes of resistance must be taken into account and addressed openly in order to bring about cultural transformation within an organization.

The ACREC held its first consultations with executives in 2005 and made its first assessment report to the 217th General Assembly (2006). The report to 218th General Assembly (2008) will introduce more formal planning, assessment, and reporting requirements for the agencies, strengthening the consultation process. It also requests the assembly to create a task force to review and update AA/EEO and Minority Vendor policies for consistent application and incorporation of cultural proficiency.

In 2002, ACREC responded to an earlier referral regarding guidelines for delivering health care to people of color, with emphasis on what the church could do. This response endorsed the *Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Standards (CLAS)* as minimum guidelines for all church-operated, church-related, and church-contracted health-care services.



In 2004, ACREC submitted a special report to the assembly, assessing the church's efforts to combat racism. This document was a five-year status report on the *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*, which was approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999).

In 2006, the committee submitted a joint resolution with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns requesting a task force to assess the church's response to the Women of Color Consultation and develop a mechanism to monitor implementation. The resolution was approved and the task force formed, including representation from ACREC. That task force is reporting to the 218th General Assembly (2008). The committee has had ongoing consultations with the task force, providing input to their work.

The ACREC also submitted the Fair Food Resolution to the 217th General Assembly (2006). This resolution, which was approved by the assembly, called for support of the Fair Food Campaign, which grew out of the Taco Bell Boycott, and authorized the elected GAC to authorize a boycott on McDonalds, in the event that the campaign called for one and waiting for the 218th General Assembly (2008) would impede the church's ability to respond in a timely manner.

For each assembly in the review period, the committee prepared advice and counsel on overtures and other items of business before the assembly. The committee provided a briefing for commissioners at each assembly, with lunch provided, and published a briefing booklet distributed at the briefing and the exhibit area of the assembly. In addition to commissioners and advisory delegates, the commissioners briefing has also been well attended by representatives of the racial ethnic caucuses in attendance at the assembly.

In addition to its work related to the General Assembly, ACREC has monitored the GAC's implementation of AA/EEO and Minority Vendor policies, including advocating for the use of the Project Equality Buyer's Guide. The ACREC held regular consultations with the director of Project Equality through 2006. The ACREC also advocated for better recruitment strategies in the GAC. In 2001, the GAC hired a recruiter in Human Resources, at least in part as a result of their advocacy. The committee monitored development of the ACSWP *Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States*, and advocated for its approval by the assembly in 2004. This document was initiated by a commissioners' resolution in 2001.

The committee has addressed issues relating to its own staffing, and revised its Manual of Operations in 2004 to reflect changes necessitated by the shift to biennial assemblies. They have worked to strengthen communication with the caucuses. Joint meetings with the National Cross Caucus began in 2003 as part of this effort. They have also worked actively to strengthen joint efforts with ACWC. In addition to responding to the Women of Color Consultation, the committees have found a common interest is working on issues related to immigration. In 2006, at its Spring meeting, ACREC hosted a consultation with representatives of the Korean Council on a proposal submitted to the General Assembly to create a non-geographic synod. This was a joint session with the National Cross Caucus. The discussion helped inform ACREC's advice and counsel on a sensitive matter of great significance to the Korean Council and the church as a whole.

The committee has engaged in a number of education and information gathering activities to inform and equip its members for their work. They have had speakers on:

- ◇ Project Equality;
- ◇ Corporate responsibility and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act;
- ◇ 2000 Census;
- ◇ Various aspects of immigration policy and experience—undocumented immigrants, refugee and asylum issues, and new immigrant ministries;
- ◇ The intersectionality of race, gender, and class;
- ◇ Cultural Proficiency; and
- ◇ Issues in the Middle East.

The committee has toured Menaul School and Cook College, becoming more familiar with the challenges facing the racial ethnic schools of the PC(USA). It met at Villa International in Atlanta and learned about their ministry with international students. In Albuquerque, the committee met with presbytery and synod executives and learned about the challenges and rewards of being a multicultural church in the unique cultural context of the Southwest. In Atlanta, they met with presbytery staff and pastoral leadership engaged in new immigrant ministry. In October of 2001, the committee met in New York City and toured the site of the destruction of the Twin Towers. The committee sent representatives to the Women of Color Consultation in 2004 and the No More Deaths Border Consultation in 2005. At its Fall 2006 meeting, ACREC met on the campus of

McCormick Seminary where they heard from seminary representatives, the Committee on Theological Education, and Office of Vocations staff on the challenges and some of the strategies to address the needs of racial ethnic seminary students and candidates for ordination.

### *Challenges*

One of the challenges facing ACREC is the need to actively recruit younger leadership to the committee. It has communicated its concern to the caucuses that nominate members to the committee and has consulted with REYWT, in particular, to attempt to recruit younger representatives through the at-large vacancies on the committee. The four-year terms and significant time commitment are perceived by the committee as partial barriers, but the committee has also noted that older members have faced difficulties with these commitments as well.

The National Cross Caucus was inactive in 2007. The ACREC has relied on the National Cross Caucus, which is made up of caucus chairs and young adult representatives of the five national caucuses recognized by the GAC and the Korean Council. The future of the National Cross Caucus is not clear. If this entity is not going to be active in the future, ACREC will need to find other means of maintaining an active relationship with the caucuses.

The ACREC faces a continuing challenge to balancing the urgency of a wide array of social justice issues and the need to monitor the work of the church on an on-going basis, with the limitations of a twelve-member committee with part-time staff support. The use of a strategic planning process has helped the committee to discern priorities for its work in a two-year cycle. However, it is still challenged by events in the church and in society that cannot always be anticipated and can impose on the time and concerns of the committee. For example, in 2006 a Supreme Court decision to overturn voluntary school desegregation plans in Louisville and Seattle put an issue on ACREC's agenda that had not appeared on its Strategic Plan. The committee's discussion following that action led to a resolution to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

## V. PLANNING, COMMUNICATION AND EVALUATION

The ACREC holds three meetings in a non-assembly year and four meetings in an assembly year. New member orientation is normally held in the summer meeting immediately following the assembly. The committee has two subcommittees: Resource and Referral (R&R), and Study and Comment (S&C).

The R&R subcommittee is responsible for reviewing reports, recommendations, and overtures to General Assembly, analyzing the actions of the assembly and making recommendations to the committee, identifying areas of concern and preparing appropriate reports and recommendations to the assembly, coordinating with ACWC and ACSWP in the preparation of advice and counsel memoranda for the assembly, and preparing resources such as the briefing booklet.

The S&C subcommittee is responsible for consultation and communication with the racial ethnic caucuses and other networks in the church, planning and coordination of the committee's work to monitor implementation of racial justice policies within the church; the church's commitments to increasing diversity in employment, and support for programs that strengthen and enrich the church's ministry with people of color.

The committee initiated a Strategic Vision Plan in 2003, to assist it in setting goals and prioritizing its work. The committee normally reviews the Strategic Vision Plan in the Summer and Fall meeting following an assembly. It assesses on-going work, new work assigned by the assembly, and new areas of concern it wants to address based on input from committee members, liaisons, and staff. These priorities are taken into consideration as it selects locations and sets agendas for its meetings. In the next two-year cycle, the committee will also have input from the Forum on Church and Race held at the ecumenical multicultural event in July 2007.

The Strategic Vision Plan has identified areas of concern, including:

- The support and success of racial ethnic and immigrant seminary students, and candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament;
- High percentage of racial ethnic/immigrant urban and rural congregations without pastoral leadership;
- Strengthening relationships of ACREC with other units of the GA to ensure that goals of ACREC are implemented;
- Strengthen relationship with racial ethnic caucuses in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with that of ACREC;
- Explore possibilities for greater investment by PC(USA) to build housing for the poor, providing the guarantee of credit to mortgage companies advancing money needed for the construction of the housing (working with PILP and/or Foundation); and

- Monitor the GAC's adoption of the cultural proficiency tools, commend it to congregations, presbyteries, and synods for their use in all aspects of their ministry of justice and cultural inclusiveness.

Dialogue with the racial ethnic caucuses has also provided valuable input. Dialogue with the National Cross Caucus in the March 2006 meeting led to a consultation at its joint meeting with ACWC in January 2007 with GAC staff, and Jean Marie Peacock, former Vice Moderator, representing the Presbytery of South Louisiana. That consultation resulted in a joint resolution with ACSWP to this assembly, *Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future*.

Much of ACREC's work is addressed to the General Assembly, communicated as new business and in the minutes of the assembly itself. The committee's briefing booklet and commissioner's briefing provide additional communication of their work at the assembly. In 2004, the committee approved a new logo and developed a brochure for distribution at General Assembly and conferences and gatherings, where appropriate. It is available through the Office for Racial Justice and Advocacy where it is also displayed for visitors at the Presbyterian Center. The Office for Racial Justice and Advocacy has also assisted with placement of articles on the work of ACREC in the newsletter, the *TORCH*. In 2004, the committee also launched a Website with support from the GAC staff. The Website is linked to the Office for Racial Justice & Advocacy, Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries, ACWC, ACSWP, Peacemaking, and the Washington Office. The Website is designed to give the committee more visibility on an on-going basis. In the six-month period preceding the assembly, it focuses on communicating with commissioners and others interested in assembly business.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns is an important voice for racial justice in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It has advocated faithfully for change within the church and for the church's prophetic witness in the nation. Through its active partnerships with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and Mission Responsibility Through Investment, ACREC works to equip the whole church to attend to the intersections of race, gender, and class in its public witness.

This self-study report is based on the work of the committee for the five-year period from 2001–2006. Sources for the report include minutes, agency summaries, reports, resolutions, and advice and counsel submitted to the General Assembly, and briefing booklets prepared for commissioners. The self-study team met July 11, 2007, for planning purposes, and consulted by email and conference call in the preparation of the report.

Members of the self-study team are:

- ◇ Judith Armour Pingel (chair of self-study team), current member of ACREC
- ◇ John Spangler, current member
- ◇ Mauricio Chácon, current member and former chair of ACREC
- ◇ Noushin Framke, current member and chair of ACREC
- ◇ Evelyn Kelly, former member
- ◇ Fahed Abu Akel, former member

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns expresses its gratitude to the self-study task force for their work in preparing this report.

## Appendix A

### Excerpt from the General Assembly Council Manual of Operations (June 2006)

#### VIII. General Assembly Advocacy and Advisory Committees

The 205th General Assembly (1993) approved the creation of two advocacy committees and one advisory committee. They are:

- Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns
- Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns
- Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

Beginning at the close of the 207th General Assembly (1995), the above named committees shall have members as detailed below; elected for a four-year term with a maximum of eight years. For those who continue from the similar committees, continuous service is counted.

## 14 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT COMMITTEES

The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall nominate the members, and shall monitor the rotation of committee members among the synods.

The chairs of the advocacy committees and of the advisory committee shall be elected in the same manner as the chairs of the GAC Ministries Division and MSS committees, i.e., elected by the members of the respective committees.

The funding for the meetings of these advocacy committees and advisory committee comes from the per capita budget and is the responsibility of the General Assembly Council.

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be accountable to the Office of the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council in consultation with the appropriate Advisory or Advocacy Committee.

### A. *Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

This advocacy committee shall consist of the following persons:

- 2 African American (\*)
- 2 Asian American (\*)
- 2 Hispanic (\*)
- 2 Middle Eastern (\*)
- 2 Native American (\*)
- 1 at-large member elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic segments, geographic diversity and ethnic balance
- 1 General Assembly Council Executive Committee Member nominated by the Executive Committee and elected by the General Assembly Council to serve a two-year term so long as such person continues to serve as a member of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the General Assembly Council Executive Committee and the advocacy committee.

(\*) Members of the five racial ethnic caucuses (African American, Asian American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Native American ) shall select one member from each caucus to be elected through the General Assembly Nominating process to serve a four year-term with eligibility for one additional term.

#### 1. Accountability and Lodgement:

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be appointed by the General Assembly Council Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the office of the General Assembly Council Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the committee to the office of the General Assembly Council Executive Director.

#### 2. Budget

Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns comes from the per capita budget except for the staffing costs which are accounted for in the budget of the office where the staff is lodged. The Advocacy Committee shall propose a yearly budget to the office of the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council.

#### 3. Access

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council. Access shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, racial involvement reports, a yearly narrative report, Advice and Counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and Counsel Memoranda shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate. The yearly narrative report shall be forwarded to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee for possible comment.

#### 4. Assigned Functions

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advise the General Assembly Council on matters of racial ethnic concerns including statements concerning pressing issues, that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of racial ethnic concern.
- d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on racial ethnic concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.
- f. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies and programs relative to racial ethnic concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concern.

**Appendix B.**  
**ACREC Manual of Operation (2006)**

**I. Introduction**

As required by The Book of Order, G-9.0405, this Manual of Administrative Operations and Procedures has been developed by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns in conformity with commitments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the diversity, inclusiveness, and full participation of all persons (G-4.0400), with particular attention to the paragraph (G-0403):

*The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decisions making of the church (G-9.0104ff).*

This Manual of Operations and Procedures:

A. Describes and defines the organization of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and provides for its functioning during and between meetings.

B. May be revised (amended) by a majority vote of the ACREC members present and voting at any scheduled meeting of the Committee insofar as this action does not conflict with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

C. Shall not prevail when changes in the *Book of Order* occur which make any provisions of this manual contrary to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

D. May have any or all of its Standing Rules suspended temporarily at any time by a two-thirds vote of those ACREC members present and voting at any scheduled meeting insofar as this action does not conflict with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The period of time and the purpose of the rules suspension shall be specified by the member moving the suspension.

Note: The 205th General Assembly (1993) approved the creation of two advocacy committees, one of which is the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns. The 207th General Assembly (1995) elected the first class of ACREC members who met for the first time in the Fall of 1995.

**II. Mission and Ministries****A. Mission Statement** (Adopted January 16, 2000)

The mission and ministries of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) are to advocate for full access for all Racial ethnic/Immigrant groups to all programs, ministries, governing bodies, and congregations of the Presbyterian church (U.S.A.) by monitoring implementation of policy and corresponding actions, decisions, and issues of racial ethnic concern. ACREC shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to provide advice and counsel assuring compliance with the *Book of Order, section G-4.0403 and section 5.6. of the Articles of Agreement* to ensure advocacy and monitoring functions in the areas of Racial Ethnic Ministries.

**B. Purpose Statement** (Adopted by the 206th General Assembly [1994])

*To ensure advocacy and monitoring functions in the areas of Racial Ethnic Ministries and Women's Ministries the GA provides for the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns. These two advocacy committees work in close cooperation with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. All three groups have direct access in the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns' work is coordinated through the Office of the General Assembly Council by the Deputy Executive Director of the General Assembly Council.*

**C. Organization for Mission** (Manual of the General Assembly 2003–2004. Organization for Mission, VI. The General Assembly Council and Its Ministry Divisions, A. Office of the Executive Director, 1. Advocacy and Advisory Committees, page 12)

The Executive Director has the responsibility for the advocacy and advisory committees. All three groups have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, and their work is coordinated through the Office of the Deputy Executive Director.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order, G-4. 0403*. The Committee shall be a prophetic voice for involving racial ethnic people in the formation of public policy, particularly where race is a factor that negatively impacts the quality of life of people of color. The committee will also monitor the implementation of policies adopted by the church which impact the quality of life of racial ethnic people in the church and in the world.

**III. Membership****A. Elected Voting Members**

Prior to the conclusion of the 207th General Assembly (1995), the membership of the elected voting members of ACREC was detailed, though terms of service have since been revised in view of the move to biennial assemblies in each even-numbered calendar year. Un-

changed is the specification that the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall nominate the committee members, except for the General Assembly Council representative, and shall monitor the rotation of committee members among the synods.

#### 1. Composition

Composition of the elected voting membership of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall consist of the following twelve (12) persons who shall be in classes upon their election:

- a. Two (2) African Americans\*
- b. Two (2) Asian Americans\*
- c. Two (2) Hispanic / Latino Americans\*
- d. Two (2) Middle Eastern Americans\*
- e. Two (2) Native Americans\*
- f. One (1) Member-at-Large elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic communities, geographic diversity, and ethnic balance.
- g. One (1) General Assembly Council Executive Committee member nominated to serve a two-year term so long as such person continues to serve as a member of the General Assembly Council Executive Committee. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the General Assembly Council Executive Committee and the Advocacy Committee.

#### 2. Selection of Members from the Racial Ethnic Caucuses

Members of the five racial ethnic caucuses (African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino American, Middle Eastern American, and Native American) shall select one (1) member from each caucus to be elected through the General Assembly's nominating process to serve a full or partial four-year term with eligibility for one additional full term.

#### **B. Liaison Members Assigned to ACREC by Other Church Entities**

Liaison persons may be elected or appointed to serve with full voice, but no vote. Such liaison persons ordinarily will include representatives from such other key church entities as the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment.

#### **C. Representatives**

In addition to the 12 elected voting members and to the non-voting liaison members of ACREC, staff, consultants, and representatives from related entities may attend the ACREC meetings. Specifically, this will involve:

1. A representative from the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall attend an ACREC meeting at least biennially at the expense of the General Assembly Nominating Committee. This representative shall be given time on the agenda of the meeting and shall have voice but not a vote.
2. For purposes of communication and resources, staff from the Congregational, National, and Worldwide Ministries Divisions, as well as Mission Support Services, may be invited to meet at least biennially with ACREC. These representatives may be given time on the agenda of the meeting and shall have voice but not a vote, with expenses being paid by their respective staff travel budgets.

#### **D. Responsibilities of ACREC Members (shall include but not be limited to):**

1. Diligence
  - a. Maintain a commitment to the purpose of ACREC;
  - b. Accept and fulfill assignments as agreed to or requested by ACREC;
  - c. Accept an Office only if willing to assume duties of the office.
2. Meeting Attendance
  - a. Upon notice of scheduled meetings, promptly make arrangements to attend;
  - b. Be in attendance at all committee meetings. If unable to attend a scheduled committee meeting, promptly notify the chairperson or the office to request an excused absence;
  - c. Remain until the meeting adjourns, unless a timely request has been submitted to be excused early;
  - d. When conference calls are scheduled, immediately confirm participation or excused absence. At the start of scheduled conference calls, initiate phone connections a few minutes before the designated time of the call in order to begin promptly
3. Meeting Participation and Process
  - a. Be on time for all committee meetings, since a quorum is established on the basis of actual attendance;
  - b. Prepare to participate in all committee business by studying materials received before and at the meeting;
  - c. Prepare all reports to the committee in writing and, if requested, provide sufficient copy for distribution to all meeting participants;

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- d. Give respectful attention to anyone speaking during meetings;
- e. direct all comments to the chairperson during plenary discussions. Submit motions in writing to the secretary. Note that the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* will generally be used to conduct the meeting;
- f. Conduct all personal business and visiting outside of scheduled meeting time.

### **E. Terms of Committee Membership**

With the exception of the ACREC member elected by and from the General Assembly Council Executive Committee, the voting members of ACREC shall be elected to fill a full or partial four-year term, and shall be eligible for election to one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial.

### **F. Vacancies in Committee Membership**

1. For each elected term, two consecutive, unexcused absences, or three consecutive absences (excused or unexcused) may be the basis for declaring a vacancy in committee membership, which determination shall be made by the ACREC Executive Committee.
2. All committee membership vacancies that occur shall be filled by the General Assembly Nominating Committee in accord with established process and procedure.

## **IV. Officers**

### **A. Composition**

The ACREC officers shall be composed of five (5) persons, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and the chairpersons of the Study & Comment and the Resource & Referrals sub-committees, which five officers shall constitute the ACREC Executive Committee

### **B. Elections**

1. \*Ordinarily\* the ACREC Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected from the committee membership in rotation according to the alphabetical listing of the five racial ethnic groups named in section III.A.1. and 2. Should the person next scheduled in rotation for election decline to serve, then the ACREC Nominating Committee shall choose a nominee or, in the alternative, there may be nominations from the floor. Subsequently, the order of rotation shall be preserved and applied in the next election of officers.
2. The annual election of Officers ordinarily shall be conducted at a scheduled Summer meeting (July–August–September in even numbered years) or a scheduled mid-Summer to mid-fall meeting (August-September-October-November in odd-numbered years). Following the election of the Chair and the Vice-Chair, there shall be a slate presented by the Nominating Committee, or in the alternative, nominations from the floor, from which list nominees shall be elected to the offices of Secretary and Chairpersons of the Resource & Referrals and the Study & Comment sub-committees.
3. All ACREC Officers so chosen shall take office and be installed immediately thereafter at the same Summer or mid-Summer meeting when they are duly elected.

\* \* This means that the leadership of ACREC may be chosen from any elected members of the Advocacy Committee.

### **C. Terms of Officer Positions**

The officers of ACREC shall be elected to serve for a one-year term, and they shall be eligible, if committee members so desire, for election to a second one-year term, for a maximum of two (2) years of service in the same office.

### **D. Vacancies in Officer Positions**

Vacancies among elected officers of ACREC shall be filled promptly, in accord with specifications IV.A.B.C above, by a simple majority vote of ACREC members in attendance at a scheduled meeting or via e-mail, facsimile, of conference call.

### **E. Responsibilities of Officers**

1. Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chairperson (or, in her/his absence, the Vice-Chairperson), shall convene and preside at the meetings of both ACREC and its Executive Committee, and shall have the authority to appoint the members and chairpersons of committees and task forces. The Chairperson shall be responsible for excusing any members who are unable to attend any scheduled meetings. The Chairperson and the Staff resource person(s) shall prepare the agenda for meetings of both ACREC and its Executive Committee, and shall ensure that the agenda is sent to all ACREC members two weeks prior to any scheduled meetings.

If for any reason(s) the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are unable to attend a scheduled meeting, a Chair pro tem shall be appointed by the Chair or committee members. When the Chairperson is unable to attend a scheduled meeting where his/her presence is required, the

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Chairperson shall appoint an experienced member of the committee as Chair pro term, with such an appointment made in writing and with a confirmation memorandum being sent to the Staff for ACREC.

### 2. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep all written records of the meetings of ACREC and of its Executive Committee. In cooperation with the Staff of ACREC, the Secretary shall prepare and distribute copies of the minutes of ACREC and of its Executive Committee. The Secretary shall also, upon request and in cooperation with the rest of the Officers, prepare and/or disseminate official ACREC correspondence and other communications.

When needed and possible, the Secretary shall serve as Parliamentarian for all meetings.

The Secretary, in cooperation with the Staff of ACREC, shall also function as Treasurer, ensuring the timely and accurate reporting of ACREC finances at all scheduled meetings.

Further, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Staff of ACREC, shall maintain and monitor a record of ACREC members' Absences (excused and unexcused) and shall advise the ACREC Executive Committee of potential need to declare a vacancy in committee membership.

### 3. Chairpersons of Sub-Committees

The Chairpersons of ACREC's sub-committees (Resource & Referrals and Study & Comment) shall convene and preside at all meetings of their respective teams, ensuring that timely response is made to all assignments and that appropriate reports and recommendations are provided to ACREC and its Executive Committee.

### 4. Functions of ACREC's Executive Committee (shall be but are not limited to):

- a. Plan and coordinate Committee meeting dates with other committees and ACREC members;
- b. Arrange meetings and schedules related to work of the Committee;
- c. Serve as ACREC's budget committee;
- d. Assist with and coordinate the ongoing and special work of the sub-committees;
- e. Facilitate decision-making processes for assigned functions;
- f. Provide orientation of all new Committee members;
- g. On behalf of the General Assembly Nominating Committee, evaluate the performance of ACREC members and their contributions at the end of their first term so as to inform any re-nomination/re-election potential and process;
- h. Review drafts of minutes and financial reports before they are presented to the full Committee for approval;
- i. Serve at least in part, as a 3-member nominating committee (consisting of the chairpersons of the R&R) and S&C sub-committees, and one other non-officer person appointed by the Chair of ACREC which shall:
  - (1). propose a slate of Officer nominees and shall guide the election process of the Committee;
  - (2). propose a slate of Liaison persons (from ACREC to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, and the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment), which Liaison persons shall maintain multi-directional advocacy and communication between ACREC and their respective assigned committee;
- j. Complete and submit required annual and/or biennial reports to the General Assembly in accord with timelines of the General Assembly Council.

## V. Organization for Mission and Ministries

### A. Meeting Schedules

1. The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns ordinarily will hold at least three (3) scheduled meetings each year (spread out from the beginning, to the middle, to the end of each calendar year).
2. Given the current biennial meeting schedule of the General Assembly, it is likely that the following flow of scheduled ACREC meetings would best facilitate successful completion of the Committee's assigned tasks:
  - a. During odd-numbered, non-meeting years of the General Assembly, ACREC ordinarily will hold three (3) scheduled meetings as follows:
    - (1). During the Winter months of January-February-March;
    - (2). During the Spring months of April-May-June;
    - (3). During the mid-Summer to mid-Fall months of August -September-October-November.
  - b. During the even-numbered, stated meeting years of the General Assembly, ACREC ordinarily will hold four (4) scheduled meetings as follows:
    - (1). During the Winter months of January-February-March;



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- (2). During the Spring months of April-May-June;
  - (3). During the Summer months of July-August-September;
  - (4). During the Fall months of October-November-December.
3. The ACREC Executive Committee shall recommend proposed dates, times, and locations of meetings of the Committee in a timely manner, and shall plan ahead for at least one or two year cycles. Subsequently and ordinarily, the specific dates, times, and locations of all one- and two-year cycles of meetings shall be determined by common consent of the ACREC members.
  4. Ordinarily, whenever possible, at least one regularly scheduled meeting in each two-year cycle shall be held jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and/or the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. A shared agenda shall be planned by the chairpersons of the respective committees for portions of the joint meeting.

### **B. Meeting Flow and Foci**

The flow and foci of the Committee's agendas will include but not be limited to the following:

1. During odd- and/ or even-numbered years:
  - a. Forward annual or biennial reports to the General Assembly, including recommendations, resolutions, and responses to referrals;
  - b. Prepare and coordinate annual calendar of meeting dates and work time lines for the year;
  - c. Review overtures to the General Assembly;
  - d. If scheduled, meet in joint session with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and/or the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy;
  - e. Prepare analyses of all items and referrals acted on at General Assembly, with special attention to those of racial ethnic concerns.
2. During even-numbered years:
  - a. Notify the General Assembly Services of committee resource persons to attend General Assembly;
  - b. Prepare final Advice and Counsel Memorandum, and complete reports and resource materials for General Assembly;
  - c. Invite presenters as desired to discuss matters coming before the General Assembly;
  - d. Provide orientation for new members of ACREC.
3. During odd-numbered years:
  - a. Prepare budget requests for the next Per Capita Table funding cycle;
  - b. Notify each of the five racial ethnic caucuses of current needs for replacement of Committee members whose term is expiring.

### **C. Criteria for Meeting Locations**

In determining ACREC's meeting sites, the following will be considered:

1. Meeting and overnight facilities must be barrier free.
2. If at all possible, facilities should be related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
3. Project Equality's standards shall be used for selection criteria.
4. Facilities should have; easy access to airports and airport transportation.
5. Equipment on site for meeting purposes (e.g., audio-visual, copier, faxing, and computer hook-ups) should be available as needed.
6. Meeting space should comfortably accommodate fifteen to twenty persons.

### **D. Educational Sessions at Meetings**

1. Topics will be an issue relevant to the work of ACREC.
2. Topics may be new or emerging issues as major foci at the next meeting of General Assembly.
3. Local advocates may be invited for educational and special expertise as appropriate.
4. Presentations are to be arranged in order to provide information on multiple perspectives and implications of issues.

### **E. Timelines**

Meeting schedules and agendas shall be designated to prepare work in a timely manner for annual and/or biennial reporting to the General Assembly.

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1. Comments and reports intended to provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly must be submitted forty-five (45) days prior to the convening of the General Assembly.
2. Narrative reports to the General Assembly must be submitted to the Office of the General Assembly one hundred and twenty (120) days prior to the convening of the General Assembly.
3. Issues, report, and overtures flagged for analysis must be referred to the Resource & Referral sub-committee in a timely manner for work schedules and conference calls prior to the convening of the General Assembly.

### F. Sub-Committees

ACREC members are assigned to one of two sub-committees by way of designated responsibilities and/or priority interest areas:

#### 1. Resource & Referral

##### a. Composition

There shall be six members of the sub-committee including, but not limited to, ACREC Liaison persons to the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, the General Assembly Council Executive Committee representative, and one caucus representative.

##### b. Tasks and Foci

- (1). Assess relevant work from other entities.
- (2). Receive and prepare responses to General Assembly referrals.
- (3). Facilitate preparation of Advice and Counsel Memoranda, including those designed in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and/or the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.
- (4). Process and analyze actions of the General Assembly following each biennial meeting in preparation for summary report to ACREC.
- (5). Prioritize and initiate the preparation of statements, communications, resolutions, and reports on racial ethnic concerns to be forwarded to the General Assembly Council or the General Assembly.
- (6). Identify and develop necessary resource materials and plans for participation of ACREC members at each biennial General Assembly.

#### 2. Study & Comment

##### a. Composition

There shall be six members of the sub-committee including, but not limited to, the caucus representatives.

##### b. Tasks and Foci

- (1). Consult with the networks of justice advocates on implementation of racial justice policies of the church.
- (2). Receive annual or biennial summaries of data on vacancies, fulfillment of diversity needs, and nomination processes relevant to racial ethnic representation by the General Assembly Nominating Committee.
- (3). Maintain communication with constituency groups to exchange information about current and emerging issues.
- (4). Ensure connections with programs related to racial ethnic communities, including Racial Ethnic Congregational Enhancement, Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges, Self-Development of People, the Washington Office, and the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association.
- (5). Consult with Equal Employment and affirmative Action Officers to identify and prioritize practices and policies affecting constituency groups.
- (6). Review and monitor the PC(U.S.A.)'s Minority Vendor Policy, focusing on procurement goals, regulations, cost analyses, and accountability.

## VI. General Assembly Connections

### A. Policies

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall function in accord with the policies of the General Assembly of the PC (U.S.A.), including the *Open Meeting Policy* (see Appendix) and the *Conflict of Interest Policy*.

### B. Staff Accountability and Lodgement

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination of work of the Committee shall be appointed by the General Assembly Council Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the Office of the General Assembly Council

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Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the Committee to the Office of the General Assembly Council Executive Director.

### C. Budget

Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns comes from the per capita budget, except for staffing costs that are accounted for in the budget of the Office of the Deputy Executive Director of the General Assembly Council.

1. The ACREC budget shall be developed, prepared, and recommended by the ACREC Executive Committee, unless it shall determine the need to establish a separate, representative Task Force composed of two (2) ACREC members elected by a simple majority vote of the Committee members in attendance, together with the ACREC staff person as an *ex-officio* member.
2. A report of the Advocacy Committee's financial status will be available at each meeting of the Committee. A full financial report will be distributed at the second scheduled meeting of the year.

### D. Access

*"The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council. Access shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, racial involvement reports, an annual or biennial narrative report, advice and counsel memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and counsel memoranda shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate. The annual or biennial narrative report to the General Assembly shall be forwarded to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee for possible comments."* (GAC Manual of Operations, September 2000, p. 36)

### E. Assigned Functions

1. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on the Advocacy Committee's own initiative.
2. Advise the General Assembly Council on matters of racial ethnic concerns, including statements about pressing issues, which the Council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
3. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its representative committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly which impact issues of racial ethnic concerns.
4. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on racial ethnic concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
5. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.
6. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies relative to racial ethnic concerns.
7. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concerns. (GAC Manual of Operations. p. 37).

### F. Relationships

1. In regard to the General Assembly, the Advocacy Committee shall do the following:
  - a. Prepare narrative reports to the General Assembly.
  - b. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on ACREC's own initiative.
  - c. In consultation with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee on Women's Concerns, provide advice and counsel to General Assembly and its representative committee on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly which impact racial ethnic people.
  - d. The ACREC Chairperson shall be a corresponding member of the General Assembly and shall be prepared to speak to racial ethnic issues at General Assembly.
  - e. Provide advice and counsel to the Office of the General Assembly on matters of racial justice referred by the General Assembly.
  - f. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies and programs implemented through the Office of the General Assembly.
  - g. Provide the Stated Clerk and the Moderator of the General Assembly information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic issues.

- h. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concerns.
2. In regard to the General Assembly Council, the Advocacy Committee shall do the following:
  - a. Furnish the General Assembly Council a copy of the Advocacy Committee's narrative reports to the General Assembly.
  - b. Advise the General Assembly Council on matters of racial ethnic concerns, including statements concerning pressing issues, which the Council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
  - c. Provide the Executive Director with information as she/he fulfills a responsibility to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.
  - d. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly Council on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, and other matters with racial justice implications that come before the General Assembly.
  - e. Correspondence related to policy matters will be addressed to the Moderator of the GAC with copy to the Executive Director. Correspondence related to program matters shall be addressed to the Executive Director of the GAC with copy to the Chair of the GAC as appropriate, or to division directors with copy to the Executive Director as appropriate.
3. ACREC Liaison Persons Assigned to Other Church Entities
  - a. ACREC members assigned as liaison persons with other church entities (General Assembly Council, the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Mission Responsibility through Investment. etc.) shall take an active stance to assure that the concerns, issues, goals, and responsibilities of ACREC are addressed at every meeting of the assigned church entity.
  - b. ACREC members assigned as liaison persons with other church entities should not assume roles or responsibilities given to those other church entities, unless doing so supports the ACREC's own focused goals and responsibilities as designated by the General Assembly.

#### G. Record Keeping

Minutes of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall be prepared using an acceptable format for General Assembly entities. In general, the minutes will include:

1. Dates and locations of meetings;
2. A record of attendance, including members present, excused, absent, and guests;
3. A record of action on all items considered by the Committee, identified using numeric sequence, synopsis of issues, and final decisions.
4. A brief description of all presentations and discussion items, including names of speakers.
5. Identification of persons assigned or appointed to specific tasks.

### Appendix C ACREC Reports and Resolutions, 2001–2006

1. *Recommendation Directing GAC to Create a Task Force to Study the Disenfranchisement of People of Color in the United States' Electoral System; to Consider Whether the Church Should Make a Policy Statement; Report Findings to the 215th General Assembly (2003)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 60, 333).*
2. *Task Force on Election Report & Recommendations, 216th General Assembly (2004).* Available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/acrec/issues.htm#electoralreform>.
3. *Recommendation to Create a Task Force to Study Issues of Reparations for African Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Others Who Have Experienced Unjust Treatment; Report Findings to the 216th General Assembly (2004)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 60, 334).*
4. *Report of the Task Force on Reparations, 216th General Assembly (2004).* Available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/acrec/issues.htm#reparations>. See also <http://www.pcusa.org/reparations/>
5. *Recommendation to Create a Task Force to Examine the Racial Justice Policies/Programs of the Board of Pensions, Foundation, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Co., Inc., and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation in Relation to the Racial Ethnic Members of the PC(USA); Report Its Findings and Recommendations to the 216th General Assembly (2004) (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 58, 333).*
6. *Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) Task Force to Examine GA Entities: Report on Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).* Available online at: <http://www.pcusa.org/acrec/pdf/climateforchange.pdf>.
7. *Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). 217th General Assembly (2006).* Available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/acrec>

8. *Resolution in Support of Ongoing Partnership Work with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and the Campaign for Fair Food.* 217th General Assembly (2006). Available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/acrec>. See also <http://www.pcusa.org/fairfood>.

9. *Joint Resolution from ACWC and ACREC Regarding the Women of Color Consultation Report and Recommendations.* 217th General Assembly (2006). Available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/acrec/woc.htm>

### **Appendix D** **Excerpt from ACREC Agency Summary, 216th General Assembly (2004)**

#### What Is Cultural Proficiency?

Cultural proficiency acknowledges that patterns of oppression are embedded in the structures of organizations. Without direct intervention and intentional efforts to change, organizational cultures perpetuate systemic patterns of oppression, even where individuals within the organization do not intend to discriminate or marginalize those who do not belong or participate in the dominant culture.

Cultural proficiency is more than a diversity program or off-the-shelf training program. It is a process that focuses on organizational transformation and individual transformation. Cultural proficiency derives from the work of Terry Cross, a First Nation clinical social worker, who observed that European American clinicians in the center where he worked were not providing competent care to their Eskimo and First Nation clients because they were not taking into account the cultural perspectives and experience of the people they were working with. As a result, Cross developed a set of tools to help people understand and respond more effectively to the differences between them.

Thus, cultural proficiency is not diversity management, it is about valuing diversity in people for the gifts they bring to the culture of an organization and the interactions between individuals. The tools of cultural proficiency work towards better self-awareness, clear articulation of core values and a process that results in positive, effective interactions among the people and the systems of a diverse environment.

Cultural proficiency provides language to describe, and standards to assess, both healthy and nonproductive policies, practices and behaviors. It acknowledges that change does not happen overnight, that people and organizations move on a continuum highly exclusive and oppressive organizations and behaviors to highly inclusive organizations and behaviors. It is built on a foundation that aligns the principles of inclusivity in diversity with the core values and mission of the organization. It also acknowledges that organizations are resistant to change and that the causes of resistance must be taken into account and addressed openly in order to bring about cultural transformation within an organization.

Based on the initial assessment and report produced by Kikanza Nuri Robins, a project management team was formed to begin implementation. In addition to the GAC and OGA staffs, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP) and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) have joined the Cultural Proficiency Initiative. This incorporates the four entities with employees in the Presbyterian Center. The project team includes representatives of all four entities.

The goal of the Cultural Proficiency Initiative at the Presbyterian Center is to transform the organizational culture integrating the best of business practices and church values so that it becomes and serves as a model for a healthy church corporation.

For more information on Cultural Proficiency see: *“Working for Justice,” Horizons*, Jan./Feb. 2004, pp. 4–7. Kikanza Nuri Robins is part of the Cultural Proficiency Group, which has authored two books published by Corwin Press:

Nuri Robins, Lindsey, Lindsey, Terrell. *Culturally Proficient Instruction: A Guide for People Who Teach*, 2003.

Nuri Robins, Lindsey, Terrell. *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*, 2nd Ed., 2003.

## **Item 14-Report 1**

### **Report 1: Report on the Review of the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns**

[The assembly approved Item 14-Report 1, Recommendations 1.–4. See p. 36.]

#### **The Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees:**

- 1. Commends the ACREC for its work, accomplishments, and insights gained in providing a self-study.**
- 2. Supports the continued funding of ACREC and its mission.**
- 3. Encourages both the General Assembly and ACREC to explore more descriptive language to identify and to better lift up the breadth of its ministry to our multicultural world.**
- 4. That the following report on Review of the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns be approved.**

**Report on Review of the Advocacy  
Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns**

**Introduction:**

The review of General Assembly permanent committees was conducted according to the provisions in the Standing Rules and the standards in the *Manual of the General Assembly*.

**Mission:**

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), along with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), was created by the 205th General Assembly (1993) to ensure representation and an active voice for advocacy at the General Assembly level for people of color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The goal of this committee is to ensure the full access and participation of people of color within the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the maintenance of a strong prophetic witness of the church on issues of racial justice in our nation and the world.

**Membership:**

The ACREC has twelve voting members nominated and elected through the General Assembly Nominating process, with the exception of one, who is elected by the General Assembly Council (GAC). Members are elected to four-year terms and may serve a total of eight years. The composition of the committee is outlined in the (GAC) *Manual of Operations*, as follows:

- 2 African Americans
- 2 Asian Americans
- 2 Hispanic/Latino Americans
- 2 Middle Eastern Americans
- 2 Native Americans
- 1 Member-at-Large elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic communities, geographic diversity, and ethnic balance.
- 1 General Assembly Council Executive Committee member

**Process:**

The ACREC provided a self-study based on their work for the past six years (2001–2006). The General Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees reviewed the self-study, examined the survey results, and interviewed the executive committee and the related staff of ACREC.

**Findings:*****Fidelity to Mission and Partnership***

1. Does the ACREC as it was created by the church serve and support the church's mission in a particular area? Does the ACREC exhibit a constant faithfulness to and fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?

*The ACREC continues to do its work with passion and dedication. The committee has fulfilled its duties. It has been faithful to its mandate.*

2. Does the basic process of the ACREC demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly? Does the ACREC exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in with the ACREC acts?

*The ACREC has provided leadership and guidance for the General Assembly and its programmatic entities in their work in order to provide advocacy for racial ethnic concerns. The ACREC is held accountable through annual and regular reports to GAC, which also reviews its minutes. Further, ACREC submits a biannual agency summary to the General Assembly.*

3. Does the ACREC exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?

*The chair of ACREC sits as a corresponding member of both General Assembly and GAC. The ACREC consults regularly with the Washington Office, Project Equality, ACWC (Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns), ACSWP (Advisory Committee for Social Witness Policy), MRTI (Mission Responsibility Through Investment), and the five racial ethnic caucuses, as well as other denominational groups.*

4. Does the ACREC provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

*The ACREC reports to each GA and the chair sits as a corresponding member of General Assembly and GAC.*

***Effectiveness of Services***

1. Does the ACREC have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?

*Yes. The ACREC has a clearly understood process by which the committee is able to respond to the variety of issues before it with flexibility.*

2. Does the ACREC have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?

*Yes. The ACREC normally reviews the Strategic Vision Plan in the Summer and Fall meetings following an assembly. It assesses on-going work, new work assigned by the assembly, and new areas of concern it wants to address based on input from committee members, liaisons, and staff.*

3. Does the ACREC employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?

*Yes. As an advocacy committee of the General Assembly, the ACREC communicates effectively with the church at large indirectly through its advocacy work with programmatic entities and the General Assembly, as well as through a print newsletter (The Torch) and through the PC(USA) Website.*

4. Does the ACREC utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?

*Yes. In 2004, the committee launched a Website with support from the GAC staff. The Website is linked to the Office for Racial Justice & Advocacy, Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries, ACWC, ACSWP, Peacemaking, and the Washington Office. The Website is designed to give the committee more visibility on an on-going basis. In the six-month period preceding the assembly, it focuses on communicating with commissioners and others interested in assembly business.*

5. Has the committee or commission developed a vision and plans for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and context of the PC(USA)?

*Yes. The ACREC initiated a strategic vision plan, which identifies areas of concern, to assist it in setting goals and prioritizing its work. The committee normally reviews this plan annually.*

## Item 14-Self-Study PJC

### *General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Self-Study*

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[Revised 2/18/08]

#### CHAPTER I

#### CHURCH DISCIPLINE: BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST

“Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission to the world, for its building up, and for its service to God. Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word. It belongs to Christ alone to rule, to teach, to call, and to use the Church as he wills, exercising his authority by the ministry of women and men for the establishment and extension of his Kingdom” (G-1.0100 b.).

“Church discipline is the church’s exercise of authority given by Christ, both in the direction of guidance, control, and nurture of its members and in the direction of constructive criticism of offenders” (D-1.0101).

“Judicial process is the means by which church discipline is implemented within the context of pastoral care and oversight. It is the exercise of authority by governing bodies of the church for

“a. the prevention and correction of irregularities and delinquencies by governing bodies, the General Assembly Council, or an entity of the General Assembly (Remedial Cases, D-6.0000);

“b. the prevention and correction of offenses by persons (Disciplinary Cases, D-10.0000).” (D-2.0101).

### *A Brief History*

This brief history is offered to give the Review Committee and other readers a taste of the broad sweep of the development of judicial process, a history which shapes current thinking and practice. The current pattern of church discipline is the continuation of centuries of development, which took a significant turn during the Reformation. As the Reformers reordered worship, so they also reordered church discipline. The establishment of church discipline was neither neat nor orderly as the Reformation developed. Early issues concerned use of excommunication as punishment, the location of jurisdiction for church discipline (with civil magistrates or ecclesiastical courts), and the relationship of the church to the civil community.<sup>1</sup> How these issues and their ramifications were resolved shaped church discipline in North American Presbyterianism.

As early as 1529, John Oecolampadius issued a directory of church discipline in Basel in which ecclesiastical discipline was separated from the civil magistrates. Huldrych Zwingli, on the other hand, thought that the government should enforce church regulations; therefore, in Zurich church discipline was interwoven with the life of the Christian state and prescribed by civil law.<sup>2</sup>

For John Calvin the purpose of church discipline was to guard the reverence of the Lord’s Supper. “The norm of membership in the Church is fitness to be admitted, without profanation, to the mystery of the sacrament, in which ‘we are made partakers of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, His death, His life, and all His benefits,’ and are ‘joined in true peace and fraternal unity’”<sup>3</sup> In a word, Calvin wanted to ensure baptismal discipline around the table. Reconciliation—living as faithful Christians mutually accountable to each other—was the goal of church discipline. A Consistory, a body of ministers and elders, exercised most cases of discipline in the church in Geneva.

The foundational nature of church discipline shows forth in the Scots Confession (1560), “The notes of the true Kirk, therefore, we believe, confess, and avow to be: first, the true preaching of the Word of God, in which God has revealed himself to us, . . . secondly, the right administration of the sacraments of Christ Jesus, with which much be associated the Word and promise of God to seal and confirm them in our hearts; and lastly, ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered, as God’s Word prescribes, whereby vice is repressed and virtue nourished.”<sup>4</sup> In the Kirk, the Presbyterian system of church courts exercised jurisdiction.

The 17th Century Westminster Confession of Faith, the bedrock of much of early American Presbyterianism, reads, “[Church] officers the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the word and censures; and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the gospel, and by absolution from censures, as occasions shall require.” (6.170) “Church censures are necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren; for deterring of others from like offenses; for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump, for vindicating the honor of Christ. . .” (6.171). The goal of discipline was to ensure right conduct through mutual accountability. Punishments ranged from admonition to excommunication (6.172).

Predecessor bodies to the Presbyterian Church (USA) adopted and adapted the Westminster Standards and over the years refined their forms of government, directories for worship, and rules of discipline. Before the latter part of the 19th Century, full General Assemblies deliberated judicial cases; because of the press of business sometimes cases were carried over for several years. As early as the 1880s, General Assemblies had the power to delegate judicial matters to commissions. Throughout the church, it was understood that discipline is the responsibility of all governing bodies. Because General Assemblies, consisting of five hundred members or more, could not easily hear and deliberate cases, the General Assembly appointed commissions to do this work. *Permanent* Judicial Commissions have been prescribed since the mid-20th Century. Powers currently exercised by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission date from 1982. Since reunion in 1983, several amendments to the Rules of Discipline have been made with major revision adopted in 1995.<sup>5</sup>

Church discipline as exercised through the formal judicial process exists to uphold the integrity of the Body of Christ through mutual accountability. “Central to the Reformed tradition from its very inception is a commitment to the faithful living of Christian faith coupled with an admission that such faithfulness is not possible alone. In the church we need each other, with accountability to each other, to live faithful lives.”<sup>6</sup>



*Organization and General Responsibilities*

The Rules of Discipline describe the judicial processes of the Church, of which the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) is a part. The GAPJC has both original and appellate jurisdiction as prescribed in the Rules of Discipline. Primarily an appellate court, the Commission hears and decides both remedial and disciplinary cases; however, GAPJC may conduct trials in cases of original jurisdiction. The range of GAPJC responsibilities will become clearer in this self-study report which explores compliance with constitutional and non-constitutional standards.

The membership of the GAPJC is composed of ministers and elders (as nearly equal as possible) from each of the synods (D-5.0100). Thus there are sixteen commissioners from the sixteen synods; currently, however, there are two vacancies. Members are elected by the General Assembly and ordinarily serve for six years (D-5.0103). The change to biennial assemblies necessitated the adjustment of the terms of some of the current Commissioners.

The Commission elects its Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, and Assistant Clerk who constitute the Executive Committee. Officers serve terms of two years and may be reelected.<sup>7</sup> The responsibilities of the Executive Committee are delineated in the *Manual of the GAPJC*, which is appended to this self-study.

The Commission is scheduled to meet four times per year over a five-day period for each meeting (Thursday-Monday). Because of caseload and briefing schedules, meetings may be cancelled. In the 2002-2007 period covered by this self-study report, the Commission has met eighteen times (two by conference call).

*Building Up the Body of Christ in Times of Turmoil*

The GAPJC often hears and acts on cases that deal with issues which are vigorously debated in the Church today. In all our deliberations the Commission is reminded of the principles of church discipline, which have remained essentially unchanged since the Reformation:

Church discipline is the church's exercise of authority given by Christ. . . . The purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct and restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the cause of discord and division, and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings (D-1.0101).

It is of no small moment that the Commission hears the words from the Preamble to the Rules of Discipline before every hearing and trial and that this paragraph heads the Commission's Code of Ethics.

In every case before it, the Commission seeks to understand both the specific pleadings as well as the constitutional implications of the case. Because we are aware that our decisions set precedents which guide the whole Church, we undertake our work in a spirit of prayer and humility. During every meeting we worship together each morning and evening. On the morning of hearings or trials, we invite the parties to join our worship.

Cases before the Commission require balancing the tensions inherent in our polity and theology. Decisions are based on the particular facts of each case. For example, in two cases arising from interpretation of *Book of Order* language on per capita giving, we concluded that while the payment of per capita may not be compelled, we nevertheless are bound together as a covenant community. We noted "Withholding per capita as a means of protest or dissent evidences a serious breach of the trust and love with which our Lord Jesus intends the covenant community to function together" (*Minihan and Richards, v. Presbytery Scioto Valley, 2003*).

The very difficult issue of ordination standards has been central to several cases in which the Commission has set important precedents. These cases differ in their details and illustrate the complexity of the issues involved in the process of examination, ordination, and installation. All cases require careful attention to due process and sensitivity to scripture and confessional standards. While it might be desirable for the issue of ordination standards to be settled once and for all, the Commission realizes that this issue will not finally be decided by any *one* judicial proceeding, but instead must be decided on a case-by-case basis. See for example: *McKittrick v. West End Presbyterian Church (2002)* and *Londonderry v. Presbytery of Northern New England. (2000)*

The Report of the Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity has occasioned debate on what it means to be "reformed," more particularly whether the PC (USA.) is to define and enumerate "essential tenets of the Reformed faith." Some cases dealing with this issue have already been scheduled to come before the GAPJC in 2008.

As the highest court in the PC(USA), the GAPJC not only speaks to the Church, but also to the civil courts (for example: *Jones v. Wolf* (1979) 443 U.S. 595, 61 L.Ed.2d 775, 99 S. Ct. 3020).

In these days when the fabric of denominational trust is frayed, the Commission seeks ways to encourage resolution of disputes with means other than the judicial process. “The biblical duty of church people to ‘come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court . . .’ (Matthew 5:25) is not diminished by the Rules of Discipline. Every church member is enjoined to try to resolve differences without resorting to judicial process” (D-1.0103). The process and decision in the Palos Park (2008) case illustrates this injunction.

The fabric of trust may be weak in some parts of the denomination at large, but it is not so among Commission members. Commissioners approach their work with deep integrity, respect for each other, and a love for the Church we serve.

#### *Constitutional Mandate, Boundaries, Powers and Process*

**Constitutional Mandate:** The GAPJC is a constitutionally mandated Commission of the General Assembly (D-5.101), charged “to serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline” (G-13.0103o).

**Constitutional Boundaries:** As a Commission, the GAPJC undertakes the judicial function of the General Assembly on behalf of the General Assembly, and considers and concludes judicial matters referred to it (G-9.0502). Its Commissioners are presbyters from each synod who are qualified to be commissioners to the General Assembly (D-5.0100).

Since the General Assembly is the highest governing body of the church, the decisions of the GAPJC are not subject to further review by appeal. Its decisions are Authoritative Interpretation of the *Book of Order*, and the “most recent interpretation of a provision of the *Book of Order* shall be binding” (G-13.0103r). The decisions of the GAPJC are reported to each General Assembly by the Stated Clerk as provided by D-7.0700 and Standing Rule M.2.b.(4).

**Constitutional Powers and Process:** “In the cases transmitted to it the [GA]PJC shall have only the power prescribed by and conduct its proceedings according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (D-5.0202).

## CHAPTER II SELF-STUDY PROCESS

### Formulation of Self-Study Process

The General Assembly’s review process has given us to the opportunity to think deeply about our work in service to the Church. In 2006 the General Assembly approved the following action: “Consistent with the action of the 216th General Assembly (2004) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 88, 339–41), the assembly committee’s review will be limited to the following questions:

1. Is the GAPJC fulfilling its constitutional mandate as specified herein?
2. Is the GAPJC in compliance with the Constitutional Standards as described herein?
3. Is the GAPJC in compliance with the Non-Constitutional standards as described herein?”

We have probed our constitutional framework and carefully considered our effectiveness in fulfilling our mandate under the *Book of Order*. The period reviewed in this self-study is 2002–2007.

The Commission believes that this self-study will demonstrate that GAPJC has indeed fulfilled its constitutional mandate and is in compliance with both constitutional and non-constitutional standards.

As we began this process, we realized there would be unusual challenges, not because we were reluctant to do a self-study, but because we are the only body of the General Assembly which acts as the Assembly in matters properly before us. Initially the GA set standards for review which included both committees and commissions; subsequently GA set standards which applied to GAPJC only. Unlike other bodies being reviewed, we are a *commission*, not a committee. Moreover, our deliberations are private (D-7.0402, 11.0403) and our decisions are final and are the decisions of the General Assembly.

Our participation in the GA review process necessarily requires respect for this Commission’s constitutional boundaries in order to uphold the integrity of the judicial process of the Church. With this understanding the Commission undertook its self-study process. Moreover, in order to insure that this understanding was carried forward, the Commission requested that the Stated Clerk involve Commission members in training the GA Review Committee in 2008, when our review will be conducted.

A Self-Study Task Force, composed of Fred Denson (chair), Catherine Borchert, Bill Carlough, and Wendy Warner, began its work in early 2004. They worked tirelessly and at length to specify *all* the constitutional provisions under which the

Commission works; they also identified non-constitutional standards. They made their first extensive report to the full Commission at the January 2005 meeting.

The Task Force continued to work during 2005 and at the February 2006 meeting presented the Standards for Review of the GAPJC. Each constitutional and non-constitutional provision is accompanied by guidelines to evaluate the Commission's effectiveness in fulfilling its constitutional mandate. This document served as the blueprint for the work of the Self-Study Committee and is the framework for this Report.

In July 2006 the Commission named The Self-Study Committee: Fane Downs (chair), Sue Cornman, Gwen Cook, and Leon Fanniel (each from different classes). The committee met by conference call and in person over the next year and made an extensive report to the full Commission in May 2007. GAPJC acted on the full draft of the self-study in November 2007. Leon Fanniel resigned from the Commission for health reasons, and the remaining three members carried on the work of the committee.

### Self-Study Process

From the beginning of this process the Self-Study Committee and the Commission as a whole were determined to provide a thorough portrait of the work of the Commission. We also wanted to provide a picture of the atmosphere of collegiality, trust, and respect in which the Commission works. Each Commissioner understands himself or herself to be engaged spiritually in building up the Church.

The Committee began by becoming familiar with the all standards and guidelines. Each member reviewed the minutes of all the meetings during the review period; each looked for certain actions, or lack of action, to gather information on the standards and guidelines. The Committee also reviewed case records from 2002 for information on the length of time elapsed from initial filing to final decision.

Simultaneously it became clear that the Commission's Manual needed revision and that the Commission needed to be intentional about using more advanced technology in our work. Thus, in true Presbyterian fashion, two more committees were named to accomplish these additional functions. The Revised Manual is appended to this Self-Study Report.

The Self-Study Committee drafted a set of survey questions for the Commissioners from 2002 to the present and questions for members of the Stated Clerk's staff. Responses to these surveys have informed this study as will be clear as the study unfolds. The Commission decided that parties who had appeared before the Commission would be surveyed for the GA Review Committee, in order to shed further light on our effectiveness and fidelity to our constitutional mandate. Research Services assisted with the distribution and analysis of this survey for the Review Committee.

The Committee prepared and revised drafts of portions of the report. The initial draft of the entire Self-Study Report was presented to the full Commission in November 2007 for comment and approval. Subsequently the Report was revised and submitted to the Stated Clerk for circulation to the GA Review Committee.

## CHAPTER III COMPLIANCE WITH CONSTITUTIONAL STANDARDS

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that the GAPJC is in compliance with its constitutional mandate as found in *The Book of Order*.

"The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is a constitutionally mandated commission of the General Assembly (D-5.0101), charged 'to serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline' (G-13.0103o)." The Commission adopted constitutional standards in order to verify compliance with the overall constitutional mandate as well as the particulars as defined by the *Book of Order*.

The following are the constitutional standards which the *Book of Order* requires, followed immediately by the findings of this committee as to the Commission's level of compliance:

1. *To open and close all meetings with prayer* (G-9.0301b). The minutes reveal that this standard was met without exception. Prayer is woven into the fabric of our meetings and our deliberations. Prayer is not simply a constitutional standard for the GAPJC, but a deliberate practice and spiritual discipline.

2. *To secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings* (D-1.0101). This Commission established the guidelines defined below.

a. *Time between receipt of complaint or notice of appeal and final disposition should not exceed an average of one year.*

(1) *Determine average annual caseload for six years.* GAPJC deals with an average of eleven (11) cases annually and of those cases half require hearings or trials.

(2) *Determine average time between receipt of a complaint or notice of appeal and final disposition on merits.* On the cases for which we have complete information, cases have taken from one (1) to fifteen (15) months from first notice (either complaint or notice of appeal) to final disposition (decision, dismissal, referral to lower court). The Commission notes that because of required process (submitting records, briefs, etc.), a typical case cannot be ready for hearing before a minimum of four months have elapsed (D-8.0303-305). The average time from first official notice to this Commission to disposition is 7.4 months. When briefing schedules conflict with meeting dates, the time from notice of appeal or complaint until decision is necessarily longer. GAPJC handles a wide variety of remedial and disciplinary cases, requests for reference, decisions on preliminary questions, responses to official communications from parties, etc. The Executive Committee tries to balance the cases so that the cases are distributed more or less evenly among the meetings (usually three meetings annually).

(3) *Adequacy of frequency of meetings to meet standard.* Both objective data and Commissioners' surveys affirm that the current number of meetings is adequate; however, vigilance in management of the docket must be maintained. More cases requiring GAPJC action may call for more meetings or longer meetings. Current caseload is manageable; however, even a small increase would necessitate changes in meeting frequency.

(4) *Adequate size and structure of Commission to meet standard.* The size and structure of the Commission are adequate for current caseload.

(5) *Adequacy of staffing.* Staffing is adequate for the current caseload.

(6) *Adequacy of technical support.* The current level of technical support is adequate. An increasing challenge is the lack of consistent access to current hardware and software for all Commissioners and staff.

(7) *Proper utilization of available technology.* Meeting by meeting the Commission is improving in this area.

(8) *Efficiency of case committees.* In general the case committee system works well to move cases forward. The degree of preparation may depend on the complexity of the case. For further information on case committees, see 14 b, on page 13 below.

3. *Procedural safeguard and due process should be accorded to all parties.* The minutes record that in every hearing or trial, parties were offered the opportunity to question process and raise concerns. When parties did so, the Commission addressed the issues and concerns in a manner consistent with due process. The Commission is careful to ensure fairness for all parties appearing before it.

4. *Prompt determination of preliminary questions.*

a. *time between receipt of initial case filings by OGA and forwarding the same to moderator and clerk should not exceed average of 14 days.*

(1) *determine average of the above for three years.*

b. *time between receipt of initial case filings by moderator and clerk from OGA and decisions on preliminary questions should not exceed average of 30 days.*

(1) *Determine three-year average for moderator and clerk to file decision on preliminary questions.*

(2) *Search available information for evidence of patterns of delay.*

(3) *Adequate use of ways to expedite process.*

There is not adequate data to make a judgment on the particulars of this standard; however, the average time for the Commission to dispose of its cases suggests that this standard is met. The Executive Committee meets often by telephone to determine preliminary questions; likewise the Stated Clerk's office is prompt in forwarding cases to the Moderator and Clerk for determination. The Administrative Assistant for the GAPJC has begun keeping a log of dates so that timeliness can be tracked more accurately in the future.

5. *Stays of enforcement (D-6.-103)*

a. *time between receipt of OGA of request for stay and forwarding it to PJC members should not exceed average of 5 working days.*

b. *time between request for stay on preliminary questions by moderator and clerk and notification to Commissioners of their recommendation should not exceed an average of 5 working days.*

Determine average time for a. and b.

Except in one case when a request for stay arrived when the Manager of Judicial Process was not available and was therefore delayed, the stays are handled promptly, then forwarded electronically to the Commissioners with a clear due date indicated. We have no data to show that the stay process prolonged the pendency of cases.

6. *Rule on challenges*

a. *Parties should be given the opportunity to present evidence and arguments on any challenges made to findings of moderator and clerk on preliminary questions (D-6.0306, D-8.0302)* When parties object to the findings of the moderator and clerk, the parties are invited to present evidence and argument to the GAPJC at hearing. In each case where a party has challenged findings at hearing, the Commission has addressed the challenge and ruled on it.

b. *Parties should be given the opportunity to object to composition of the Commission.* In the trial before this Commission, parties were given the opportunity to object to the participation of individual Commissioners (D-7.0401 b.2.) Although it is not required for hearings on appeal, the Commission offers parties the opportunity to object to the participation of commissioners for a particular case.

7. *Issue citations (D-7.0201, .0202; D-11.0201, .0202).* For the period covered by this for self-study there have been no requests for issuance of citations.

8. *Appoint counsel (D-11.0302)* In applicable cases, the GAPJC should appoint counsel for the accused. The Commission should have a process for providing counsel and minutes should show compliance if counsel is appointed. At the time of the preparation of this self-study the Commission did not have a process for appointing counsel, nor has the need arisen; however, the Manual Review Committee has been alerted to the need for this.

9. *Conduct pre-trial and pre-hearing conferences in appropriate cases.* In the time under review, one trial has been conducted. In another case, a pre-trial committee was appointed and the case was resolved through mediation instead of trial. In both cases, the Moderator appointed a pre-trial committee and a pre-trial conference was held.

10. *Conduct trials and hearings with full decorum in a neutral and suitable place.* The Commission intentionally schedules its meetings in neutral places; the Commission takes care prayerfully to conduct its proceedings as befits a court of the Church of Jesus Christ.

a. *In appropriate cases use of Alternate Forms of Resolution (AFR) should be encouraged as part of pre-trial or pre-hearing procedures.* In the period under study there has been one mediated case; GAPJC adopted a consent order based on the mediated agreement. In another case GAPJC ordered that a trial be conducted “unless an alternative resolution is achieved.” This case is still pending. By implication, judicial commissions have the authority to act on agreements made by mediation and Alternate Forms of Resolution.

b. *The Commission should have guidelines for use of Alternate Forms of Resolution.* The Manual Review Committee will be drafting guidelines for use of AFR.

c. *Adequate time should be allocated at hearings for oral argument and for GAPJC to gather information needed to make fair and just determination.* Ordinarily, a hearing is conducted in one and one-half hours, with each party having one half hour to present its case with the remaining half hour for the Commission to question the parties. Occasionally when the issues are unusually complex, the Commission may question parties for more than thirty minutes. This time allocation appears to be adequate.

d. *Adequate time and resources should be available for GAPJC to prepare for trials and hearings.* Post-meeting evaluations show that Commissioners have adequate time to prepare for cases. Sometimes the briefing schedule is such that the Commissioners do not receive the final briefs until a short time before the meeting.

e. *Ongoing assessment should be conducted regarding need for changes in constitutional mandate for trials and hearings.* This topic will be addressed in the context of our consideration of AFR. Current practice remains under review.

f. *Determination should be made regarding impact of size of the GAPJC workload on its ability to conduct quality trials and hearings.* Commissioners' surveys and data suggest that the size of GAPJC workload does not currently impose an undue burden.

g. *Determination should be made regarding need to increase size of GAPJC or limit grounds for appeal to improve management of workload.* Currently the workload is manageable. If circumstances change, it may be important for the entire Church to consider possible changes in the Rules of Discipline in this or other process issues.

11. *Read aloud D-0101 and D.0102.* The minutes demonstrate that the required portions of the Rules of Discipline are read without exception at the beginning of each hearing and trial.

12. *Control conduct of trials.*

a. *GAPJC should exercise its authority and power to control conduct of trials and of all parties, witnesses, counsel and public, including removal of them, to the end that proper dignity and decorum are maintained.* In the one trial conducted during the period under study, decorum and dignity were maintained. Commissioners consistently show impartiality and courtesy and respect to all parties.

b. *Moderator should decide all questions as to procedure or the admissibility of evidence after parties are given the opportunity to be heard and Commissioners should be given opportunity to appeal decisions by the moderator with decisions by majority vote.* These guidelines were fulfilled in the trial before the Commission.

c. *Absences of any Commissioner after trial has begun should be recorded.* This is done without exception.

13. *Decide cases. In each case when a decision has been rendered there should be private deliberations, separate votes on each specification of error, and in the case of a trial, a separate vote on each irregularity or charge.* These guidelines are fulfilled without exception. Meeting evaluations show that Commissioners are generally satisfied with the length of meetings. See 14. b. below for information on how the Commission conducts its deliberations. Obviously when the caseload is unusually heavy, there is greater pressure and Commissioners work longer hours.

14. *Prepare and disseminate written decisions.*

a. *In each case a written decision should be prepared while GAPJC is in session.* This guideline is fulfilled without exception. In one case, however, the Commission recessed without having written the decision and took it up at the next session of the recessed meeting.

b. *Review adequacy of time for GAPJC to prepare well-written decisions.* The Commission ordinarily meets three times per year over a five-day period. Case committees work prior to the meetings and generally prepare drafts of case histories and language for the specifications of error; the case committees report to the full Commission on the first evening, the night before the hearings are held. Following hearings and initial discussion by the full Commission, the case committee meets and begins drafting the decision. After the drafting and discussion process, the Commission finalizes the decision. The number and complexity of cases determines how much time is devoted to each case. The Commission and its Executive Committee have discussed the merits of the current length and number of meetings without recommending either one more meeting per year or longer meetings. Commissioners are urged to arrange their schedules in order to be in attendance from opening prayers through closing gavel.

c. *A copy of the decision should be delivered to the parties by personal service or certified mail.* This guideline is met by the Manager of Judicial Process; a certification of service accompanies each decision.

(1) *The decision should be filed with the Stated Clerk within 30 days of the hearing/trial.* The Manager of Judicial Process ensures that this guideline is met.

(2) *Each written decision carries the proper certifications.* This guideline is met without exception.

15. *Prepare and process records. Following hearings and trials, the full record of the proceedings should be prepared, processed, and transmitted to the Stated Clerk for permanent preservation.* The Manager of Judicial Process takes care of the record of the proceedings following the meetings. The records are transmitted to the Department of History in Philadelphia for permanent keeping.

## CHAPTER IV

## COMPLIANCE WITH NON-CONSTITUTIONAL STANDARDS

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that GAPJC is in compliance with the Non-Constitutional Standards which guide its work.

Inasmuch as the administration of justice is “the church’s exercise of authority given by Christ” (D-1.0101), the GAPJC adopted non-constitutional standards which describe the spiritual dimension of the Commission’s work as a function of the church as the Body of Christ. Other non-constitutional standards deal with the effectiveness of the Commission’s work internally and externally.

The following are the non-constitutional standards guide the Commission in the conduct of its work, followed by the findings as to the Commission’s level of compliance.

1. *To participate in daily corporate worship for the duration of GAPJC meetings.* While prayer is constitutionally mandated (G-9.0301b), daily worship is not. The Commission adopted the practice of daily worship about a decade ago. The practice of daily worship and prayer has as its purpose the building up of the body and creation of community (*koinonia*, mutual partnership in Christ). Worship is offered everyday in which the Commission is in session, typically twice each day. Currently the vice-moderator of the Commission requests members to conduct daily worship; both elders and clergy Commissioners lead worship. These worship services are rich and varied and keep the Commission grounded in its ministry of Christ. Evaluations after meetings reveal the depth of the Commissioners’ appreciation of daily worship.

On Sundays the Commission ordinarily worships with a local Presbyterian congregation. Commissioners experience Presbyterian worship in a variety of settings and have the opportunity to speak informally with congregants. When the caseload is unusually heavy, the Commission plans and conducts a Service of Word and Sacrament at the meeting place.

2. *To maintain and follow the Manual of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, including its Code of Ethics.* The Moderator of the Commission appointed a Manual Review Committee in July 2006 which has undertaken to review and recommend revisions of the *Manual*. The *Manual* has three parts: *the first* deals with the organization of the Commission, its officers and their responsibilities, case committee responsibilities, procedures for cases, practices in opinion writing, and staff support. *The second*, The Code of Ethics, was adopted in October 2004 and following a preamble deals with general expectations, public comment, conflicts of interest and appearance of impropriety, mutual accountability, and application. *The third part* of the Manual consists of The Standards of Review of the GAPJC. The most recent edition of the *Manual* is appended to this self-study report. The Commission conducts its business according to the *Manual*.

3. *To build community among members of the GAPJC.* The criteria for this standard is that the Commission will include time for sharing of personal joys and concerns, time for intercessory prayer for one another, and time for fellowship. The Commission is diligent in community building as shown in Commission minutes. Meetings convene with dinner on Thursday night, followed by a period in which Commissioners share the joys and concerns of their lives since the last meeting. Obviously Commissioners build relationships during the meeting—relationships marked by mutual respect and genuine affection. These sessions before the formal work of the Commission begins prepare Commissioners to work 12-hour days (or longer) on complicated and potentially divisive issues in a spirit of collegiality and cooperation. The Commission seeks always to be a community guided by the Holy Spirit.

4. *To orient newly elected commissioners.* The two criteria for this standard include letters sent by the GAPJC moderator to new Commissioners and orientation at the first meeting following the election of new Commissioners.

a. The Moderator of GAPJC welcomes new Commissioners by mail or email. The current and immediate past moderators sent such letters.

b. Commission minutes show that orientation is in fact conducted at the first meeting following the meeting of the General Assembly. Ordinarily the orientation is led by the Executive Committee, other Commissioners, and the Manager of Judicial Process. The Moderator urges returning Commissioners to arrive in time to participate in the orientation of new Commissioners. All Commissioners, no matter how long they have served, benefit from the orientation, which serves as continuing education.

c. Experienced mentors are assigned to new Commissioners to guide them as they become familiar with the work and procedures of the Commission.

5. *To communicate with the greater church by various means including writing Headnotes for each decision; ensuring that decisions are disseminated in a timely manner.*

a. Since 2002 the Commission has written headnotes which summarize the salient points of the decision. The Commission attempts to write its decisions in language understandable by all church members whether or not they have had legal training. Annotations in the *Book of Order* are not formulated by the GAPJC and are not part of the official decisions.

b. Case decisions are disseminated to parties within seven days after adjournment of each meeting. Decisions are proofread and signed before the Moderator and Clerk leave the meeting site; they are then given to the Manager of Judicial Process who distributes the decision to the parties by next-day air. Dates on the certification and transmittal forms attest that this standard is met.

c. The cases are thus transmitted to the OGA whose staff then post the decisions on the PCUSA website, after the decisions have been received by the parties. The commission has adopted a procedure by which the Clerk of the Commission will verify that the decisions have been posted on the website within the required time. The minutes of the following meeting reflect that the decisions were timely posted.

6. *To implement an ongoing self-evaluation program, which will include (a) completion of evaluation forms by Commissioners at the conclusion of each GAPJC meeting, and (b) a triennial self-study by the Self-Study Review Team conducted in accordance with the Standards for Review as approved by the General Assembly.*

a. Commissioners routinely complete evaluation forms which invite assessment of the flow of records, the work of case committees, conduct of hearings and trials, work of the moderator, meeting site (accommodations, food, meeting rooms, etc.), and worship. The Executive Committee reviews the evaluations and sometimes makes adjustments in the work of the Commission or meeting arrangements. One copy of the compilation of each meeting's evaluation is kept on file by the Manager of Judicial Process.

b. Since this is the beginning of the cycle of self-study, the Commission has not yet conducted a triennial self-study; the procedure for this process is detailed in the revised *Manual of the GAPJC*.

7. *To engage in "continuing education" programs involving matters relevant to the work of GAPJC.* This standard has proved difficult to accomplish; the agenda often calls for periods of continuing education (e.g., research using the *Annotated Book of Order*). On two occasions Commissioners met with members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to discuss constitutional issues. In January 2005 the Commission "engaged in considerable and thorough review of the functions, procedures, and minimum requirements for operating as a permanent judicial commissions and conducting the judicial process of the PC (USA) during the report of the Self-Study Task Force." The Commission discussed the merits of adopting a specific plan of continuing education but came to no conclusion (Minutes, January 29, 2005, p 4). In November 2007 the Commission conducted a study meeting on two issues of immediate interest.

8. *Maximize GAPJC meeting attendance through several means.*

a. *All members should attend all GAPJC meetings unless excused.* Commissioners show a high degree of commitment to their work on GAPJC. Those who are unable to attend request excuses well ahead of the meeting date, unless, of course, unexpected events preclude their attendance at the last minute. Appendix A shows the attendance at all the meetings.

b. *All members should be present at the time when the meeting is initially convened.* Most Commissioners are present by dinner on Thursday evening; those who come late arrive either while the evening meeting is in session or in time for the hearing the following morning.

c. *All members should remain in attendance until the meeting is adjourned and no members should leave before the meeting is concluded.* Occasionally during the period under study, Commissioners have had to leave before the meeting was concluded. In these cases the minutes so noted that the Commissioners had departed. In no case was the Commission left without a quorum. The Commission makes every effort to complete its work in the time set for the meeting and Commissioners are urged to be present for the duration. Sometimes, however, the press of commitments at home demands that Commissioners leave early.

d. *The GAPJC meetings should be scheduled at least one year in advance in order to provide Commissioners with adequate time to arrange their schedules.* Meeting minutes reveal that the Commission does schedule its meetings one to two years in advance. Meeting dates are rarely changed once set.

e. *The GAPJC meetings should be held at locations that minimize Commissioner travel time on a rotating basis while weighing the attendance or convenience of the parties and the funds available for meetings.* Since 2002 meetings have been held at Dallas, Phoenix, Kansas City (three times), Louisville (seven times), St. Louis, Baltimore, Austin and Snowbird,



UT. Obviously meetings are rare on the West Coast, though the Commission has considered such a location on a number of occasions. Commissioners and litigants from the westernmost synods generally have the most onerous travel schedules.

f. *Travel arrangements should be made so as to facilitate the work of the Commission, while accommodating the health, safety, and reasonable personal needs of commissioners.* Meeting evaluations show a general satisfaction with meeting sites and travel arrangements.

9. *Meeting minutes:* The Clerk keeps full and accurate minutes of all meeting; these are on file in the Office of the Stated Clerk.

## CHAPTER V EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING THE CHURCH

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is a reactive body; that is, the Commission responds to cases referred to it. Our constitutional mandate is “to serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline,” thus the Commission is not a body which proposes mission initiatives, plans programs, or generates strategies.

GAPJC undertakes the judicial function of the General Assembly, in order that the other work of the General Assembly might move forward more expeditiously. In the past the entire General Assembly dealt with judicial matters as the highest court of the Presbyterian Church. Presently the judicial function is assigned to this Commission and it is on the basis of that assignment that its effectiveness must be judged. The GAPJC operates within strict constitutional boundaries, which were described and analyzed in Chapter III. The Commission also adheres to non-constitutional standards which were described in Chapter IV. In this chapter the Commission seeks to evaluate its effectiveness: that is, how well does it do that which it is assigned to do?

The Standards for Review list five areas of effectiveness of service within its constitutional mandate. The following paragraphs will deal with each in turn.

### 1. *The Commission has a defined and consistent process for completing its work.*

Much of the process for completing the work of a permanent judicial commission is outlined in the Rules of Discipline. When a case is referred to the GAPJC, first the Moderator and Clerk, in consultation with the Executive Committee, make determinations on preliminary questions deciding whether the case is properly before the body. These findings are reported to the parties and the full Commission. If they are challenged, briefs may be received and a hearing held; then the Commission will make a decision on the preliminary questions. If the Commission has established jurisdiction, the case is accepted. The Commission will then conduct a hearing or a trial on the main issues of the case. (See Rules of Discipline, Chapter VI: Remedial Cases, VII: Trial in a Remedial Case, Chapter VIII: Appeal in a Remedial Case, Chapters X: Disciplinary Cases; XI Trial in a Disciplinary Case).

Most cases before the GAPJC are on appeal from lower courts. When General Assembly entities or synods are parties to a judicial action, the GAPJC acts as the court of original jurisdiction.

GAPJC has defined process in the *Manual of the GAPJC* for the officers of the Commission to deal with matters which come before them. The most helpful process which has been refined over the years is the use of case committees. The Moderator appoints these committees which analyze the issues of the case, delineate the specifications of error, suggest lines of questioning for the hearing or trial, lead the questioning of parties, write the first draft of the decision (after discussion in the full Commission), and rewrite until the decision is accepted by the Commission. Those dissenting from the decision may write a dissenting opinion which must be heard by the full Commission and must be declared “decorous” before its inclusion in the decision.

The ability of the Commission to work effectively toward the decision is directly related to the quality of the work of the case committee. When the case committee has carefully analyzed the issues of the case, the rest of the Commission is better equipped to reach a decision. Because the cases before GAPJC are generally complex, clarity is not only desirable but necessary.

GAPJC acts on three to six cases per meeting; additionally there are always motions, correspondence, and other issues with which to deal. The number of hearings per meeting ranges from one to five (with the latter number occurring only once). The *Book of Order* requires that decisions be reached while the Commission is in session; therefore, Commissioners often feel rushed as the time for adjournment approaches. Management of the docket is essential if each case is to be carefully decided and written and edited; the Moderator’s job in moving the business along requires a deft touch and sometimes a sharp gavel.

Although this standard deals with *process*, the GAPJC is effective in fulfilling its constitutional mandate because of the *spirit* of collegiality and mutual respect among the Commissioners. As noted earlier, the Commission is careful to spend time at each meeting building community and sharing joys and concerns. The Commission is intentional about daily worship in the mornings and evenings and is regular in prayer for each other and the work before it. While there is not unanimity of opinion on issues before the body, there is unanimity that we are servants of the Church and seek to build up the Church. Commissioners decide cases on the basis of evidence and argument presented, and not on personal beliefs and views. The high personal regard with which Commissioners hold each other enables us to disagree with good grace; we work with an attitude of mutual trust. Commissioners depend on the leading of God's Spirit. Many Commissioners have noted that their service on the GAPJC was the most fulfilling work they had done for the Church.

In order to be effective, the Commission needs a careful balance of commissioners with vision and dedication to the Church as a whole. A consistent practice of this Commission has been to meet with representatives of the General Assembly Nominating Committee before commissioners rotate off.

Surveys of current and past commissioners revealed that in sum they think the Commission is effective in fulfilling its constitutional mandate.

2. *The Commission has a regular process of self-evaluation of its services.*

At the conclusion of each meeting, Commissioners complete an evaluation form covering the meeting arrangements, work of case committees, staff support, individual work before and during the meeting, conduct of the meeting, and worship. These surveys have resulted in adjusting adjournment time to Monday noon (rather than Sunday afternoon). The staff uses the evaluations to judge the meeting sites and arrangements. Meeting evaluations and discussion during meetings have led to a broader use of technology. Frequently the Commission now uses computer and projector to edit documents, rather than paper copies. As of the summer of 2007 some Commissioners are using a secure internet site to receive and work on documents. Other Commissioners without adequate computers and internet connectivity receive the documents in hard copy. Notwithstanding budgetary considerations, all GAPJC Commissioners should be provided with adequate computer hardware and software so that all Commissioners can work effectively online.

The other dimension of the self-evaluation is the triennial self-study which will be implemented for the period following the submission of this self-study. The Moderator will appoint a Self-study Review Team to conduct this triennial self-study with a report to the full Commission. Thus, there will be time for adjustments to be made prior to the six-year self-study prepared for the General Assembly. Ideally one of the members of the current Self-Study Committee will continue.

We anticipate that adjustments will be made in the work of the Commission as a result of this self-study.

3. *The Commission employs a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large.*

Following each meeting, the Executive Committee meets with the Stated Clerk. The Commission then formally forwards its decisions to the Clerk, who then posts them on the PC(USA) website within seven days of the conclusion of each meeting. The decisions are also sent by certified mail to the parties to each case immediately at the close of the meeting.

Since 2002 the Commission has written headnotes which summarize the major parts of the decision. Headnotes are designed to give readers the salient points of the decision.

Any other communication is out of the Commission's hands and therefore is not authoritative.

The Constitution requires that the deliberations of the GAPJC are closed and confidential. The Commission's Code of Ethics requires that Commissioners not comment publicly on decisions; only the Moderator or someone he/she designates shall speak for the Commission. Commissioners are free to comment on the procedures of the Commission, including the atmosphere of collegiality and trust which mark our work.

4. *The Commission utilizes current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission.*

As observed above, this standard is a work in progress. While we have made significant progress, there is still work to do to enable all Commissioners to utilize available technology fully. The staff of OGA and our technically proficient Commissioners have been particularly helpful to the GAPJC in exploring new ways in which to work more efficiently with new and emerging technologies. The Commission notes that a particular impediment is the fact that electronic resources such as the *Annotated Book of Order* are not available for the McIntosh operating system.

5. *The Commission has developed a vision and plans for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and the context of the PC(USA).*

GAPJC is not mandated to “develop a vision;” we are mandated to be faithful in upholding the *Constitution* of the PC(USA). When the Church changes the *Constitution*, we will change. We await with great interest the work of the Form of Government Task Force which will undoubtedly affect the work of permanent judicial commissions at all levels.

The Commission is aware of the limits of judicial process, which often results in winners and losers and no reconciliation. This Commission urges greater use of Alternative Forms of Resolution or other forms of mediation which “will provide justice and compassion for all parties” (D-2.0103, also D-10.201h (1-4), 10.0301). The biblical injunction “to conciliate, mediate, and adjust differences without strife” compels the Church to seek alternatives to judicial process. (See D-1.103.) Historically the purpose of church discipline was to reconcile individuals to each other and to the church. Although reconciliation should be at the center of all judicial process, the reality of a system which produces winners and losers does little to restore trust within our denomination.

Emerging issues before the Church demand that the Commission engage in regular continuing education. The Commission must take the time to consider and discuss emerging issues *before* these issues are before the body for decision.

The shared vision of the Commission is that we remain faithful to our work as described in the *Constitution*. We understand that “the purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the cause of discord and division, and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings” (D-1.0101). Therein lie our vision and our hope.

## CHAPTER VI CHALLENGES AND STRENGTHS

This Commission’s review of the work of the past six years has offered valuable insights into the challenges and strengths of conducting the General Assembly’s judicial responsibilities. This backward look also provides guidance for the future as the Commission continues to serve the PC(USA) faithfully. As challenges have emerged, several corrective actions have begun. Likewise the identification of the strengths of our processes will enable us to continue to improve the way we work together for the strengthening of the church for work in the world.

We have identified five broad areas for improvement.

### 1. *Continuing Education*

In a wide-ranging discussion of issues which emerged from this self-study, the Commission identified the need for more consistent and timely continuing education. The judicial process deals with a wide variety of complex issues which demand that Commissioners be fluent in the *Book of Order*, Reformed theology, legal nuances and precedents, church history and confessions, and the scriptural foundations of all of the above. Obviously not every Commissioner will be fluent in all these ‘languages’ of our work; however, each Commissioner should be well schooled in the *Book of Order*, particularly the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline.

While Commissioners need to be conversant in the general languages of our work, they also have to be specialists in the cases which come before them. There are several broad categories of remedial cases which come before the GAPJC: those dealing with ordination standards, relations within and among governing bodies, cases arising from actions of General Assembly, synods, or presbyteries; cases arising from within congregations. The GAPJC also handles a variety of disciplinary cases.

Two new areas of concern emerging in cases which will be heard early in 2008 are those regarding property issues, as well as those dealing with questions about the essentials of Reformed faith and polity. The Commission devoted an entire meeting to these two areas as they prepare for the cases which will be before them.

Another area for continuing education is in case precedents. It is rare for a case to come before the Commission dealing with issues which have never been considered before. Therefore, most cases come with issues which have a history of precedent. Since GAPJC decisions have the standing of Authoritative Interpretations of the Constitution of the PC(USA), the precedential history of the case must be carefully analyzed; and if the precedent is being overturned, the reasons should be clear and understandable to PJs at every level. Thorough interpretation of past precedents is difficult and complex. Case committees must be more helpful than in the past in identifying precedents.

## 2. *Case Committee Process*

When the case committees do their work well, the entire Commission benefits. A case committee can identify the salient points of the case before the hearing in order to sharpen the Commissioners' listening to the parties and asking their questions. Moreover, following the hearing, a well-prepared case committee will offer clearer drafts of the decision for the full Commission to discuss.

## 3. *Management of the docket and meeting agenda*

If the volume of cases increases even slightly, the Commission will have to meet more often or for a longer time at each meeting. The Preamble to the Rules of Discipline calls for "the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings" (D-1.0101). If a case is ready to be heard by the GAPJC, it should be timely docketed. Past experience, however, would suggest that the number of cases to be heard at any one meeting should not exceed three or four. Four cases with full records and hearings, deliberations and decisions are almost impossible to conclude in a meeting which lasts three full days and parts of two others. It is clear to all of us that we do not do our best thinking and writing toward the end of a long day of intense deliberation. Fortunately the Commission has never lost its sense of humor.

Commissioners' preparation time is another factor in management of the docket. Case records have ranged in length from 200 to about 3,000 pages. The expectation is that each Commissioner will be thoroughly familiar with the record, with the case committee being especially well prepared for its case. The demand on an individual commissioner's time before the meeting is obvious. One Commissioner characterized work on the commission as "challenging, frustrating, exhausting, inspirational and thoroughly rewarding."

## 4. *Use of staff and technological resources*

The Commission is exploring ways to use the knowledge and experience of the Manager of Judicial Process more effectively. The Manager and others in the Stated Clerk's office deal with the implementation of the *Book of Order* and Rules of Discipline daily; their contacts with governing bodies give them a perspective on the judicial process which individual Commissioners do not have. Moreover, briefing by the Manager on the implications of cases can be helpful and in no way compromises the Commission's independence.

GAPJC, as noted above, is moving into greater use of emerging technologies. This will continue to be a growing edge for us as a body and as individuals.

## 5. *Use of Alternative Forms of Resolutions and other ways to "conciliate, mediate, and adjust differences without strife" (D-1.0103)*

The GAPJC is moving into a new frontier in this arena. There is little guidance in Rules of Discipline about how the conciliation and mediation should take place. The Commission needs to analyze the processes for doing that which the Preamble and Scripture urge us to do. The Commission is currently working on guidelines for the use of mediation to be included in its manual.

The experience of this Commission leads us to urge the General Assembly to consider adopting revisions to the Rules of Discipline that would promote alternative forms of dispute resolution and consensus building in lieu of adversarial judicial process. The Church should strive to resolve disputes in a manner that minimizes divisiveness and expense and promotes consensus, leaving this Commission to resolve disputes by judicial process as a last resort.

Several strengths characterize the work of GAPJC.

### 1. *Working together*

In the period of this self-study the work of the GAPJC has been characterized by collegiality, trust, and respect. The GAPJC is intentional about creating community which is marked by mutual care for one another and a firm commitment to the work before us. Underlying this sense of community is a love for the Church and desire to serve the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ. The friendship and respect Commissioners have for one another transcends theological differences and creates an environment in which we work diligently on the tasks which are before us. As noted above, each meeting begins with a time of catching up with each other's lives and sharing of joys and concerns. Daily worship provides the spiritual foundation for our lives together. Inevitably when the hour grows late or the discussion intense, someone will provide just the appropriate amount of levity to keep us from taking ourselves (though not our work) too seriously. There is a healthy sense of playfulness which keeps us grounded in who we are.

Orienting new Commissioners and integrating them into the work of the Commission is an on-going task. We are intentional about re-forming our community as new Commissioners are elected and veterans retire.

## 2. *Commitment to task*

Commissioners rarely miss meetings. Commissioners come well prepared for the cases before them. Familiar with the record, they are ready for each hearing and/or trial and subsequent discussions; the debate is lively and spirited—and occasionally long-winded. Commissioners spend hours in session and in case committee meetings; this task is not for the faint-hearted. Often Commissioners have to use vacation and personal time sacrificially in order to serve the Church in this way.

## 3. *Working with parties*

The Commission shows respect for all parties. This respect is obvious in the preparation for the meetings and conduct during the hearings or trials. Parties have commented favorably on how familiar the Commissioners are with the record and the issues of their case. Commissioners exhibit courtesy and respect to all who appear before them. Inviting the parties to worship prior to hearings or trials, as well as extending the right hand of fellowship to all parties at the conclusion of each hearing or trial also shows the Commission's high regard for all who appear before them.

## 4. *Openness to change*

The GAPJC is open to changing its processes and ways of work, an example is the greater use of technology which has moved some Commissioners out of their comfort zone. We understand ourselves to be servants of the Church and seek to be helpful to the Church as we move into the future together. We seek to improve the quality of our decisions and to improve our ways of working together to accomplish that end.

## Conclusion

We appreciate the work of the General Assembly Review Committee and are confident that this self-study will give the committee a helpful window into our work.

## ENDNOTES

1. Donald K. McKim, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992) 104.
2. John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954) 65, 78.
3. McNeill, 139.
4. *The Book of Confessions* 3.18 (hereafter the citation numbers will be included in the text).
5. "Historical Summaries Relating to the Constitutions of the Uniting Churches," *Annotated Book of Order, 2005–2006*, Supplementary Materials).
6. Charles Wiley, "Ordinary and Extraordinary Discipline: Mutual Accountability in the Reformed Tradition," Office of Theology and Worship, PC (USA), no date, p. 3.
7. *Manual of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission*, A.2.4.

## Appendix A General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Cases Heard and Decided 2002–2007

Year/ Month	Cases	App	Orig	H'rngs	Rem.	Disc.	Annual # Cases	Attnd	Mtg. Loc.
02/Apr	5	4	1	4	4	1		13/3	Dallas
02/Jul	4	3	3	2	4	0		15/1	Phoenix
02/Oct	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	No Mtg.
							9		
03/Feb	6	4	2	5	4	2		12/4	K.C.
03/Mar	1		1	Trial	1			12/4	K.C.

03/Jul	1	1		1	1			13/3	Lou.
03/Sept	-	-	-	-	-	-		9/7	Conf. Call
03/Oct	9	3		3	3	6		15/1	Lou.
							17		
04/Jan	-	-	-	-	-	-		12/4	Conf. Call
04/Mar	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	No Mtg.
04/Aug	4	4		1	4			15/1	Lou.
04/Oct	4	4		2	4			11/5	St. Louis
							8		
05/Jan	5	4	1	2	4			13/3	Lou.
05/Apr	4	3	1	2	4			14/0	Baltimore
05/Oct	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	No Mtg.
							9		
06/Feb	6	6		2	6			14/2 GANC	Austin
06/Jul	4	3	1	2	4			15/1 Ori- ent.	Lou.
06/Oct	2	1	1	1	2			15/1	Lou
							12		
07/May	5	4	1	2	4	1		*14/1	K.C.
07/Jul	6	5	1	2	5	1		*14/1	Lou.
07/Nov	-	-	-	-	-	-		**13/1	Snowbird, UT
							11		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>215/43</b>	

\* Commissioner Resigned (15 Total)

\*\* Another Commissioner Resigned (14 Total)

Notes:

Feb. 03: Case Withdrawn @ Request of Complainant

Oct. 03: Dealt w/ 4 related cases from Hamni & 2 separate orders for dismissal (Concern for early departures)

Aug. 04: 2 motions to dismiss; 1 preliminary order

Apr. 05: 2 members resigned; thus, 14 is total membership

Feb. 06: 2 orders for dismissal, 1 order for hearing, 2 letters answered

July 06: 2 cases heard; one decision, one carried over

May 07: 1 consent order; 1 request for reference; 1 challenge to preliminary questions; Not included in total—1 order for hearing

Nov 07: Study meeting on issues of property and theology

**Appendix B  
Manual of the  
General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission**

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**THE PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION**  
June 2006

Moderator ..... Wendy Warner

Vice-Moderator ..... Fred Denson

Clerk ..... Ernest Cutting

Assistant Clerk..... Kitty Borchert

**Class of 2008**

Catherine G. Borchert, Synod of the Covenant  
 Tony Cook, Synod of Alaska/Northwest  
 Ernest E. Cutting, Synod of Lakes and Prairies  
 vacancy, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii  
*vacancy, Sinodo Boriquen en Puerto Rico*  
*Wendy Warner, Synod of the Pacific*

**Class of 2010**

Mary Eleanor Johns, Synod of the Trinity  
 Fred L. Denson, Synod of the Northeast  
 Fane Downs, Synod of the Sun  
 June L. Lorenzo, Synod of the Southwest  
 Judy L. Woods, Synod of Lincoln Trails

**Class of 2012**

Ronald Bullis, Synod of Mid-Atlantic  
 Susan Corman, Synod of the Rocky Mountains  
 Gregory A. Goodwiller, Synod of Living Waters  
 Patrick W. Notley, Synod of Mid-America  
 William E. Scheu, Synod of South Atlantic

**GAPJC Roster**

**Name/Address**

**Phone/Fax/Email**

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14 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT COMMITTEES

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**RULES OF THE PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION**

**A. ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION.**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| AUTHORITY            | 1. The Commission shall have the powers prescribed by, and conduct its proceedings according to, the <i>Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)</i> , the rules adopted by the Permanent Judicial Commission, and the most recent edition of <i>Robert's Rules of Order</i> .                             |
| OFFICERS             | 2. The officers of the Commission are a Moderator, a Vice-Moderator, a Clerk, and an Assistant Clerk, who shall hold office until their respective successors assume office.   |
| CONVENER             | 3. The officers, in the order stated above, shall convene the Commission. Should all of the officers be absent or unable to act, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall appoint a convener from among the other members of the Commission.   |
| EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  | 4. The officers named above shall constitute the Executive Committee.  |
| NOMINATING COMMITTEE | 5. The Moderator of the Commission shall appoint a nominating committee of at least three persons from among the members of the Commission. The committee shall nominate a slate from among the continuing members for election as officers, and shall nominate persons as needed to fill a vacancy in any office. |
| INTERNAL ELECTIONS   | 6. The Commission shall regularly elect officers at the Spring meeting in those years in which the General Assembly elects a new class of members to the Commission. If no meeting is otherwise required, election may be by conference telephone call or by mail ballot.  |
| CALENDAR             | 7. Meetings of the Commission shall be at such times and places as the Commission shall determine. Normally, at least thirty days notice of the date of meeting shall be given members of the Commission. (D-5.0203)   |
| QUORUM               | 8. The quorum of the Commission shall be a majority of its members. (D-5.0204)   |
| GENERAL ASSEMBLY     | 9. The Moderator, or a member of the Commission appointed by the Moderator, shall be the corresponding member representing the Commission at General Assembly meetings and shall advise the General Assembly and its Nominating Committee and any other General Assembly entities on behalf of the Commission.     |

**B. PROCEDURE FOR CASES**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| FILING<br><br>Original<br>Jurisdiction<br><br><br>On<br>Appeal | 1. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall accept for filing:  | a) In remedial cases of original jurisdiction: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) a complaint filed as provided in D-6.0200 and D-6.0300;</li> <li>2) any amendments to the original complaint; (D-7.0401d)</li> <li>3) any answer by respondent to the complaint; (D-6.0303)</li> <li>4) names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all parties;</li> <li>5) trial briefs if ordered by the Executive Committee. (D-6.0306)</li> </ol> b) In cases of appellate jurisdiction: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) a notice of appeal (D-8.0201 or D-13.0201);</li> <li>2) the record on appeal (D-8.0203 or D-13.0203);</li> <li>3) brief by appellant (D-8.0204 or D-13.0204);</li> <li>4) brief by appellee (D-8.0205 or D-13.0205);</li> <li>5) any newly discovered evidence (D-14.0502);</li> <li>6) names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all parties.</li> </ol> |
| DISTRIBUTION   | 2. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall send copies of the papers filed to the Executive Committee.   |  |
| JURISDICTION   | 3. The Executive Committee may determine, either by meeting in person or by telephone conference call, whether (D-6.0307, D-8.0301, D-13.0301):   | a) the governing body has jurisdiction;<br>b) the complainant or appellant has standing to file the case;<br>c) the complaint or appeal was timely filed;<br>d)1. the complainant states a claim upon which relief can be granted.<br>or<br>d)2. the appellant states one or more of the grounds for appeal in D-8.0105 or D-13.0106   |
| REFERRALS  | 4. The Executive Committee shall be authorized to make a preliminary determination of whether the complaint or appeal shall be dismissed or accepted for trial or hearing on appeal and submit its recommendation to the Commission.  |  |
| HEARING ON<br>JURISDICTIONAL<br>QUESTIONS                      | 5. The Executive Committee shall be authorized to conduct a hearing on the jurisdictional questions should one be required by challenge by a party or a member of the Commission to a preliminary order dismissing a complaint on an appeal.  |  |
| NUMBERING OF<br>CASES  | 6. Cases accepted shall be numbered with the number of the General Assembly meeting which next follows filing of the case, hyphenated with a numerical sequence number.   |  |
| PRETRIAL<br>CONFERENCE   | 7. The Moderator may appoint a member or members of the Commission to conduct a pretrial conference with duties and responsibilities determined by D-6.0309.  |  |
| DOCKET   | 8. The Executive Committee shall schedule all trials and hearings and shall notify all parties of the date, time, and location. (D-6.0305, D-8.0401, D-13.0401)   |  |
| ADMINISTRATIVE<br>MATTERS                                      | 9. The Moderator may rule with respect to any administrative matter preliminary to the presentation of complaints or appeals scheduled to come before the Commission.   |  |
| BRIEFS   | 10. a) The Commission may require either party in an original proceeding to file a trial brief outlining the evidence to be produced and the theory upon which the evidence is considered to be relevant (D-6.0306).<br><br>b) Briefs on matters on appeal shall be filed with the Office of the General Assembly not later than thirty (30) days before the announced date of the convening of the Commission, provided the requirements of the Rules of Discipline D-8.0204, .0205 or D-13.0204, .0205 have been fulfilled. |  |
| TIME<br>LIMITS   | 11. a) The Commission may limit the time for presentation of argument by the parties or counsel in cases heard on appeal. The usual limit is 30 minutes for each party.<br>b) The Executive Committee shall schedule, at a pre-trial conference, the time for trial in consultation with the parties, allowing for a complete hearing of the issues.  |  |

DECISION

- 12. The Commission shall report the decisions in all cases to the General Assembly through the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. The decision of the Commission shall be the final judgment of the General Assembly from the time of the announcement of the decision to the parties either in person or by certified mail. (D-7.0402, D-8.0404, D-13.0404)

**C. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICERS OF THE COMMISSION**

In addition to responsibilities given above:

1. The Moderator shall:

- a) make arrangements for meetings of the Commission, in consultation with the Stated Clerk or the staff person designated by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly;
- b) appoint Case Committees and other committees or officers pro tem who are necessary for each meeting;
- c) preside at all meetings of the Commission except when disqualified by D-5.0205;
- d) together with the Clerk, edit and certify each decision of the Commission.

2. The Vice-Moderator shall perform all the duties of the Moderator in the absence, disability, or disqualification of the Moderator.

3. The Clerk shall:

- a) keep administrative records of the Commission and its Executive Committee;
- b) in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly, ensure:
  - 1) preparation of a roster of members, including business and home addresses;
  - 2) preparation of a current Manual for the Commission;
  - 3) notification of each member of the Commission of all meetings of the Commission;
  - 4) notification of parties to cases to be heard before the Commission of the date, time, and place of the hearings;
  - 5) distribution of final copies of the administrative record to members of the Commission;
- c) arrange, and report to the Moderator, names of persons to open and close each session with prayer;
- d) together with the Moderator, edit and certify each decision of the Commission;
- e) ensure prompt transmittal of a certified copy of the decision to each party in a case;
- f) file with the Stated Clerk or the staff person designated by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly a certified record of the proceedings and decisions of the Commission.

4. The Assistant Clerk shall:

- a) perform all duties of the Clerk in the absence, disability, or disqualification of the Clerk;
- b) assist the Clerk, as requested;
- c) meet parties outside the Commission room, record the names of all parties with their case position titles, present the record of names to the Moderator and the Clerk, conduct the parties into the room, and introduce them to the Commission.

**REMEDIAL CASE CHECKLIST FOR CASE COMMITTEES**

PageDate

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Party filing complaint \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Party against whom the complaint is made (D-6.0202a, 6.0202b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Particular irregularity or delinquency complained of (D-6.0301b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Date, place, and circumstances thereof (D-6.0301b)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Request to correct delinquency (D-6.0202a)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Reasons for complaint (D-6.0301c)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Interest or relationship of the complainant or standing to complain (D-6.0301d)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Relief requested (D-6.0301e)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Date of filing complaint with higher governing body (D-6.0202):
  - a) irregularity - within 90 days
  - b) delinquency - within 90 days of failure or refusal of respondent to act at its next meeting, when so requested
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Date of filing answer to complaint by respondent (D-6.0303)

Complete items below for EACH appeal, i.e., from decision of presbytery to synod and then to General Assembly.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Stay of enforcement (D-6.0103)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Decision delivered to parties including date received (D-7.0402c)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Permanent Judicial Commission making decision
  - Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Decision transmitted to parties (D-8.0404c)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Certification that notice of appeal was served upon (stated clerk or) clerk of the lower governing body (D-8.0201a)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Certification that notice of appeal was served upon other parties and their counsel (D-8.0201b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Notification to the parties of a list of all records, etc., to be filed with stated clerk of higher governing body (within 30 days after receipt of notice of appeal (D-8.0203a)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Designation by parties of additional papers within 10 days thereafter (D-8.0203b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Transmittal of record from clerk of lower governing body to clerk of higher governing body within 45 days of the receipt of notice of appeal (D-8.0203c)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Notification of receiving of record on appeal to all parties (D-8.0203c)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Filing of brief by appellant with clerk of higher governing body (within 30 days after filing of record on appeal) (D-8.0204)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. Time for filing brief extended to \_\_\_\_\_ (D-8.0204b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. Certification by appellant that brief has been furnished to appellee (D-8.0204a)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Reply brief of appellee 30 days after brief of appellant (D-8.0205)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. Time for filing brief extended to \_\_\_\_\_ (D-8.0205b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. Certification by appellee that brief has been furnished to appellant (D-8.0205a)

**DISCIPLINARY CASE CHECKLIST FOR CASE COMMITTEES**

- |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|--|
| Page  | Date  |  |
| _____ | _____ | 1. Governing body from whose judgment appeal is taken (note each judgment included): |
|       |       | Synod of _____   |
|       |       | Presbytery of _____  |
|       |       | Session of _____ Presbyterian Church   |
|       |       | (location:) _____  |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Delivery of judgment decision (D-13.0202d)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Written notice of appeal filed within thirty days after delivery of judgment (D-13.0202d and D-13.00301c)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Governing body notified of filing of appeal (D-13.0202f)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Judgment or decision in original trial: (D-11.0403, 12.0100)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a) rebuke
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b) rebuke with supervised rehabilitation
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c) temporary exclusion from exercise of ordained office\*\*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ d) temporary exclusion from membership
  - \_\_\_\_\_ e) removal from ordained office
  - \_\_\_\_\_ f) removal from membership

\*D-13.0103 allows either party in a disciplinary case to initiate an appeal of an appellate decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ other consequences: (\*\*details of supervised rehabilitation requirements)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Judgment of appellate decision
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a) Reversal of guilty verdict in one or more charges
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b) Modification of censure
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c) Remand to lower body
  - \_\_\_\_\_ d) Other instructions in decision
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Notification to the parties of all records, etc. to be filed with stated clerk of higher governing body (within 30 days after receipt of notice of appeal (D-13.0203a)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Designation by parties of additional papers within 10 days thereafter (D-13.0203b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Transmittal of record from clerk of lower governing body to clerk of higher governing body within 45 days of receipt of notice of appeal (D-13.0203c)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Notification of filing of record on appeal to all parties (D-13.0203e)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Filing of brief by appellant with clerk of higher governing body (within 30 days after filing of record on appeal) (D-13.0204)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Time for filing brief extended to \_\_\_\_\_ (D-13.0204b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Certification by appellant that brief has been furnished to appellee (D-13.0204a)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Reply brief of appellee 30 days after brief of appellant (D-13.0205)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Time for filing brief extended to \_\_\_\_\_ (D-13.0205b)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Certification by appellee that brief has been furnished to appellant (D-13.0205a)

**D. CASE COMMITTEES**

1. The initial organization of the material information in a case and drafting of a decision of the Commission shall be performed by the Case Committee, and the Case Committee shall have primary responsibility for managing the discussion and decision-making process of the Commission.
2. Pre-arrival Responsibilities:
  - a) at the request of the Executive Committee, recommend final determination of jurisdictional matters [D-6.0307 (Original jurisdiction) and D-8.0301 and D-13.0301 (Appellate jurisdiction)];
  - b) if directed to do so by the Executive Committee, participate in a jurisdictional hearing or pretrial conference;
  - c) conduct specific research on issues and undertake preliminary writing assignments;
  - d) identify in a memorandum:
    - 1) all basic issues,
    - 2) positions of the parties on those issues, and
    - 3) a preliminary history for the case;
  - e) make recommendations for the hearing of the case, procedure, and other related matters;
  - f) complete any assignments made in the initial conference call;
  - g) timeline prior to the hearing date:
    - 1) thirty (30) days prior:
      - complete review of the case materials;
    - 2) not later than thirty (30) days prior:
      - circulate among all the members of the Case Committee a draft of the memorandum in 2.d. above, with such comments as the chair (or designee) deems appropriate;
    - 3) not later than twenty (20) days prior:
      - by conference telephone call among the members of the Case Committee, the Moderator, and Vice-Moderator:
        - a) discuss recommendations for the hearing of the case, procedure, and other related matters,
        - b) make appropriate preliminary writing assignments, and
        - c) assign specific issues to members of the Case Committee, if appropriate;
    - 4) not later than twenty (20) days prior:
      - the Case Committee Chair will call the Office of the General Assembly regarding any “housekeeping” matters.
3. Post-arrival / Pre-trial or Pre-hearing Responsibilities:
  - a) review the memorandum of issues and the draft history of the case prepared in advance;
  - b) lead the Commission in discussion of the issues, history, and procedures recommended for the case.
4. Responsibilities at the Trial or Hearing on Appeal:
  - a) the Chair of the Case Committee will be recognized first to ask all the questions researched by the Committee;
  - b) other members of the Case Committee will then be recognized, followed by other members of the Commission.
5. Responsibilities after the Trial or Hearing on Appeal:
  - a) recommend disposition of the case to the Commission;
  - b) support that recommendation with Constitutional provisions and factual bases, with citations;
  - c) following a preliminary consideration of the Commission on the disposition, submit a draft or drafts of a decision to the Commission, until a satisfactory draft is approved.

FOR ASSISTANT CLERK’S USE AT HEARINGS

CASE No. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Complainant-Appell(-ant)(-ee)  
or Person Found Guilty

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent-Appell(-ant)(-ee)  
or Prosecuting Committee

Complainants-Appell(-ants)(-ees):  
Person Found Guilty  
Counsel

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Respondents-Appell(-ants)(-ees):  
Prosecuting Committee  
Counsel

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

[Rule C-4-d: Copies of names to both Moderator and Clerk.]

**E. PROCEDURE FOR HEARINGS AND ADOPTION OF THE ORDER**

1. The Moderator reads the case name and number.
2. The Assistant Clerk introduces all parties and counsel.
3. The Moderator introduces members of the Commission and indicates any who are absent or disqualified. (D-5.0205)
4. “The Moderator shall read aloud the first and second paragraphs of the Preamble to the Rules of Discipline (D-1.0101-.0102), shall announce that the governing body is about to proceed to trial, and shall enjoin the members to recollect and regard their high character as judges of a governing body of the Church of Jesus Christ and the solemn duty they are about to act.” (D-7.0401a for Trial; not required but good practice for appeals.)
5. A member of the Commission, ordinarily the Chair of the Case Committee, shall offer prayer.
6. For Trials, opportunity shall be given to the parties to challenge the organization and jurisdiction of the judicial commission, the eligibility of any member to sit in the hearing of the case, or any other substantial objection affecting the order and regularity of the proceedings. (Strictly, this procedure applies only to Trial. D-7.0401b)
7. For Trials, the Commission shall determine (D-6.0307a-d):
  - a) whether it has jurisdiction;
  - b) whether the complainant has standing to file the case;
  - c) whether the complaint was timely filed;
  - d) whether the complaint states a claim upon which relief can be granted.

8. For Appeals, the Commission shall determine (D-8.0301 or D-13.0301):
  - a) whether it has jurisdiction;
  - b) whether the appellant has standing to appeal;
  - c) whether the appeal papers were properly and timely filed;
  - d) whether the appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal.
9. For Appeals, time limits:
  - a) 20 minutes - Opening statement of Appellant;
  - b) 30 minutes - Opening statement of Appellee;
  - c) 10 minutes - Closing (Rebuttal) statement of Appellant.
10. Trials (Original Jurisdiction)
  - a) arise under D-6.0202 or D-4.0000 (Reference)
  - b) arguments shall be recorded electronically, unless waived by all parties;
  - c) procedure is given by D-6.0000, D-7.0000
11. Questions in Hearings on Appeal
  - a) by the Chair of the Case Committee;
  - b) by other members of the Case Committee;
  - c) by other members of the Commission.
12. The Moderator
  - a) announces the hearing is completed;
  - b) thanks the parties;
  - c) excuses all persons who are not members of the Commission.
13. In closed session (D-7.0402, D-8.0404, D-13.0404), the Commission discusses the case, hears any minority opinions, and offers guidance to the Case Committee for the writing of drafts.
14. Approval of the Decision includes editorial authority for the Moderator, the Clerk, and the Chair of the Case Committee to conform the Decision to the standards of this Manual.

**F. UNIFORM PRACTICES IN OPINION WRITING**

1. The *Book of Order*:
  - a) At end of sentence, enclose in parentheses: “(G-X.xxxx)”
  - b) Within sentences: “...G-X.xxxx provides ...”
2. Cases:
  - a) first reference: “Abraham L. Edmonds v. Presbytery of Cape Fear, *Minutes*, 1984, p.107.”
  - b) thereafter: “...the Edmonds case...”
3. Minutes of the General Assembly: “*Minutes*, year, page number.”
4. Governing bodies:
  - a) “The Presbytery of Geneva” --not-- “Geneva Presbytery”
  - b) “The Synod of Scotland” --not-- “Scotland Synod”
5. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament:
  - a) first reference: “...Chris O. Stomm, minister...”
  - b) thereafter: “Ms. Stomm” or “Mr. Stomm” or “Mrs. Stomm”
  - c) never: “Rev. Stomm” or “Reverend Stomm”
6. Parties:
  - a) Following identification by name, may be referred to as “Complainant,” “Respondent,” “Appellant,” “Appellee.”
  - b) Formal titles of entities may be shortened, if usage is entirely consistent throughout: “The Stewardship and Communication Development Ministry Unit Committee (hereinafter called the Unit Committee).”
7. Capital Letters:
  - a) Use capitals for proper names: “The Synod of Scotland.”
  - b) Use lowercase for the same word used as a common noun: “Every synod in the General Assembly has voted...”
  - c) Use capitals for:

Appellant  
 Appellee  
 Case (this Case,  
 not any case)  
 Chapter  
 Complainant

Notice of Complaint  
 Respondent  
 Book of Confessions/  
 Order  
 Directory for Worship

Form of Government  
 General Assembly  
 Presbytery of A---  
 Rules of Discipline



- 8. Underscore:
  - a) text which is to appear printed in italics, and
  - b) words or phrases which are of foreign derivation.

---[Standard Form for Report of Decision in a Hearing on Appeal]---

THE PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION  
 of  
 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
 of  
 THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

DECISION

[Name(s)] )  
 Complainant-Appellant ) )  
 --or-- )  
 Complainant-Appellee ) )  
 v. ) [case number]  
 ) )  
 [Name(s)] )  
 Respondent-Appellee )  
 --or-- )  
 Respondent-Appellant )

-----[ ARRIVAL STATEMENT ]-----

This is a [remedial] [disciplinary] case which has come before the Commission on appeal by [name(s) of Appellant-Complainant] from a decision by the permanent judicial commission of the Synod of [Synod name].

---[JURISDICTION STATEMENT,  
see *BOOK OF ORDER*, D-8.0301 & D-13.0301 ]---

The Permanent Judicial Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that appellants have standing to appeal, that the appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal (D-8.0105 and D-13.0106).

-----[HISTORY]-----

[text of History ]

-----[REPORT ON SPECIFICATIONS OF ERROR]-----

Of Specifications of Errors alleged in the Appeal, the Commission voted not to sustain

[summary of specifications NOT SUSTAINED ].

and voted to sustain

[summary of specifications SUSTAINED ]

[Modify appropriately for Trial.]

-----[ORDER]-----

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

[text of Order]

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of (the Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_) (the Synod of \_\_\_\_\_), Appellee, report this Decision to the (Presbytery) (Synod) at its first meeting, that the (Presbytery) (Synod) enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. (D-8.0404f, D-13.0404f)

-----[ABSENCES AND NON-PARTICIPANTS]-----

[name(s)], (a) member(s) of the Commission, (was)(were) present for argument of the Appeal, but took no part in the decision.

OR

[name(s)], (a) member(s) of the Commission, (was)(were) not present and took no part in the proceedings.

-----[DATE]-----

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

----[Certification And Transmittal Form]----

CERTIFICATES

We certify that the foregoing is a full and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in [Remedial] [Disciplinary] Case No. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ v. \_\_\_\_\_ made and announced at \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[ typed name ], Moderator  
Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly

\_\_\_\_\_  
[ typed name ], Clerk  
Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly

I certify that I did transmit a certified copy of the foregoing to the following persons by UPS Next Day Air, on \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_:

- [ typed name: ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[position title in case: ] \_\_\_\_\_
  - [ typed name: ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[position title in case: ] \_\_\_\_\_
  - [ typed name: ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[position title in case: ] \_\_\_\_\_
  - [ typed name: ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[position title in case: ] \_\_\_\_\_
  - [ typed name: ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[position title in case: ] \_\_\_\_\_
- General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission –Regular First Class Mail

I further certify that I did transmit a certified copy of the foregoing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by delivering it in person to the undersigned representative of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly at \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[ typed name ], Clerk  
Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly

I certify that I received a certified copy of the foregoing, and that it is the final judgment of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), sitting during an interval between meetings of the General Assembly at \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_ in [Remedial] [Disciplinary] Case No. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ v. \_\_\_\_\_.

Dated at \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[typed name],  
Manager, Judicial Process, for  
The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

**G. THE STATED CLERK AND STAFF SUPPORT**

1. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly may designate a member of the Office of the Stated Clerk to be the officer responsible for any action assigned to the Stated Clerk by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. The Office of the Stated Clerk shall provide staff support to the Commission, including:

## 14 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT COMMITTEES

- a) preparing copies of materials as directed by the Executive Committee for orientation and training of new members of the Commission;
- b) preparing a current Roster of members, including business and home addresses and telephone numbers;
- c) numbering cases and transmitting papers to the Commission;
- d) arranging for telephone conference calls for the Commission, the Executive Committee, or Case Committees;
- e) identifying by personal inspection appropriate locations for meetings of the Commission;
- f) notifying parties on behalf of the Clerk of the Commission of the dates, times, and places for any hearing or trial;
- g) making physical arrangements for meetings of the Commission, such as housing, meal service, meeting rooms, photocopying, and travel;
- h) photocopying working papers for the Commission during any trial or hearing;
- i) contracting for the services of a court reporter or other means of accurate recording, when required for a trial of original jurisdiction (D-7.0601a);
- j) producing in printed form, by word processor or other means, during meetings of the Commission, drafts, copies of final decisions, and other official correspondence;
- k) distributing final copies of the minutes and decisions of the Commission, and other official correspondence;
- l) distributing and collecting expense vouchers from members of the Commission.

PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### **To parties filing appeals with this Permanent Judicial Commission:**

It is the responsibility of the Permanent Judicial Commission to decide your appeal promptly and fairly, and in accordance with the *Book of Order*.

In your brief please state the factual contentions about errors in the decision you are appealing on which you rely to establish your claim that the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission should review the proceedings and decision of the lower court and correct, modify, set aside, or reverse the decision (see D-8.0101 for a remedial case or D-13.0101 for a disciplinary case), and advise just where in the record of your case the Commission may find the information about these contentions.

Please state exactly what you are asking the Commission to do in your appeal to correct, modify, set aside, or reverse the decision and point out the paragraphs of the Book of Order or interpretations of the Book of Order by the Commission or the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that you believe give to the Commission the power to do so.

It is very important to your appeal that your brief addresses the issues noted above completely and concisely. THE COMMISSION'S REVIEW OF YOUR APPEAL WILL BE FOCUSED UPON THE ISSUES RAISED IN YOUR BRIEF.

After the Executive Committee of the Commission has reviewed the record of the trial or prior hearing on appeal (including your brief, if necessary), your appeal usually will take one of the following courses:

- (a) If it appears to us that your appeal does not meet the jurisdictional requirements for filing, including stating "one or more of the grounds for appeal" in D-8.0105 or D-13.0106, as required by the Book of Order, we will advise you that your appeal probably will have to be dismissed. In that event, you still will have an opportunity, in a jurisdictional hearing, to present your arguments on behalf of the sufficiency of your appeal (i.e., assuming your contentions as to the facts to be true, that you would be entitled to a hearing on the substance of the appeal).
- (b) If it appears that your appeal does meet the jurisdictional requirements for filing, including stating "one or more of the grounds for appeal" in D-8.0105 or D-13.0106, we will then review the documents in the case to determine if there is a genuine dispute as to any issues raised in the appeal, and consider (1) just what the previous Commission found to be the facts, and (2) whether there is sufficient information in the record of the proceedings to support that finding. Ordinarily, when there is a conflict in the evidence, the Permanent Judicial Commission will rely on the findings of the Commission that last heard your case, and will apply the principles of the Book of Order to the facts as found by that Commission -- without hearing new evidence, and without making a new determination of our own as to what the facts are.
- (c) If we find that there is no genuine dispute as to the facts of the case, the focus of the hearing will not be on the facts, but both sides will have an opportunity to present to the Commission their requests as to a proper disposition of the appeal.
- (d) If we find that there is a genuine dispute as to the facts of the case, ordinarily there will be no new hearing of the evidence relating to any such dispute, but you will have an opportunity to present to us your reasons why the findings of the last Commission that heard your

case are not in accordance with the Book of Order, and why you are entitled to some relief that is within the power of this Permanent Judicial Commission to give.

**ALPHABETICAL INDEX**

[Note: Page numbers will not correspond to pages in the Journal or in PC Biz.]

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-- end of Manual --

**Attachment A**

**PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

**CODE OF ETHICS  
(Adopted on October 17, 2004)**

**PREAMBLE**

“Church discipline is the church’s exercise of authority given by Christ, both in the direction of guidance, control, and nature of its members and in the direction of constructive criticism of offenders. Thus, the purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to restore the unity of the church by removing the causes of discord and division; and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings. In all respects, members are to be accorded procedural safeguards and due process...” D-1.0101

Members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission are charged to “recollect and regard their high character as judges of a governing body of the Church of Jesus Christ...” D-11.0402

The following constitutes a “Code of Ethics” for the members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission and is intended to provide guidelines for their conduct:

**GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

In relationship with others, members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission shall strive to:

1. Be honest and truthful.
2. Regard all persons with equal respect and concern.
3. Recognize the gifts of others.
4. Work with others cooperatively and collegially.
5. Be diligent and dependable.
6. Speak the truth in love and bear witness without fear or favor.
7. Maintain critical self-awareness.
8. Conduct their lives with integrity so that they demonstrate consistently that they are disciples of Jesus Christ.

**PUBLIC COMMENT<sup>1</sup>**

1. Commissioners should exercise discretion in making public comment on decisions.
2. Commissioners should exercise discretion in commenting on decisions in casual or private conversations.
3. The deliberations of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission are confidential and are not to be divulged by any member of the Commission. Commissioners may not comment on decisions until the parties to the case have received the decision.
4. Once a decision has reached the parties and has been published by the Stated Clerk’s office, only the moderator or someone he/she designates shall speak for the Commission.
5. Commissioners will not misrepresent the position of the Commission even though personal opinions may conflict with the majority opinion of the Commission.
6. Commissioners may make public statements regarding the procedures of the Commission. While a proceeding is pending, Commissioners shall not make any public comment that might reasonably be expected to affect its outcome or impair its fairness.



## 14 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT COMMITTEES

[<sup>1</sup>For purposes of this code, “public” refers to any group or person not a member of this Commission, including members of the church and secular press, formal meetings of governing bodies or entities, educational or training events organized and conducted by entities of the church.]

### *CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND THE APPEARANCE OF IMPROPRIETY*

1. Commissioners may be appointed to serve on committees and task forces at various levels of the church. Each commissioner must evaluate the risks of conflict of interest with his/her service on the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission.
2. “No person shall serve on the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly who is a member of any other entity elected by the General Assembly until that person shall have resigned such membership” (D-5.0105). In the spirit of this provision of the Rules of Discipline, commissioners should carefully weigh service on task forces or committees that might present the appearance of impropriety.
3. Impropriety is understood as conduct that would create in reasonable minds a perception of the commissioner’s inability to carry out judicial responsibilities with integrity and impartiality.

### *MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY*

1. Each commissioner is accountable to other commissioners and to the Church for maintaining the integrity and fairness of the judicial process. This requires mutual respect for each other and for those appearing before the Commission.
2. Commissioners are mutually accountable for their preparation for and participation in the meetings of the Commission and in carrying out responsibilities as outlined in the current *Manual* – The Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

### *APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF ETHICS*

1. All members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission shall comply with this Code.
2. Staff related to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission shall be guided by this Code in their work with the Commission.
3. Any questions regarding the applicability of this code to specific situations shall be referred to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Executive Committee or the Moderator.

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **Standards for Review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission**

#### A. Constitutional Mandate

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is a constitutionally mandated commission of the General Assembly (D-5.0101), charged “to serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline” (*Book of Order*, G-13.0103o).

#### B. Constitutional Boundaries

As a commission, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission undertakes the judicial function of the General Assembly on behalf of the General Assembly, and considers and concludes judicial matters referred to it (*Book of Order*, G-9.0502). Its commissioners are presbyters from each synod who are qualified to be commissioners to the General Assembly (D-5.0100).

Since the General Assembly is the highest governing body of the church, the decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission are not subject to further review by appeal. Its decisions provide authoritative interpretation of the *Book of Order*, and the “most recent interpretation of a provision of the *Book of Order* shall be binding” (*Book of Order*, G-13.0103r). The decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission are reported to each General Assembly by the Stated Clerk as required by D-7.0700, D-11.0700, and Standing Rule M.2.b.(4).

#### C. Constitutional Powers and Process

“In the cases transmitted to it, the [General Assembly] Permanent Judicial Commission shall have only the powers prescribed by and conduct its proceedings according to the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*” (*Book of Order*, D-5.0202).

#### D. General Assembly Review Process

1. *Responsibilities of General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC)*
  - a. The GAPJC will conduct a self-study of its work based on the Constitutional Standards and Non-Constitutional Standards (specified below) covering the previous six years.
  - b. The GAPJC will finalize its self-study and render a report at least 120 days prior to the General Assembly at which the self-study report will be reviewed.
  - c. The GAPJC will have representatives available at the assembly to serve as resources to the assembly committee.

## 14 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT COMMITTEES

- d. The GAPJC may include responses in the self-study and additional questions that explore the Constitutional Standards that apply to its work.
- e. The GAPJC may utilize former members to help conduct the self-study.

### 2. *Responsibilities of Office of the General Assembly (OGA)*

- a. The OGA, the GAPJC, and the Office of Research Services will jointly develop and agree upon the content, distribution, and processing of any survey instrument used in the GAPJC review.
- b. The OGA will conduct training of assembly committee leadership and members as needed, with the assistance of GAPJC leadership, to help the assembly committee to meet its responsibilities in accomplishing its work.
- c. The OGA will budget for development and implementation of the GAPJC self-study.

### 3. *Work of the Committee of the General Assembly Committee for Review as Set Out in the Manual for Review of the General Assembly Permanent Committees and Commission*

- a. The review assignment will be assigned to an assembly committee.
- b. As with other committees, OGA will conduct training of the review committee.
- c. Consistent with the action of the 216th General Assembly (2004) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 88, 339-41), the assembly committee's review will be limited to the following questions:
  - (1) Is the GAPJC fulfilling its Constitutional Mandate as specified herein?
  - (2) Is the GAPJC in compliance with the Constitutional Standards as described herein?
  - (3) Is the GAPJC in compliance with the Non-Constitutional Standards as described herein?
- d. The assembly committee may hold hearings, etc.
- e. The assembly committee will be in dialogue with the representatives of the GAPJC.
- f. The assembly committee may break into subgroups in conducting its work.
- g. The assembly committee will make a final report, possibly with recommendations.

### E. *Constitutional Standards: Fidelity to Constitutional Process*

Compliance by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission with the following standards is required by the *Book of Order*:

1. To open and close all meetings with prayer (*Book of Order*, G-9.0301b);
2. To secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings (*Book of Order*, D-1.0101);
3. To accord procedural safeguards and due process (*Book of Order*, D-1.0101);
4. To examine papers promptly upon receipt to determine preliminary questions (moderator and clerk only) (*Book of Order*, D-6.0305, D-8.0301, D-13.0301);
5. To respond to stays of enforcement in a timely fashion (*Book of Order*, D-6.0103);
6. To decide challenges to the findings of the moderator and clerk (*Book of Order*, D-6.0306, D-8.0302); rulings of the moderator (*Book of Order*, D-7.0303a, D-11.0304); and the composition of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (*Book of Order*, D-7.0303b, D-7.0401a and b, D-11.0402);
7. To issue citations as deemed necessary (*Book of Order*, D-7.0202, D-11.0201);
8. To appoint counsel when necessary (*Book of Order*, D-11.0302);
9. To conduct pretrial and pre-hearing conferences when necessary (*Book of Order*, D-6.0310, D-10.0405, D-8.0307, D-13.0307);
10. To conduct trials and hear appeals in remedial cases, and to hear appeals in disciplinary cases (*Book of Order*, D-4.0202, D-7.0101, D-7.0102, D-8.0403, D-11.0101, D-13.0403); [Note: The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission would only hold a trial on a disciplinary case in the rare event of reference from a lower governing body, since a disciplinary case would ordinarily be tried by the presbytery or session of membership.]
11. To read aloud D-1.0101 and D-1.0102 at the beginning of each trial (*Book of Order*, D-7.0401 and D-11.0402a);

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12. To control the conduct of trials and hearings (*Book of Order*, D-7.0303, D-11-0304);
13. To decide cases after private deliberations (*Book of Order*, D-7.0402, D-8.0404, D-11.0403, D-13.0404);
14. To write, amend, proofread, and finalize written decisions with the signatures of the moderator and clerk while in session, and immediately disseminate and timely file those decisions (*Book of Order*, D-7.0402, D-8.0404, D-11.0403, D-13.0404);
15. To prepare and process records of proceedings following a trial before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (*Book of Order*, D-7.0600, D-11.0600).

### F. Review Criteria for Constitutional Standards

Constitutional Standard	Review Criteria (The following review criteria provide an objective measure for determining compliance to Constitutional Standards.)
#1 Open and close with prayer	All meetings should be opened and closed with prayer.
#2 Just, speedy and economic determination of proceedings	a. Time lapse between receipt of complaint or notice of appeal and final disposition of case should not exceed an average of 1 year. b. GAPJC meeting arrangements should be made by staff in a manner that reflects the needs of the commission to do its work, as well as reflecting the stewardship concerns of the church.
#3 Procedural safeguards and due process	Procedural safeguards and due process should be accorded to all parties.
#4 Prompt determination of preliminary questions	a. Time between receipt of initial case filings by OGA and forwarding the same to the moderator and clerk of the GAPJC for their determination on preliminary questions should not exceed an average of 14 days. b. Time between receipt of initial case filings by the moderator and clerk from OGA and their determination on preliminary questions should not exceed an average of 30 days.
#5 Stays of enforcement	a. Time between receipt by OGA of a request for a stay of enforcement and forwarding the same by OGA to members of the commission should not exceed an average of 5 working days. b. Time between receipt of a request for a stay of enforcement by the moderator and clerk and the notification to commissioners of their recommendation regarding preliminary jurisdictional questions should not exceed an average of 5 working days.
#6 Rule on challenges	a. In each applicable case, parties should be given the opportunity to present evidence and arguments on any challenges made to findings of moderator and clerk on preliminary questions. b. In each applicable case, parties should be given the opportunity to object to the composition of the commission. c. In each applicable case, the GAPJC should address any challenges and/or objections raised by the parties.
#7 Issue citations	In applicable cases, the moderator or clerk should consider and act upon requests for the issuance of citations.
#8 Appoint counsel	In applicable cases, GAPJC should appoint counsel for an accused.
#9 Conduct pretrial and pre-hearing conferences	a. Pretrial or pre-hearing committees should be appointed in appropriate cases. b. Pretrial or pre-hearing conferences should be conducted in appropriate cases.
#10 Conduct trials and hearings	Trials should be conducted formally with full decorum in a neutral place suitable for the occasion.
#11 Read aloud D-1.0101 and D-1.0102	Sections D-1.0101 and D-1.0102 should be read at the beginning of each trial.
#12 Control conduct of trials and hearings	a. The GAPJC should exercise its authority and power to control conduct of trials and of all parties, witnesses, counsel and public, including removal of them, to the end that proper dignity and decorum are maintained. b. Moderator should decide all questions as to procedure or the admissibility of evidence after parties have been given an opportunity to be heard. c. In each case where applicable, all parties and commissioners should be given the opportunity to appeal from a decision of the moderator to the GAPJC. d. The GAPJC should decide by majority vote all appeals from decisions of the moderator. e. The absence of any member of GAPJC after trial has commenced should be recorded.
#13 Decide cases	For each case in which a decision has been rendered, there should be a. private deliberations by the commission; b. for an appeal, a separate vote on each specification of error, which may be combined or altered for clarity and efficiency; c. for a trial, a separate vote on each irregularity, delinquency, or charge.

- #14 Prepare and disseminate written decisions For each case in which a decision has been rendered:
- a. a written decision should have been prepared while the commission was in session;
  - b. a copy of the decision should have been delivered to the parties by personal service or certified mail;
  - c. the decision should have been filed with the Stated Clerk within thirty days of the hearing.
- #15 Prepare and process records Following trials before the GAPJC, the full record of the proceedings should be prepared, processed, and transmitted to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for permanent preservation.

G. Non-Constitutional Standards

In addition to the standards mandated by the *Constitution*, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission has established the following other standards as guidance in conducting its work:

1. To participate in daily corporate worship for the duration of GAPJC meetings;
2. To maintain and follow the *Manual of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission* including its Code of Ethics;
3. To build community among members of the GAPJC;
4. To orient newly elected commissioners;
5. To communicate effectively with the greater church by various means including:
  - a. writing headnotes for each decision;
  - b. ensuring that decisions are disseminated in a timely manner
6. To implement an ongoing self-evaluation program;
7. To engage in “continuing education” programs involving matters relevant to the work of the GAPJC;
8. To maximize attendance at GAPJC meetings;
9. To keep minutes of GAPJC meetings.

H. Review Criteria for Non-Constitutional Standards

Non-Constitutional Standard	Review Criteria(The following review criteria provide an objective measure for determining compliance to Non-Constitutional Standards.)
#1 Daily worship	Commissioners should participate in daily corporate worship.
#2 GAPJC Manual	The <i>GAPJC Manual</i> , including its appendices, should be reviewed and, if necessary, updated following each meeting of the General Assembly.
#3 Community building	Each meeting of the GAPJC will include time for sharing of personal joys and concerns, time for intercessory prayer for one another, and time for fellowship.
#4 New commissioner orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The GAPJC Moderator should send welcoming letters to new commissioners at the conclusion of the electing General Assembly, which would include all scheduled GAPJC meetings.</li> <li>b. At the first GAPJC meeting following election by the General Assembly, newly elected commissioners shall participate in an orientation in matters pertaining to the GAPJC, held prior to the convening of the full commission.</li> </ol>
#5 Communicate effectively with the greater church	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Case decisions should contain headnotes as appropriate.</li> <li>b. Case decisions should be disseminated to the parties within 7 days after adjournment of the meeting.</li> <li>c. Case decisions should be forwarded to OGA within 7 days after adjournment of the meeting for immediate posting to the denominational website.</li> </ol>
#6 Ongoing self evaluation	The GAPJC should implement an ongoing self-evaluation program, which includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. completion of evaluation forms by commissioners at the conclusion of each GAPJC meeting;</li> <li>b. a triennial self-study by the Self-Study Review Team conducted in accordance with the Standards For Review as approved by the General Assembly.</li> </ol>

- #7 Continuing education for commissioners Each GAPJC meeting should include an allocation of time for continuing education as feasible and needed.
- #8 Maximize GAPJC meeting attendance
- a. All members should attend all GAPJC meetings unless excused.
  - b. All members should be present at the time when the meeting is initially convened.
  - c. All members should remain in attendance until the meeting is adjourned and no member should leave before a meeting is concluded.
  - d. The GAPJC meetings should be scheduled at least one year in advance in order to provide commissioners with adequate time to arrange their schedules.
  - e. The GAPJC meetings should be held at locations that minimize commissioner travel time on a rotating basis while weighing the attendance or convenience of the parties and the funds available for meetings.
  - f. Meeting arrangements should be made so as to facilitate the work of the commission, while accommodating the health, safety, and reasonable personal needs of commissioners.
- #9 Keep minutes The clerk shall keep adequate minutes of GAPJC meetings.

I. Review Process

The self-study will be conducted on a triennial basis by a four-person Self-Study Review Team composed of one person from each of the last four classes elected to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. The review team will accomplish its work in accordance with the *Manual of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission* and will render a report at the fall meeting of the commission in the year in which the review was conducted. The commission will act on the report, and thereafter, in applicable years, forward the report to the General Assembly in accordance with the Standing Rules of the General Assembly.

J. Effectiveness of Service

The services of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission are to be consistent with the constitutionally required process.

**Appendix C**

**Budget Process**

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is housed in the Department of Constitutional Services in the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). Budget requests are submitted every two years. Budget approval is a three-step process:

1. Requests are submitted to a budget committee comprised of the budget director and at least one staff member from each department. This committee reviews each request to make sure that it complies with the funding formulas approved by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), and negotiates any suggested changes with departments.
2. The requests are then submitted for Senior Coordinating Cabinet approval.
3. Once approved by the Senior Coordinating Cabinet, the budget is sent forward to COGA for approval.

The formula used to calculate travel, lodging and meals is \$560.00 for the first day, and \$160.00 for each additional day. The \$560.00 is to include the cost of transportation. The budget does not take into account that some commissioners must arrive and/or stay a day later due to airline schedules and/or meetings. This formula has not increased since 2005. Additionally, to reduce cost of staff travel, COGA has requested that as much as possible, all meetings should be held in Louisville. In the past two years, the GAPJC has met in Louisville for five of six meetings.

The COGA budgets for three meetings of the GAPJC a year with the acknowledgement that there may need to be a fourth meeting if the caseload demands it. So far, this has not been necessary. COGA and the GAPJC are looking at providing for training at the current meetings or providing a fourth meeting for training purposes only.

The GAPJC requests funds for printing and mailing. Some case records are in excess of 1000 pages. Copies of these records are provided to 16 commissioners and both parties at a considerable expense for printing and mailing.

In an effort to contain costs of printing and mailing, the GAPJC is migrating to a paperless system of doing work. A web-based program, Base Camp/Project Path, is being phased in gradually. Although there will always be printing and mailing costs associated with getting business and information to parties, once the migration is complete, the GAPJC will significantly reduce this line item.

The GAPJC is mindful of the considerable budget crisis facing the Office of the General Assembly and is continually looking for ways to reduce expenses.

GAPJC Budget Allocation & Expenditures  
2003–2008

<u>Allocation</u>	<u>Spent</u>	
2003	\$65,550	\$78,990
2004	76,850	67,361
2005	76,965	66,965
2006	78,490	68,779
2007	77,100	-
2008	78,925	-

## Item 14-Report 2

### Report 2. Report on the Review of the Advisory General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission

[The assembly approved Report 2, Recommendations 1.–5. See pp. 36, 38.]

1. Commends the GAPJC for its work and insights gained in providing a self-study.
2. The GAPJC is cognizant of the importance of using new technology to communicate its work; however, case history is not currently recorded in electronic-digest form. Given that the GAPJC has identified in its self-study the importance of precedence in the adjudication of future cases, the Assembly Committee on the Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees recommends that the GAPJC and the Office of the Stated Clerk compile an electronic digest of all cases adjudicated from 1983 to the present.
3. The GAPJC should be encouraged to move forward to provide adequate information and technology support for the commission to do its work.
4. The self-study recognized the limits of judicial process and expressed concern for potential future increase in caseload; the commission therefore encouraged greater use of Alternative Forms of Resolution (AFR) beginning at the presbytery level. In keeping with Matthew 5:25, the review committee recommends that the Office of the General Assembly, in cooperation with the Office of the Stated Clerk, develop a process for using AFR starting at the presbytery level and present its recommendation to the 219 General Assembly (2010) for action.
5. That the following report on Review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission be approved.

#### Report on Review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission

##### Introduction

The review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) was conducted according to the provisions in the Standing Rules and the standards in the *Manual of the General Assembly* as far as this committee is aware.

##### Mission

The GAPJC is a commission of the General Assembly and is a reactive body as opposed to a committee that generates its own work.

As quoted in their self study: “The Rules of Discipline describe the judicial processes of the Church, of which the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) is a part. The GAPJC has both original and appellate jurisdiction as prescribed in the Rules of Discipline. Primarily an appellate court, the Commission hears and decides both remedial and disciplinary cases; however, GAPJC may conduct trials in cases of original jurisdiction.”

The mission of the GA PJC is stated as follows in the self-study:

“Judicial process is the means by which church discipline is implemented within the context of pastoral care and oversight. It is the exercise of authority by governing bodies of the church for

“a. the prevention and correction of irregularities and delinquencies by governing bodies, the General Assembly Council, or an entity of the General Assembly (Remedial Cases, D-6.0000);

“b. the prevention and correction of offenses by persons (Disciplinary Cases, D-10.0000).” (D-2.0101).”

**Membership**

As stated in the self-study:

The membership of the GAPJC is composed of ministers and elders (as nearly equal as possible) from each of the synods (D-5.0100). Thus there are sixteen commissioners from the sixteen synods; currently, however, there are two vacancies. Members are elected by the General Assembly and ordinarily serve for six years (D-5.0103). The change to biennial assemblies necessitated the adjustment of the terms of some of the current commissioners.

The commission elects its moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, and assistant clerk, who constitute the executive committee. Officers serve terms of two years and may be reelected. The responsibilities of the executive committee are delineated in the Manual of the GAPJC, which is appended to the self-study.

**Process**

The Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees received a self-study based on the work of the GAPJC for the last six years. The committee would like to commend the GAPJC for an excellent self-study, which was informative and thorough. The committee was disappointed that an external survey form, which the committee had prepared, had not been distributed and completed. The committee requests that a survey be included in the next GAPJC self-study.

**Findings:*****Fidelity to Mission and Partnership***

1. Does the GAPJC, as it was created by the church, serve and support the church's mission in a particular area? Does the GAPJC exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?

*In the presentation of the self-study, the committee was impressed by the commission's commitment to the task given to them by the GA and the quality of their faithfulness to the task. The GA PJC goes above and beyond its constitutional mandates to ensure this faithfulness (e.g., not only opening meetings with prayer but opening with daily corporate worship).*

2. Do the basic processes of the GAPJC demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly? Does the GAPJC exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which the GAPJC acts?

*The GAPJC demonstrates fidelity to its mission and accountability to establishing deliverance by self-limiting its review of cases presented to it. It perceives itself as deliberately not legislating through judicial review.*

3. Does the GAPJC exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?

*The GA PJC exhibits cooperation with those agencies with which it is mandated to work with and report (e.g., the Office of the Stated Clerk).*

4. Does the GAPJC provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

*Given the caseload, the GAPJC is timely in their responses to the General Assembly. It averages eleven cases per year and average 7.4 months from receiving a case to final adjudication. (2–3 cases per meeting ... 4 meetings).*

***Effectiveness of Services***

1. Does the GAPJC have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?

*Yes*

2. Does the GAPJC have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?

*Yes. At the conclusion of each meeting the commissioners complete an evaluation form.*

3. Does the GAPJC employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?

*Yes, through the office of the Office of the Stated Clerk. Since 2002 the commission has written Headnotes which summarize salient points of their decisions.*

4. Does the GAPJC utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?

*Yes, to the best of its ability given the budget constraints (see recommendations).*

5. Does the GAPJC have a developed vision and plan for its work in light its historic mandate and the emerging issues before the PC(USA)?

*Yes; however, because the GAPJC is a reactive body and the vision and scope of its work is proscribed by the Book of Order, the vision pertains only to its process and work.*

## Item 14-Self-Study PCCEC

### *Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates Self-Study*

#### Contents

- I. Introduction to the Self-Study
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- VI. A Vision for the Future of National Ordination Examinations
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- Attachment A: Summary of Pass Rates
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#### I. Introduction to the Self-Study

Section IV.D., “Review of Agencies and Committees,” of the *Organization for Mission* mandates regular review of all General Assembly permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees. The Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) is being reviewed at the 218th General Assembly (2008).

The PCCEC has responsibility for the written examinations that are among the requirements for ordination to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (*Book of Order*, G-14.0430). The committee has twenty-four members, half of whom are elected by the General Assembly, and half of whom are elected by six regional reading groups that meet annually to grade the examinations. The committee recruits two additional, nonvoting members whose primary responsibility is preparation of the Bible Content Examination.

In preparation for General Assembly review, the PCCEC established a self-study subcommittee. Its members included: John Burgess, chair (professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, member of Pittsburgh Presbytery, and member of the PCCEC’s theology task group); Chris Lenocker (pastor in San Diego Presbytery, member of the PCCEC’s Bible task group, and chairperson of the PCCEC); Leeann Scarbrough (pastor in Sheppards and Lapsley Presbytery and chairperson of the PCCEC’s worship and sacraments task group); Syngman Rhee (professor at Union-PSCE, member of Atlantic Korean American Presbytery, and member of the PCCEC’s polity task group); and Ernest Kimmel (stated clerk of New Brunswick Presbytery and chairperson of the PCCEC’s polity task group). Lesley Davies, manager of examination services and member of Utah Presbytery, provided staff support from the national offices (OGA/GAC).

The subcommittee met five times (August 28, 2006; February 5, 2007; April 24, 2007; September 8, 2007; and November 29–30, 2007), gathered information about the examinations and examination process, and asked a wide range of interested individuals and church entities to evaluate the effectiveness of the examinations and the examination process:

- The subcommittee reviewed statistics from the last ten years relating to pass rates in each examination area and of the examinations as a whole.
- With the help of the Office of Research Services, it surveyed in 2006 and 2007 readers of ordination examinations, current moderators of committees on preparation for ministry (CPMs), ministers of the Word and Sacrament who were ordained in 2003 or 2004, and inquirers and candidates who took examinations in January or August 2007.
- In October 2006, the chairperson of the PCCEC and the chairperson of the subcommittee sent a letter to deans of Presbyterian seminaries, asking them to comment on the current structure and administration of the examinations.



- The subcommittee reviewed results of a consultation in October 2005 of Presbyterian seminary faculty and representatives of the PCCEC.
- In February 2007, representatives of the subcommittee attended a national meeting of persons involved in PC(USA) programs that assist candidates in the transition from seminary to the first call.
- In April 2007, the subcommittee consulted with the entire PCCEC, as well as with each of its four task groups.
- In June 2007, the chairperson of the subcommittee met with members of the Core Cluster of the Re-Forming Ministry Initiative of the Office of Theology and Worship.
- In July 2007, representatives of the subcommittee attended a national meeting of moderators of committees on preparation for ministry and committees on ministry and consulted with them about the examinations.
- In September 2007, the subcommittee met with Marcia Myers, director of the Office of Vocation.
- In October 2007, the chairperson of the subcommittee met with the Committee on Theological Education (COTE).
- In October and November 2007, the subcommittee sent an initial draft of its report to CPM moderators, seminary representatives, recent readers of ordination examinations, and members of the PCCEC for review and response.

We have drawn gratefully on this reservoir of experience and insight in preparing this report.

## II. The Ministry of the Word and Sacrament

Chapter III of the *Book of Order*, “The Church and Its Mission,” boldly calls the church to be “the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all humanity” (G-3.0200), to proclaim “in Word and Sacrament that ... the new age has dawned” (G-3.0300a), and to engage “in the struggle to free people from sin, fear, oppression, hunger, and injustice” (G-3.0300c(3)(c)). The *Book of Order* further declares that “the Church is called to undertake this mission even at the risk of losing its life, trusting in God alone as the author and giver of life, sharing the gospel, and doing those deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in Christ” (G-3.0400).

The Reformed tradition has emphasized that the church sets aside certain persons as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to help “to equip and enable [the whole people of God] for their tasks within the church and their mission to the world,” including the church’s responsibility to reach out “in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole” (G-6.0202b).

The Reformed tradition has also emphasized that those who would lead the church faithfully in its mission to the world must manifest certain personal gifts and character traits, and must receive adequate academic preparation. A significant report on “The Theology and Practice of Ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” commended by the 204th General Assembly (1992) for church-wide study and response, carefully identifies and discusses these factors.<sup>1</sup>

The report notes that “the formal educational requirements for those preparing for ordination ... need to be properly rigorous, reflecting the key role these officers play in interpreting the church and its mission and equipping the church for its ministry to the world” (p. 78). “Ministers ... need to know the text of Scripture and principles for interpreting it that respect its integrity. They also need to know the theological tradition of the church ... and the challenges made to it by modern critical thinking” (p. 77).

The report argues, however, that “these kinds of knowledge and skills alone are, while necessary, insufficient. Ministers must also be able to discern where and how the promises and claims of God in Scripture intersect with human life in a particular context for ministry, and they must be able to communicate those promises and claims clearly and effectively to the whole company of God’s people” (p. 72). Seminary preparation must be supplemented by practical experience, for “some things can only be learned, and some skills only developed, in the exercise of ministry” (p. 78).

Intellectual preparation and practical experience are key areas in which the church assesses candidates’ readiness for ministry. Presbyteries evaluate seminary transcripts as well as candidates’ personal faith and ability to exercise appropriate pastoral wisdom, judgment, and imagination in the actual exercise of ministry.<sup>2</sup> The PCCEC assists presbyteries in this process of evaluation. By assessing candidates’ answers in written examinations, the PCCEC helps the larger church to make better judgments about candidates’ ability to relate the church’s biblical, theological, and constitutional resources to the church’s ministry in the world.

### III. Discerning Readiness for Ministry

Five church bodies participate in discerning a candidate's call and readiness for ministry: (1) the session that recommends a person to come under care of the presbytery; (2) the presbytery in which the candidate is under care (through its committee on preparation for ministry (CPM) and in cooperation with the candidate's session); (3) the institution of theological education that a candidate attends; (4) the PCCEC, through the examinations that it prepares and administers; and (5) the receiving presbytery that confirms a candidate's call to a particular ministry within its bounds. The candidate's CPM plays the leading role in this process, and the principal purpose of the ordination examinations is to assist the CPM in determining its candidates' readiness for ministry.

The PCCEC administers five examinations, as outlined in the *Book of Order* (G-14.0431): a multiple-choice Bible Content Examination on major themes, events, and people of the Scriptures (normally taken in the first year of seminary); and four written examinations in the areas of Bible Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Church Polity (normally taken after two full years of seminary [G-14.0431]).

The written examinations are graded by minister and elder readers elected by the presbyteries (G-11.0103m, G-14.0432) regionally. Four groups meet in the fall, and two in the spring. Each group meets for three and a half days. Prior to each meeting, the PCCEC develops and distributes resource papers to readers and encourages them to undertake additional preparation on their own. When the reading group meets, the PCCEC provides additional orientation to each examination question and to the examination process as a whole.

Because readers seek to discern how well a candidate communicates in writing his or her ability to relate the church's biblical, theological, and constitutional resources to issues in ministry today, the perspective of both ministers and elders is important. In order to encourage readers to focus on the content of the examinations, candidates' names and personal information remain anonymous. Each examination is graded by at least two readers. In overseeing the process, the PCCEC works to ensure that readers' grades have a high degree of consistency, even though readers have diverse backgrounds and differing levels of formal theological training.

Pass rates on individual examinations in recent years have ranged between 63 percent and 71 percent. Approximately half of the candidates who take all four examinations at the beginning of their senior year of seminary satisfactorily complete them at that time. Another 15 percent or so of these candidates will complete the examination requirements in January of their senior year (see Attachment A).

Additional statistical evidence indicates that after a second attempt to complete an examination satisfactorily, the likelihood of success decreases substantially. The PCCEC believes that the presbytery of care should determine whether such a candidate could better demonstrate readiness for ministry through an alternate means of examination or is better suited for a form of service to the church different from the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

The examinations of the PCCEC have a limited but distinct purpose. Seminaries are especially concerned to test a candidate's academic competence; presbyteries evaluate the adequacy of a candidate's theological views and his or her personal gifts for ministry. Ordination examinations focus on a third area of concern (shared by the seminaries and the presbyteries): a person's ability to integrate what he or she has learned in seminary and through practical church experience, with pastoral situations. The ordination examinations offer candidates a significant opportunity to move from thinking of themselves as students in an academic context, to thinking of themselves as pastors and leaders in the church and for the world.

### IV. The Situation Today

Ordination examinations provide an important moment for candidates to integrate biblical and theological knowledge with pastoral wisdom. They are more than a requirement to be endured. At their best, they provide a unique opportunity for candidates to bring together what they have learned in seminary and in the church.

The examinations are vitally important in a second regard: they lift up common, church-wide standards of readiness for ministry in a time in which candidates for ministry come from a wide variety of personal backgrounds:

- Some have been lifelong Presbyterians, but many have moved through several denominational or religious traditions before joining a Presbyterian church, sometimes as late as during seminary.
- Some have been raised in a Christian church; others had a conversion experience in their college years during their participation in a campus ministry program or a parachurch organization.
- Some are members of racial and ethnic groups that have not been strongly represented previously in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

- Some have a strong college background in the liberal arts and took religion classes at the undergraduate level, but many have educational backgrounds in other areas and have difficulty meeting the demands of reading and writing that come with theological education.
- Some have a clear sense of call to pastoral ministry; others seek ordination to other forms of validated ministry or are uncertain of their vocational plans.
- Some come straight from college to seminary, but many are older, second-career students.
- Some come with basic Bible knowledge; others are reading the Bible almost for the first time.

Preparation for ministry also takes place in an ever-wider variety of ways:

- Some candidates for ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) attend a Presbyterian seminary; others choose a seminary based on location or theological reputation, rather than Presbyterian affiliation.
- Some seminaries require a year-long internship; in other cases, students have a few hours of field work each week over the course of a year, while continuing their seminary studies.
- Some students never take a class in Reformed theology, worship, or polity (which are not necessarily required courses even at PC(USA) seminaries), while other students have several courses in these areas.
- While candidates must attend accredited theological institutions, the level of theological preparation in different institutions and under different instructors varies greatly.
- Some candidates have been closely guided and nurtured by their CPM; others feel disconnected from their presbytery and see *Book of Order* requirements as bureaucratic hurdles that stand in the way of their personal call to ministry.

The church acknowledges and at points welcomes this diversity of background and preparation, even as it affirms that ministers have a common responsibility to represent and transmit the church's biblical, theological, and ecclesiastical heritage faithfully. Knowledge of this heritage, and ability to work with it pastorally, are presupposed in several of the ordination vows (W-4.4003), which all candidates for ministry take:

- Ordination vow "b": to accept the Scriptures and their witness to Jesus Christ (Bible Content Examination, Bible Exegesis Examination).
- Ordination vow "c": to receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the church's confessions (Theological Competence Examination, Worship and Sacraments Examination).
- Ordination vow "e": to be governed by the church's polity (Church Polity Examination).
- Ordination vow "i(3)": to proclaim the good news in Word and Sacrament (Bible Exegesis Examination, Worship and Sacraments Examination).
- Ordination vow "i(3)": to be active in the church's government and discipline (Church Polity Examination)

The five examinations of the PCCEC seek to ensure that candidates know the church's foundational documents (the Scriptures, *The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order*, including the Directory for Worship, the Form of Government, and the Rules of Discipline) and are able to use them effectively in pastoral situations. The examinations encourage candidates, regardless of their personal or educational background, to familiarize themselves with the basic theology and polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and to relate this theology and polity to the diverse contexts of ministry in which they will be serving.

#### V. Strengthening the Effectiveness of the Examinations

The PCCEC has carefully reviewed approximately 1,200 surveys that were administered to readers of ordination examinations, moderators of CPMs, ministers who have taken the ordination examinations in recent years, and candidates who have taken examinations in the past year (see Attachment B). The PCCEC has also reviewed more than seventy written responses from seminary representatives, CPM moderators, and ordination examination readers. The surveys and written responses provide rich material for ongoing self-evaluation by the PCCEC.

Overall, presbyteries affirm the examinations and the current examination process. Forty-six percent of CPM moderators surveyed, and 62–63 percent of ordination examination readers, agreed that successful performance on the examinations reflects readiness for ministry “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent” (only 9 percent of CPM moderators and 1–5 percent of readers said, “to a small extent” or “not at all”). Recent ordinands were generally supportive of the examinations, though less enthusiastically so: 22 percent saw the examinations as reflecting readiness for ministry “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent”; 42 percent, “to some extent.”

Current candidates also offered generally positive responses when asked to what extent each examination accurately assessed their integration of academic learning and pastoral skills. Depending on the particular examination in question, 36–47 percent checked, “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent”; 29–37 percent, “to some extent”; and only 16–21 percent, “to a small extent” or “not at all.”

Extensive written comments on the surveys and in communications to the self-study subcommittee reflect strong feelings about the examinations. Some respondents strongly affirm the examinations as one of the things that the denomination does best, while others sharply criticize them. Among these critics are representatives of some seminaries, who argue that the examinations are composed and graded without sufficient sensitivity to the cultural context of many racial-ethnic candidates and are therefore a poor tool for assessing readiness for ministry.

In light of these responses, the PCCEC has identified four areas in which the examinations can and should be strengthened: examination content and format, grading procedures, timing of when candidates take examinations, and racial ethnic representation in the composing and grading of examinations.

#### A. *Examination Content and Format*

The PCCEC regularly reviews examination content and format, seeking to ensure that each examination meets the goal of asking candidates to draw on the church’s foundational documents to order to interpret and respond to pastoral situations wisely. The PCCEC is recommending that the current descriptions of the Open Book Bible Exegesis and Theological Competence Examinations be revised in order to align them more closely with these goals (see Item 14-01, Recommendation #1 to the 218th General Assembly [2008]).

The PCCEC is also actively rethinking the format of the Bible Exegesis Examination. The current examination takes four and a half days, and emphasizes detailed exegetical work that at points may duplicate assessments for which a candidate’s seminary and presbytery are already responsible. The *Book of Order* requires candidates to pass Hebrew and Greek exegesis classes in seminary. Presbyteries review the candidate’s seminary transcript, including this work in Hebrew and Greek, before certifying that the candidate is ready to receive a call (G-14.0450c). In addition, candidates normally provide an exegetical paper and sermon to their presbytery (G-14.0305j) in the 2005 *Book of Order*, now part of an Advisory Handbook [see 2007 *Book of Order* G-14.0402]).

In light of these seminary and presbytery requirements, the PCCEC believes that the Bible Exegesis Examination should be revised and perhaps shortened, and, while retaining the church’s concern for responsible exegesis, should place emphasis on the text’s application to the church and the world.

#### B. *Grading Procedures*

The examinations will be credible to candidates and the wider church only to the degree that grading is fair and reliable. The PCCEC must be confident that readers have adequate knowledge and training to make accurate judgments about candidates’ answers.

The PCCEC works with presbyteries to recruit competent readers. It prepares resource papers and provides training prior to each grading session. New technologies (such as DVD presentations about each of the examination questions) may help to improve this training.

The PCCEC is particularly concerned to improve the grading of the Bible Exegesis and Theological Competence Examinations, both of which presuppose a level of expertise that normally comes only through seminary training. Survey results indicate that readers feel less secure in grading these two examinations than the others; seminary representatives have also expressed concern about the grading of these two examinations. Recruitment of readers with specialized knowledge and experience in each examination area is essential, although the PCCEC also benefits from the insights of elder readers without specialized training who can help to judge a candidate’s ability to communicate to a general church audience.

Because the current grading format (three and a half days at a regional grading site) makes it difficult for some pastors and elders to participate who could otherwise make a vital contribution, the PCCEC is exploring changes to reading group schedules. New technologies may eventually allow readers to grade from home, but potential trade-offs in doing so would

have to be carefully weighed, since the current reading group process provides for an intensity of focus and mutual learning and support.

### C. *Timing of When Candidates Take Examinations*

Because the ordination examinations focus on readiness for ministry, they presuppose that candidates:

- have completed seminary work that familiarizes them with the church's foundational documents (such as courses in the confessions, Reformed worship, and church polity), and
- have sufficient practical experience in ministry to be able to relate this foundational material effectively to various kinds of pastoral situations.

The PCCEC is recommending that current language in the *Book of Order* be revised in order to encourage presbyteries to approve candidates to take the four written ordination examinations only after they have completed adequate academic work and practical experience in these areas (see Item 14-01, Recommendation #2 to the 218th General Assembly [2008]).

### D. *Representation of Racial Ethnic Persons in the Composing and Grading of Examinations*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to increasing the membership and the participation of different racial and ethnic groups in the denomination. Ordination examinations must be sensitive to the church's racial and ethnic diversity, including new immigrant groups, while lifting up common, church-wide standards of theology and polity.

The PCCEC is deeply concerned that pass rates of racial ethnic candidates on the ordination examinations are significantly lower than those of white candidates. Pass rates of white candidates in recent years on each examination have ranged between 65 percent and 77 percent. Pass rates of other candidates have averaged between 27–54 percent.

The PCCEC has adopted several strategies to address this concern. It actively recruits people to be members of the PCCEC and readers who are familiar with the pastoral contexts of different racial ethnic groups and have cultural sensitivity in the formulation and grading of examination questions. In addition, the PCCEC provides for translation of the examinations into Spanish and Korean, and grading of those examinations by persons competent in those languages.

The PCCEC will work with the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the presbyteries, and the seminaries to increase the number of racial ethnic persons who serve on the PCCEC and as readers. Additional strategies, however, are necessary. The PCCEC commits itself to constituting by 2009 a panel of persons to assist the PCCEC in ensuring that examination questions do not have unintentional cultural biases but rather allow candidates to relate the church's foundational documents to diverse cultural contexts. The PCCEC also commits itself to exploring how the examinations can better serve all candidates to integrate theological, biblical knowledge with the particular pastoral contexts in which they will be serving, including racial ethnic contexts (a point that will be more fully discussed below, in Chapters VII and VIII).

The PCCEC believes that the presbyteries play an especially important role in guiding racial ethnic candidates through the examination process. First, presbyteries can interpret to all of their candidates, including racial ethnic candidates, the examinations' significant but limited role in discerning readiness for ministry. The perspective of examination readers from the wider church must supplement, not replace, the judgment of the CPM, which knows its candidates personally. Second, the results of ordination examinations offer a presbytery an opportunity to work with its candidates to discern what further steps are most appropriate to help them to demonstrate readiness for ministry: additional seminary studies or field experience, assistance with preparation for taking the examinations, or alternate means of examination administered by the presbytery itself.

## VI. A Vision for the Future of National Ordination Examinations

Issues related to racial ethnic participation in the examinations point to deeper issues about how readiness for ministry is best discerned and by which church bodies. A key question to the PCCEC is: What kind of examinations will best help the church assess candidates' readiness for ministry?

In consulting with seminary faculty and students, the PCCEC has been concerned that many candidates see the examinations as just another hoop to jump, in what is already a long and involved road to ordination. Candidates sometimes wonder why they must take an ordination examination in an area for which they already passed a seminary course. Upon receiving their grades, candidates do not always understand readers' comments or what readers were looking for. The examinations may result in frustration rather than learning and spiritual discernment.

Imagine a different scenario: A candidate has completed basic seminary work in the foundational documents of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). He or she has extensive, supervised field experience in the church, and so has seen how biblical exegesis makes a difference for preaching; how Reformed theology and confessions inform a pastor's teaching and priorities

personally and for the church; how a Reformed understanding of worship and sacraments shapes the liturgical life of a congregation; and how Presbyterian polity guides decision-making and life together in sessions, presbyteries, and the wider church.

The candidate is asked to take four written examinations. Each examination provides an opportunity for the candidate to exercise pastoral wisdom and imagination. Each asks the candidate to draw on the church's foundational documents in order to illuminate church life and to guide the decisions that pastors and congregations make.

The candidate comes to these examinations prayerfully, perhaps taking them in a church setting rather than in a seminary classroom, and beginning each examination period with worship rather than simply the distribution of examination booklets. The candidate prays not simply to pass the examinations but, more importantly, that the examinations might truly be a means by which he or she will grow in wisdom and faith. People throughout the denomination join the candidates in prayer on the days that the examinations take place.

Readers from the wider church provide an assessment of the completed examinations. Their goal is not simply to issue a grade but rather to provide insights that will enable a candidate and his or her presbytery to have an extended conversation about the candidate's readiness for ministry. The candidate values the examinations because they allow him or her to get a better sense of his or her strengths and weaknesses in pastoral ministry. The presbytery values the examinations because the readers provide a perspective from the larger church that helps the presbytery to see things about a candidate that might otherwise be overlooked or incorrectly interpreted.

The PCCEC now invites the church to capture this vision of the unique opportunity that ordination examinations present to candidates and their presbyteries. We invite all of the partners concerned with assessing candidates' readiness for ministry to work together for examinations and an examination process that better fulfill their promise. We call for a radical shift in thinking about the examinations, so that candidates and presbyteries alike will be able to affirm the positive role that examinations can play in strengthening pastoral leadership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## VII. The Search for New Models

In contrast to this vision of the examinations' exciting possibilities, some respondents to the self-study subcommittee have argued that the time has come to eliminate national ordination examinations altogether, leaving the examination process solely in the hands of individual presbyteries. Other respondents have suggested that the PCCEC, while continuing to develop examination questions, could invite presbyteries to grade the examinations of their own candidates, aware of who they are and their personal contexts.

The PCCEC recognizes that the current system of nationally designed and graded examinations may tempt presbyteries to rely excessively on the judgments of readers from the wider church. Elimination of national examinations could encourage presbyteries to assume fuller responsibility for examination of their candidates. Presbyteries could tailor examinations to candidates with different backgrounds and in different contexts of ministry. Similarly, a system in which ordination examinations were nationally designed but locally graded could result in greater presbytery involvement in the examination process.

But elimination of national examinations could also have unintended negative consequences. The overture from San Francisco Presbytery in 1963 that led to a national system of ordination examinations noted that:

Presbyteries ... vary widely in the level of knowledge and ability they require for ordination so that candidates for the ministry often seek a less exacting presbytery to examine them.

The wide latitude in requirements for entrance into the ordained ministry in practice shifts the burden for setting ministerial standards to the seminaries rather than the presbyteries as constitutionally provided.

Such wide latitude in entrance lowers the esteem accorded to the ministerial vocation and makes it increasingly difficult to recruit the ablest [persons] for the ministry in competition with such exacting fields as science, medicine and law.

In view of the turnover of committee personnel and the rapid expansion of skills and knowledge required in the ministry, many candidates' committees feel the need for more specific guidelines in examination standards. (*Minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1963, Part I, p. 36*)

The PCCEC still finds these arguments to be persuasive. We believe that the current system of national ordination examinations continues on balance to be more helpful to the church than their elimination. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a national, interdependent church characterized by ever-greater mobility of candidates and ministers from one part of the country to another and by a wide diversity of levels of academic preparation and church experience. In such a time, national ordination examinations play an important even if limited role in lifting up the church's core theology and polity. They represent the church's commitment to ordaining candidates for service to the whole church even as they minister in their particular and diverse contexts.

At the same time, the PCCEC affirms the wisdom in calls for the presbyteries to take the lead in assessing their candidates' readiness for ministry. Precisely because presbyteries know their candidates personally, national examinations should not replace presbyteries' judgments but rather should help to fill them out.

The ordination examinations are uniquely valuable as one place in the process of assessing readiness for ministry in which the presbytery learns from the perspectives of individuals representing the larger church. Ordination examinations resemble certifying examinations in professions like law and medicine. Or to use a different analogy: just as an attending physician may ask a partner who knows nothing about a particular patient to review the patient's charts and the attending physician's judgments, so too national ordination examinations offer a presbytery a valuable second opinion about a candidate's readiness for ministry.

Frustration may arise when the judgments of the ordination examination readers differ widely from those of the members of a candidate's CPM or his or her seminary teachers. The current process does allow a CPM to appeal a grade, but the PCCEC sustains such appeals only under extraordinary circumstances. A presbytery may provide alternate means of testing competence in an examination area (G-14.0472), but because this exception can come only after a candidate has twice failed to pass the national examinations, it may emotionally burden a candidate and a presbytery, especially when they together sense that the candidate has a clear call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.<sup>3</sup> The opposite situation is also possible: passing ordination examinations may actually hinder a candidate and a presbytery from asking necessary questions about whether the candidate is truly called to ordained ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Concrete proposals for change to the examinations and examination process should come only after careful study. The current examinations and examination process have been carefully developed and refined over the years. Responses to the PCCEC indicate that presbyteries, through their CPMs and elected readers, are widely supportive of the current system. Nevertheless, more effective long-term partnerships among sessions, CPMs, presbyteries, seminaries, and the PCCEC are needed if the church as a whole is better to discern candidates' readiness for ministry. The time is right for the church to explore new models of assessing readiness for ministry that will help the church realize more fully the promise of national ordination examinations.

#### VIII. A Pilot Program

In light of these far-reaching concerns, the PCCEC commits itself to constituting a task force that will explore new models of national ordination examinations, so that they:

- better serve as a moment for a candidate to demonstrate integrative learning and pastoral wisdom and imagination,
- more fully invest presbyteries in providing gifted members to read ordination examinations,
- more fully enable racial ethnic participation in the examinations and examination process (see above: Chapter V, Section D).

This task force will:

1. be appointed by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates;
2. have eight to twelve members, with representatives of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates, at least one Presbyterian seminary, and at least three presbyteries;
3. study examination and certification processes in other denominations and profession;
4. determine how national ordination examinations can better enable candidates, including racial ethnic candidates, to relate the church's foundational documents to particular contexts of ministry;
5. Develop a pilot program in which candidates, including racial ethnic candidates, take ordination examinations only after completion of their seminary work and a significant internship in a supervised pastoral context; and
6. report its progress to the PCCEC by January 1, 2012.

As noted throughout this report, the PCCEC believes that the examinations best offer an opportunity for a candidate to demonstrate integrative learning and pastoral wisdom when they take place late in one's seminary education or after seminary, and after significant supervised church experience, such as an internship. New models of examination that better achieve these goals will require the PCCEC, seminaries, sessions, and presbyteries to avoid imposing undue hardship on can-

didates. The church must ensure that candidates have adequate financial support and pastoral mentoring as they make the transition from seminary, take ordination examinations, and seek a call.

The PCCEC has also noted that the examination process depends vitally on the readers, who give selflessly of their time and are strongly supportive of the current system. The PCCEC believes that increased presbytery investment in the examinations process will further strengthen the examination process. To the degree that presbyteries capture a vision of ordination examinations as a unique moment for candidates to demonstrate integrative learning and pastoral wisdom, their candidates will also capture this vision. New models that better lift up the promise of national ordination examinations will require new strategies for selecting readers, organizing reading groups, and coordinating the judgments of the presbytery and those of PCCEC readers.

#### IX. Concluding Reflections: Ordination Examinations as One Aspect of Assessing Readiness for Ministry

The self-review has reminded the PCCEC that readiness for ministry encompasses a host of academic and personal factors that go far beyond the parameters of the ordination examinations. But ordination examinations do play a distinct role in lifting up the significance of the church's shared legacy in the Scriptures, *The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order*. The examinations help to ensure that all candidates for ministry, regardless of their personal background and their particular course of theological education, are well-grounded in these foundational documents and are able to use them effectively in pastoral situations.

The ordination examinations work from the premise that this grounding involves more than rote memory. What ministers need is a practical wisdom informed by the Bible and the constitutional documents that orient their ministry over a lifetime. Seminaries, presbyteries, sessions, and the PCCEC alike are committed to training ministers who will draw on this rich legacy "with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love" (W-4.4003h) to speak to the most urgent matters of faith and life in the church and the world today. The PCCEC trusts that its proposals will assist in realizing this goal and looks forward to advice and counsel from the wider church.

#### Attachment A: Summary of Pass Rates

Table I: Recent Pass Rates on All Four Examinations, When Taken Together

	August 2005	August 2006
# of exams written	1,492	1,623
# of individuals writing exams	540	573
# of individuals writing exams for first time	303	330
# of individuals taking all four exams	231	255
% of individuals passing all four exams	53.7%	49.8%
% of individuals taking all four exams in Aug. who passed them by Jan.	65.3%	63.0%

Table II: Average Pass Rates in Each Examination Area<sup>4</sup>

Bible Exegesis	62.6%
Theological Competence	63.1%
Worship and Sacraments	69.4%
Church Polity	70.7%

#### Attachment B: Summary of Survey Results

The ordination examination process of the PC(USA) is of interest and concern to several key groups. The PCCEC implements the process. The readers who grade the examinations are elected by their presbyteries, all of which are requested to elect readers although not all do so. The CPMs are prime users of the results, as are the examination-takers. As part of its self-study and with the valuable assistance of the Research Services of the General Assembly Council (GAC), the PCCEC surveyed all CPM moderators, readers at both the October 2006 and March 2007 reading sessions, inquirers and candidates who took the examinations in January and August 2007, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament who were ordained in 2003 and 2004. The number of returned surveys is shown in Table I.



Table I: Groups Surveyed by the PCC

Group	# of surveys sent	# of surveys returned	Response rate
CPM Moderators	192 <sup>5</sup>	106	55%
October 2006 Readers <sup>6</sup>	185	167	90%
March 2007 Readers <sup>7</sup>	99	76	77%
January 2007 Candidates	448	203	45%
August 2007 Candidates	573	320	56%
Ordinands of 2003-2004	616 <sup>8</sup>	372	64%

Responses from each group are summarized below.

#### CPM Moderators

Among the CPM moderators who responded, two-thirds (69%) were men and almost all (98%) were white. Eighty-five percent were ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Less than half (47%) of the CPMs had racial-ethnic members. The responding presbyteries all had inquirers or candidates who took examinations in 2006. About three in five (58%) CPMs discuss the situation of the inquirer or candidate before granting approval, while 41% automatically approve the taking of examinations if the person under care has reached a certain point in seminary study. Ninety percent of the CPMs reported offering help in preparation when requested, three-quarters offered tutoring, and 61% shared copies of old examinations.

About half of the CPM moderators (46%) judged that successful performance on the ordination examinations reflect candidates' readiness for pastoral ministry "to a very great extent" or "to a great extent." Only a quarter thought that the examinations reflect candidates' readiness for other forms of ministry to this extent.

Most of the presbyteries (92%) reviewed the results of the examinations—typically, the CPM moderator and, in 84% of the presbyteries, the CPM liaison to a particular examinee. Ninety percent of examination-takers who did not achieve a satisfactory grade indicated that a member of CPM reviewed the examination readers' comments with the inquirer or candidate and in most (70%) of the cases, advised the inquirer or candidate to "find a knowledgeable person to tutor him or her." A quarter of the CPM moderators reported that the committee "expected the inquirer or candidate to improve his or her knowledge of the content area without the committee's help."

One-fifth of the presbyteries used an alternate means of examination during 2006, typically for one candidate. The most common alternate means for assessing the candidate's competence were conducting oral examinations (77%), administering old examination questions with extended or no time limits (43%), and administering a written examination composed by the presbytery (33%).

The majority of CPM moderators (62%) thought that candidates should take the four examinations when they were partway through seminary study. Nineteen percent thought that the examinations should be taken after the completion of seminary or after a post-seminary supervised internship or licensure period.

#### Examination Readers

Forty-nine percent of the readers elected by their presbyteries served on their CPM, and most were white (94%). A total of 122 presbyteries (71%) provided readers to grade the examinations in either October or March. None of the readers responding to the survey were from the non-geographical presbyteries. In both groups, a high proportion (more than 80%) of the readers reported that they were motivated to serve because of their concern about the quality of future ministers, their concern for inquirers and candidates for ministry, and out of a desire to serve the denomination.

A plurality of readers (42-45%) thought that candidates should take the four examinations when they were partway through seminary study. A similar proportion (39-41%) thought that the examinations should be taken after the completion of seminary or after a post-seminary supervised internship or licensure period.

Several differences were evident between the readers elected by their presbyteries to serve in October and those elected to serve in March. In October, 72% of the readers were ministers of the Word and Sacrament and 28% were elders. Slightly more than half of the readers (55%) were men. The vast majority (94%) were white, and half (53%) served on their presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry. In March, only 57% of the readers were ministers of the Word and Sacrament; 43% were elders. Slightly more than half of the March readers (52%) were women, but only 40% served on a CPM.

This group of presbyters, who are intimately familiar with the examinations and the range of examinees' responses, shared a strong consensus (60-75%) that the examinations, as presently structured, assess the examinees' integration of academic learning and pastoral skills "to a very great extent" or "to a great extent." Almost two-thirds of the October readers (63%) and half (52%) of the March readers judged that successful performance on the examinations reflect candidates' readiness for pastoral ministry, while about a third of each group judged that performance on the examinations reflects readiness for other forms of ministry.

This difference (63% versus 52%) may be attributable to the different composition of the two reading groups with regard to gender and office. Table II shows the results when the data are disaggregated by gender and office for each of the two reading groups. In both groups, about three-fifths of the ministers agreed that the examinations assess readiness for ministry. In each group, the male elders were least likely to agree with that judgment. The two groups of female elders were quite divergent in their views. Because of the small numbers of respondents, these differences can only be regarded as suggestive.

Table II: Proportion of Readers Agreeing that the Examinations Assess Candidates' Readiness for Pastoral Ministry "To a Very Great Extent" or "To a Great Extent"

	October		March		Pooled	
	Ministers	Elders	Ministers	Elders	Ministers	Elders
Male	n=80 61%	n=10 50%	n=23 65%	n=12 25%	n=103 62%	n=22 37%
Female	n=39 62%	n=36 75%	n=17 53%	n=20 45%	n=56 59%	n=56 64%

Examination Candidates

Slightly over half of the responding examinees in both January and August 2007 were women (52%-54%); 85% of both groups were white, and 9% of the January group and 6% of the August group were African American. The median age of the January examinees was 42; the August group was slightly younger, with a median age of 38. Forty-five percent of the January group and 49% of the August group were in their third year of seminary and about two out of every five examinees had already graduated from seminary. Examinees from over three-quarters of the presbyteries (133) responded to the survey.

The majority of the responding examinees were satisfied with the timing of the examinations in August and January, and with the registration process.<sup>9</sup> However, in open-ended comments, there were many pleas that the examinations be offered more than twice a year, as well as a number of comments about the cost of the examinations.

The examinees brought a variety of learning experiences to the examinations (Table III). Surprisingly, a small proportion had no seminary classroom experience in the areas in which they were being examined. Similar proportions of the examinees did not have field education, an internship, or leadership in their home congregation to provide them practical church experience. Although the examinations seek to assess the integration of classroom knowledge with its application in the life of the church, a small but non-trivial proportion of the examinees appears not to have both kinds of learning experiences before attempting the examinations.

Table III: Percent of Examinees Who Had Certain Learning Experiences Prior to Taking Each Ordination Examination

	Biblical Exegesis		Theological Competence		Worship & Sacraments		Church Polity	
	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug
Seminary class or classes	89%	96%	93%	96%	86%	88%	87%	89%
Field education or internship	84%	84%	90%	86%	92%	86%	89%	86%
Leadership in home congregation	77%	81%	81%	86%	82%	86%	79%	85%
Clinical Pastoral Education	43%	55%	45%	59%	43%	56%	48%	56%

Table IV reports the degree to which particular learning experiences were helpful to candidates in preparation for each examination.

Table IV: Percent of Examinees Who Perceived a Particular Learning Experience as "Very Helpful" or "Helpful" Preparation for Each Examination

	Biblical Exegesis		Theological Competence		Worship & Sacraments		Church Polity	
	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug
Seminary class or classes	94%	93%	90%	93%	84%	91%	87%	92%
Field education or internship	64%	75%	80%	83%	88%	91%	79%	77%
Leadership in home congregation	59%	72%	79%	81%	78%	90%	79%	84%
Clinical Pastoral Education	46%	63%	61%	69%	54%	64%	45%	36%

In addition to these learning experiences, examinees were asked about other methods of preparing for the examinations. Table V shows that virtually everyone prayed, and 80% or more reviewed previous examinations. About two-thirds of the examinees talked with a student who had taken the examinations, and similar proportions reviewed their class notes. About half of the examinees consulted with a professor or a pastor as they prepared to take the examinations. Only about one-fifth consulted with a CPM member as they prepared. The August candidates were somewhat more likely than the January candidates to study with other students or to participate in a seminary-sponsored review course. A high proportion of examinees taking the three examinations that require use of the *Constitution* of the PCUSA did read it in preparation.

Table V: Percent of Examinees Using Various Methods of Preparation for the Ordination Examinations

	Biblical Exegesis		Theological Competence		Worship & Sacraments		Church Polity	
	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug	Jan	Aug
Prayed	98%	99%	100%	99%	100%	97%	99%	98%
Reviewed previous examinations	80%	85%	87%	95%	87%	92%	86%	92%
Consulted a student who has taken the exam	65%	67%	70%	74%	66%	70%	64%	67%
Consulted class notes	62%	76%	68%	76%	57%	66%	62%	72%
Read the PCUSA <i>Constitution</i>	53%	63%	89%	88%	91%	93%	96%	96%
Consulted with a professor	44%	55%	46%	57%	42%	51%	44%	48%
Consulted with a pastor or minister	39%	42%	58%	54%	58%	53%	60%	51%
Studied with other students	29%	41%	43%	56%	40%	53%	44%	52%
Took a seminary-sponsored review course	29%	42%	35%	43%	35%	42%	41%	42%
Reviewed with a CPM member	16%	20%	25%	21%	18%	20%	18%	22%

Responses to the question of how well the examinations assessed the integration of academic learning and pastoral skills (Table VI) varied considerably among the four examinations and between the January and August examinees.

Table VI: Percent of Examinees Who Think That Each Examination Assesses the Integration of Academic Learning and Pastoral Skills to a “Great” or “Very Great Extent”

	January	August	Pooled
Biblical Exegesis	36%	40%	38%
Theological Competence	38%	48%	44%
Worship & Sacraments	47%	55%	52%
Church Polity	39%	55%	49%

Approximately half of the examinees thought that the Worship and Sacraments and Church Polity Examinations assessed the integration of academic learning and pastoral skills “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent.” Only about two-fifths of the examinees felt that the Biblical Exegesis and Theological Competence Examinations were this successful in assessing the integration of academic and pastoral skills.

#### Recent Ordinand

In an effort to understand how the examination process was perceived after beginning ministry, a survey was sent to those ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the PCUSA in 2003 or 2004. The respondents were divided fairly evenly between women (47%) and men (53%). Eleven percent were under age 30 when they responded, 41% were between 30 and 40, 18% were between 41 and 50, and 29% were older than 50. Four percent identified themselves as Asian/Pacific Islanders, 2% as Latino, and 2% as African-American, while 92% were white.

The proportion of ministers who had to repeat an ordination examination varied among the four examinations: 24% of the respondents had repeated the Bible Exegesis Examination; a similar percentage repeated Theology; 18% repeated Church Polity, while 15% repeated Worship and Sacraments. For each examination, one percent or less of the respondents took the examination in either Korean or Spanish. For each examination area, four percent or fewer of the recent ordinands demonstrated competence through alternate means.

When asked the extent to which preparation for and taking the ordination examinations were helpful to their current ministry, 63% reported that the Worship and Sacraments Examination was “helpful” or “very helpful.” About the same proportion (60%) found the Polity Examination to be helpful to the same extent. The proportions were lower for Theology (55%) and for Biblical Exegesis (49%). This last figure may relate to many respondents’ open-ended comments that ministers, when they prepare sermons today, rarely consult the Scriptures in Greek or Hebrew. These respondents question the continued requirements both to study and to be examined on the biblical languages.

When asked the extent to which the examinations assessed the integration of academic learning and pastoral skills, the greatest number (38-42%) responded that each examination did so “to some extent.” Similar proportions (36-44%) responded that each examination did so “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent.” Twenty-two percent of the respondents thought that successful performance on the examinations reflected readiness for pastoral ministry “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent.” Only 11% made this same judgment regarding readiness for other ministry.

Forty-two percent of the respondents thought that candidates should take the four examinations “partway through seminary study.” Thirty-two percent indicated that the examinations should be taken after completing seminary or following a post-seminary internship or licensure period. A variety of other responses ranged from “not at all” to “when they’ve taken the appropriate seminary course” to “whenever they feel prepared.”

Differences among the Groups

Each of the four surveys had somewhat different emphases; consequently, data on particular questions are not available for all four groups. It is, however, helpful to compare cross-group data where they are available. Table VII presents the proportion of the combined groups of readers, the current candidates, and the recent ordinands who judged each of the examinations to assess the integration of academic learning and pastoral skills “to a very great extent” or “to a great extent.”

The most striking difference is between those who grade the examinations, where a majority judge each examination to assess the desired integration “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent,” and those who have just taken the examinations or took them within the past decade. How might this difference be explained? Readers’ experience in seeing a wide range of responses to the examination questions may lead them to view the examinations as successfully differentiating candidates’ ability to integrate academic learning and pastoral experience. By contrast, the candidates and recent ordinands have only their own experience to go by.

Table VII: Proportion of Respondents Judging that a Particular Examination Assessed the Integration of Academic Learning and Pastoral Skills to a “Very Great Extent” or to a “Great Extent”

	Pooled Readers	Pooled Examinees	Recent Ordinands
Biblical Exegesis	70%	38%	36%
Theological Competence	74%	44%	38%
Worship & Sacraments	71%	52%	44%
Church Polity	71%	49%	43%

Table VIII shows that recently ordained ministers are the most skeptical about the relationship of successful performance on the examinations and readiness to begin ministry. By contrast, almost two-thirds of the readers think that successful performance on the examinations reflects readiness for pastoral ministry.

All groups recognize that the examinations are not indicative of readiness to begin other forms of ministry. Readers and CPM moderators may recognize that the examinations cover only a limited scope of demands on ministers but feel that the examinations nevertheless reflect competence within those limits reasonably well.

Table VIII: Proportion of Respondents Judging that Successful Performance on the Four Ordination Examinations Reflected Readiness for Ministry to a “Great” or “Very Great Extent”

Readiness for:	CPM Moderators	Pooled Readers	Recent Ordinands
Pastoral ministry	46%	63%	22%
Other ministry	25%	34%	11%

Table IX reflects views about when the examinations should be taken. The differences may reflect the goal of CPM moderators to help candidates get through the process and receive a call, while a substantial portion of the readers and the recently ordained ministers recognize that candidates’ performance on the examinations would be better after the completion of course work or more experience in the ongoing life of a congregation.

Table IX: The Stage of the Preparation Process When the Examinations Should Be Taken

	CPM Moderators	Pooled Readers	Recent Ordinands
Mid-Seminary	62%	43%	42%
After seminary or internship	19%	40%	32%
At another time	3%	13%	17%

Clearly, one’s perception of the national ordination examinations is shaped by one’s role in the preparation process and by the experiences that one has had. Overall there is recognition of the important, though limited, role that the examinations play in the care and preparation process.

Endnotes

1. The report is available from Distribution Management Services (DMS #272-92-411), as well as in the *Minutes* of the 204th General Assembly (1992). Page numbers refer to the DMS version of the report.
2. The term candidate is used in this report to refer to all persons who are pursuing ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), regardless of whether they are formally in the inquiry or candidacy stage of presbytery care. The examinations are also required of ministers of other denominations seeking membership in the PC(USA) (G-11.0404a(2)).

3. Candidates with disabilities that affect test-taking ability may also demonstrate competence in the examination areas by alternate means administered by the presbytery (G-14.0472).
4. Based on the last eight years, and with variation of plus or minus ten percentage points.
5. There are 173 presbyteries; this number reflects a number of co-moderators.
6. Reading sites in Raleigh, Pittsburgh, Oklahoma City, and San Francisco.
7. Reading sites in Chicago and Atlanta.
8. Thirty-nine returned as undeliverable to address of record with PC(USA).
9. In order to serve candidates even better, the PCCEC is working toward using computer technology to allow candidates to register for examinations on-line and receive their grades quickly. This technology will also allow the PCCEC to increase the number of times it offers the Bible Content Examination each year.

## Item 14-Report 3

### Report 3: Report on Review of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations of Candidates

[The assembly approved Report 3, Recommendations 1.–2. See pp. 36, 39.]

**1. This committee would like to commend the PCCEC for a thorough self-study. The committee wants to affirm the PCCEC commitment to the Theological Standard of The Reformed Faith while at the same time seeking to address the interpretative barriers of racial ethnic candidates. We recommend in the future that the communication links between the PCCEC and CPMs be continued and significantly strengthened. As the demographics of the denomination continue to change, we encourage the committee to engage in continual reassessment. We further recommend that the General Assembly continue to support the work of the PCCEC.**

**2. That the following report on Review of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations of Candidates be approved.**

#### Report on Review of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations of Candidates

##### **Introduction:**

The review of the General Assembly committees was conducted according to the provisions in the Standing Rules and the standards in the *Manual of the General Assembly*.

##### **Mission**

The Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) has responsibility for the written exams that are among the requirements for ordination to the office of minister of Word and Sacrament.

##### **Membership:**

The committee has twenty-four members, half of whom are elected by the General Assembly, and half of whom are elected by six regional reading groups that meet annually to grade the exams. The committee recruits two additional, nonvoting members whose primary responsibility is preparation of the Bible Content Examination.

##### **Process**

The PCCEC provided a self-study based on their work and the General Assembly Committee on Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees reviewed the self-study, examined the survey results, and heard a presentation from the PCCEC.

##### **Findings:**

##### **A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership**

1. Does the PCCEC exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?  
*Yes*

2. Does the basic process of the PCCEC demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly? Does the PCCEC exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which the PCCEC acts?

*Yes*

3. Does the PCCEC exhibits practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?

*Yes, The PCCEC communicated its desire to cooperate with other agencies dealing with ordination such as seminaries and CPMs.*

4. Does the PCCEC provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

*Yes. The committee was realistic about their timeline. It expressed a willingness to expedite the process when possible.*

### **B. Effectiveness of Services**

1. Does the PCCEC have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?

*Yes. The self-study reflects a thorough analysis of its work to date and a well-thought out pilot program to strengthen the program in four areas: (1) Examination content and format; (2) Grading procedures; (3) Timing of when candidates take examinations; (4) Racial ethnic representation in the composing and grading of examinations.*

2. Does the PCCEC have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?

*Yes. The committee keeps track of their own internal statistics and evaluates the results.*

3. Does the PCCEC employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?

*Based on the self-study, it is unclear to us if and how the committee communicates with the church-at-large, including the CPMs, and especially racial ethnic sessions.*

4. Does the PCCEC utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?

*Yes.*

5. Does the PCCEC have a developed vision and a plan for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and within the context of the PC(USA)?

*Yes.*

## **14-Info**

### ***Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Agency Summary***

The committee is composed of twelve regular members representing African Americans, Native Americans, Latina/o Americans, Asian Americans, Middle Eastern Americans, and European Americans.

The 2006–08 membership of the committee is as follows: Noushin Framke, chairperson, Middle Eastern, at-large; Irvin Porter, vice chairperson, Native American Consulting Committee; Judith Pingel, secretary, Native American, at large; Eugene Turner, chair, Resource and Referral Subcommittee, National Black Presbyterian Caucus; John Spangler, chair, Study and Comment subcommittee, European American, at-large; Mauricio Chacón, National Hispanic/Latino Caucus, Adel Malek, Middle Eastern Caucus; Patricia Lee, liaison to ACSWP, National Asian Caucus; Adel Malek, National Middle Eastern Caucus; Jean Kim, liaison to ACWC, Asian, at-large; Dale Lindsay Morgan, GAC Executive Committee; Jacquie Lyman was appointed GAC representative to ACREC in September 2007.

As of December 2007, the committee had two vacancies.

Liaisons to ACREC are: Esperanza Guajardo, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP); Jerri Rodewald, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC); Ruth-Aimee Belonni-Rosario, Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT).

### **1. Assigned Functions**

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) works to fulfill its General Assembly mandate to provide advocacy and monitoring on issues of concern to people of color in both church and society. The committee evaluates social trends in church and society, and provides advice and counsel to the General Assembly (GA) and the General Assem-

bly Council (GAC). The committee addresses issues, including civil rights, racial justice, environmental justice, economic justice, public education, law enforcement, health care, employment, and housing, as they impact communities of color. The committee also monitors the implementation of programs and policies approved by the church that impact the participation and quality of life for people of color within the church. The committee works in close cooperation with other agencies and entities within the church, including the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), to fulfill its responsibilities. The ACREC's assigned functions, as stated in the *GAC Manual of Operations* include:

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advise the General Assembly Council on matters of racial ethnic concerns including statements concerning pressing issues that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of racial ethnic concern.
- d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on racial ethnic concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.
- f. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies and programs relative to racial ethnic concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concern.

The work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) is coordinated through the Office of the General Assembly Council by the Deputy Executive Director of the General Assembly Council. The committee has direct access to the General Assembly and its chair has corresponding member status with the General Assembly Council and with the General Assembly.

## 2. *Accomplishments*

a. The committee held four regularly scheduled meetings in 2006: January 19–22, in Louisville, Kentucky, a joint meeting with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns; March 30–April 1 in Louisville, Kentucky, a joint meeting with the National Cross Caucus; August 10–13 in Louisville; and November 16–19 at McCormick Seminary, Chicago, Illinois. Officers elected in January: chair—Adel Malek; vice chair—Evelyn Kelly; secretary—Judith Armour Pingel; Resource & Referral Subcommittee chair—Eugene Turner; and Study & Comment Subcommittee Chair—John Spangler.

b. The ACREC provided advice and counsel to the 217th General Assembly (2006), in accordance with its charter. The committee submitted two resolutions—one in support of the Fair Food Campaign, and a Joint Resolution on the Women of Color Consultation, with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC). Both resolutions were approved by the assembly. The committee also submitted its first report on the Climate for Change assessment and consultation with the executives of the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly.

c. In the January 2006 meeting, ACREC continued its education to understand cultural proficiency with DeBorah Gilbert White, associate for Cultural Proficiency (GAC); and immigration issues with Julia Thorne, manager for Immigration Issues (OGA). In joint session with ACWC, the committees met with Joseph Small to discuss concerns related to the Study Guide on the Belhar Confession and the Trinity Paper. The committees also identified areas of common interest and concern.

The March 2006 meeting featured a forum with the National Korean Presbyterian Council on *Overture 35*, which proposed a nongeographic Korean synod. In joint session with the National Cross Caucus, the two groups discussed strategies to strengthen their relationships and possible responses to the disaster in New Orleans and the Gulf coast following Hurricane Katrina.

In August 2006, in accordance with Manual of Operations revisions to accommodate the new General Assembly biennial schedule, the committee elected officers: chair—Adel Malek; vice chair—Eugene Turner; secretary—Judith Armour Pingel; Resource and Referral Subcommittee chair—Eugene Turner; and Study and Comment Sub-committee chair—John Spangler. The committee held annual consultations with the executive director of Project Equality, Carlos Salazar, and with the director of the Washington Office, PC(USA), Elenora Giddings-Ivory; and heard a report on the GAC downsizing and reorganization. The committee voted to send correspondence to Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick, Moderator Joan Gray, and Executive Director Linda Valentine concerning ongoing issues in Israel/Palestine.

The November 2006 meeting, held at McCormick Seminary, featured a forum with representatives of the Committee on Theological Education, OGA and GAC staff, and representatives of the McCormick community, concerning issues related to theological education, candidacy, call, and ordination of people of color.

d. The committee held three regularly scheduled meetings in 2007: February 15–17 in Louisville, Kentucky; July 8–11 in Los Angeles, California; and November 16–19 in Merida, Mexico, in the Yucatan.

At the February 2007 meeting, ACREC hosted a forum exploring the church's response to the disaster in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, and the continuing challenges facing the region. Participants included Jean Marie Peacock (former Vice Moderator, 216th General Assembly (2004)), representing the Presbytery of South Louisiana; Susan Ryan, director of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA); and John Robinson, regional PDA coordinator. Discussion following the forum provided framework for a joint resolution with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to the 218th General Assembly (2008). The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), meeting concurrently, also attended the forum, along with several other GAC staff. In preparation for the Fall meeting in Merida, the committee watched a DVD entitled *Letters from the Other Side*, which highlighted the plight of women left in Mexico when husbands and children migrate to the U.S.

In July 2007, the committee heard reports from the Climate for Change working group, the Joint Women of Color Consultation task force, and a report from ACSWP outlining their proposal for a joint resolution on Katrina. The ACREC agreed to send an action to the 218th General Assembly (2008) in response to the Supreme Court's decision striking down voluntary desegregation plans in Louisville and Seattle school districts.

The Fall 2007 meeting, a joint meeting with ACWC, was held in Merida, Mexico, which is located in the Yucatan. The primary purpose for this meeting was to support ACREC's ongoing education and information gathering on immigration issues, to understand the factors that push migration, the influence of globalization on the local economy, social environment, and culture. The committees met with seminary faculty and students, visited a Mayan community where they were welcomed by the local Presbyterian congregation, and heard from representatives of Indemaya, a state agency working to improve economic conditions for Mayan communities and protect indigenous Mayan culture. The committees also toured Chichen Itza and heard from representatives of grassroots organizations working on migration issues in the region. As an outcome of this meeting, ACREC voted to work with MRTI to address exorbitant remittance fees, specifically looking at the practices of Western Union.

e. *Ecumenical Multicultural Conference—July 11–15, 2007, Los Angeles, California*

(1) The ACREC held a pre-conference forum on July 11, 2007. The purpose was to inform participants about the role of the advocacy committee, to hear about the recent work of ACREC, and to share ideas/concerns in dialogue about key issues impacting people of color in the PC(USA). Facilitators were Virstan Choy, interim director of the Center for Asian American Ministries and visiting professor of ministry, McCormick Theological Seminary; and Barbara Campbell Davis, executive presbyter and stated clerk of the Presbytery of New Hope.

(2) The ACREC also hosted a workshop at the conference entitled "Race and Religious Pluralism: New Challenges for the 21st Century." This workshop examined some of the dynamics that are changing the cultural landscape of our society, explored the challenges of living in diversity, and offered modes for encouraging cross-cultural, cross-racial dialogue. This workshop was facilitated by Michael Livingston, executive director, International Council of Community Churches; president, National Council of Churches in the USA; and member of the Presbytery of New Brunswick.

f. The ACREC will be reviewed at the 218th General Assembly (2008). The following members and former members were appointed as the self-study team: Judith Armour Pingel, chair; Evelyn Kelly; Fahed Abu Akel; John Spangler; Mauricio Chacon; and Noushin Framke. The team met July 11, 2007, for planning purposes.

g. The ACREC is sending the following new items of business to the 218th General Assembly (2008):

- (1) Resolution to Create a Committee to Study the Belhar Confession;
- (2) Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future—joint resolution with ACSWP;
- (3) 2008 Creating a Climate for Change, report and recommendations;
- (4) Public Education for the 21st Century Resolution.

3. The ACREC took the opportunity in its final meeting with Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on January 23, 2008, to express its gratitude for his faithful service and his support for the work of the advocacy committees:



*Cliff, how does one thank the “pope”?*

*I am speaking for the committees gathered here, and ACREC in particular. This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to express thanks to you, Cliff, for having served the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) well.*

*We thank you for your generous spirit, your availability to these committees that carry a heavy duty in helping the PC(USA) live out its commitment to justice for all people.*

*Cliff, you have shown in your ministry as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, that you care for the church and its ministry of justice. You are a loving person and it shows in your ministry.*

*Your influence is both national and international. You are well known throughout the ecumenical church world, and greatly appreciated by the way you have related to the church in the global community.*

*Your welcoming of all God’s people is admirable.*

*As part of your staff, we became friends and colleagues, and it was a joy and a privilege.*

*It is a great honor to present this small gift to you on behalf of ACREC expressing appreciation to you for the support you have given to the advocacy ministry of ACREC. [Comments prepared by Eugene Turner.]*



## Item 15-01

[The assembly approved Item 15-01. See p. 11.]

*On Urging the Board of Pensions to Expand the Definition of Medical Necessity to Include Habilitative Services for Children with Congenital Developmental Disabilities—From the Presbytery of Central Nebraska.*

**The Presbytery of Central Nebraska overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:**

**1. Urge the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to expand the current definition of Medical Necessity as found in Article XIII, Section 13.1 (k) of the benefits plan to include habilitative services such as occupational therapy, speech therapy, and physical therapy, which seek to promote healthy growth and improve function for children with congenital developmental disabilities such as Down’s syndrome and autism and report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

**2. Direct the PC(USA) office of Social Welfare Organizations, which encompasses the disability portfolio, Presbyterians for Disability Concerns, and the PC(USA) Disability Consultants to be in consultation with the Board of Pensions throughout this review.**

### *Rationale*

Health entails well-being in all facets of life, and all children, including children with intellectual or congenital developmental disabilities, have a right to achieve and maintain their full level of health. All children are entitled to nondiscriminatory, appropriate, cost-effective, informed, and sufficient health services and supports to achieve full levels of well-being. The services of health professionals, in every discipline and specialty (including mental health, physical and occupational therapists; speech-language pathologists; behavior analysts; assistive technologists), should be available to all children.<sup>i</sup>

The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) currently excludes children with congenital developmental disabilities such as Down’s syndrome from accessing the medically prescribed occupational, physical and speech therapies crucial to support healthy growth and development and to ameliorate the effects of a disabling condition. These therapies are available to children who have suffered illness, accident, or injury and lost skills, but children who have not yet developed skills can benefit from these same therapies as well. There is no moral, ethical, or medical justification for denying one group of children treatment. In fact, providing children with congenital developmental disabilities with therapeutic services provides cost savings to society.<sup>ii</sup>

This overture began in response to the case of a seven-year-old child, Martha, who has Down’s syndrome. The Board of Pensions denied Martha coverage for her prescribed occupational and physical therapy because the treatments are not “restorative” (rehabilitative). The Board of Pensions acknowledged the benefits of the therapies in relation to her development. However, because the treatment was not intended to restore lost functioning due to accident, illness, or injury but was intended to address needs related to Martha’s general physical condition and support developmental milestones the Board of Pensions defined the therapies as not medically necessary and labeled them educational rather than medical. The Board of Pensions covered these therapies for Martha for over two years, repeatedly stating that they did meet the guidelines for medical necessity but abruptly ceased coverage because the intent of the treatment was habilitative as opposed to rehabilitative.

Over the course of trying to understand the Board of Pensions’ reasoning, it was discovered that many parents of children with developmental disabilities faced the same frustration and sense of discrimination in insurance coverage. It also became clear that corporations and states were changing their policies and laws to remove the discriminations against children with developmental disabilities.

In 2005, the American Academy of Pediatrics published a policy statement titled *Model Contractual Language for Medical Necessity for Children*.<sup>iii</sup> The policy states that health insurers should define medical necessity to include interventions that “assist in achieving, maintaining, or restoring health and functional capabilities without discrimination to the nature of a congenital/development anomaly.” The states of Indiana and Maryland and the District of Columbia have recently passed legislation requiring health insurance companies to provide such habilitative services to children with disabilities. The state of Maryland estimates that the cost of these therapies is small, less than 0.1 percent of the average annual premium.<sup>iv</sup> Legislation to mandate that private insurance companies must cover habilitative services for children with developmental disabilities has been introduced in Illinois and Virginia. A study paper on the Virginia legislation notes that in a survey of parents whose children are not receiving these medically prescribed therapies, the two most common reasons are high cost and lack of insurance coverage. The paper goes on to say in Virginia as many as 28,000 children could be benefit from the proposed mandate.<sup>v</sup>

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Home Depot and Microsoft are two corporate citizens that have recently rewritten their health insurance policies to cover habilitative therapies for children with neurological or genetic disabilities including autism, Down's syndrome, and cerebral palsy.<sup>vi</sup>

Jesus said, "Let the children come unto me and forbid them not." The current definition of medical necessity in the benefits plan of the Board of Pensions is a barrier to children with congenital developmental disabilities accessing the same medical care that is available to others within the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The current definition of medical necessity and the limit it poses on access to habilitative services for children is not consistent with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s vision of empowering all children to participate fully in the life and ministry of the church. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is currently celebrating the Decade of the Child that calls the church to focus on the health and well-being of God's gift—children.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the policy paper titled "Living into the Body of Christ: Toward Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities."<sup>vii</sup> This policy states that "We envision a church in which every child of God [may] realize his/her full potential ..." (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 920). The policy calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) "to work for justice with persons who have disabilities, both within the church itself and the wider social order" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 919). It also envisions "the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) as a leader in promoting and manifesting this vision of a just world, serving with and empowering people with disabilities to engage in this ongoing work" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 920).

The policy urges the Board of Pensions to be "in partnership with employing organizations and national and local church leadership in coordinating the scope of the Medical Plan and the Assistance Program in order to offer appropriate care for all Plan members" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 923). The rationale for the policy notes that there have been great advances in the field of medicine and therapeutic treatment that are improving the quality of life for people with disabilities, enabling them to live longer, fuller lives. Providing insurance coverage that supports children in achieving or restoring health and functional capabilities without discrimination to the nature of a congenital/developmental anomaly is a concrete step toward realizing the commitment made by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to be the Body of Christ in which every child of God may realize his or her full potential.

#### Endnotes

- i. Adapted from the *Declaration on Health Parity for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 2006. American Association on Mental Retardation. <[http://www.aamr.org/Policies/health\\_declaration.shtml](http://www.aamr.org/Policies/health_declaration.shtml)>
- ii. In its decision to cover services for children with autism Microsoft relied on a study conducted in 1998 that suggests that the savings in unneeded social services could be substantial if all children with autism had access to behavior intervention. Spake, Amanda. "Families Changed Microsoft's View of Autism." 8 May 2007. < <http://www.virginia.gov/cmsportal2/cgi-bin/search.cgi?q=site%3Ajlarc.state.va.us+financial+assistance&start=60&num=10&filter=0&access=p&entqr=0&sort=date%3AD%3AL%3Ad1&ie=UTF-8> >  
  
Evaluation of legislation introduced in Virginia to mandate coverage of habilitative therapies for children with developmental delays notes that such therapies offer "direct health benefits to children with developmental delays, which in some cases could include a reduced need for services over their lifetime" and points to "studies that suggest providing support to persons with developmental delays that enable them to remain in their communities, instead of institutions, is cost effective." "Evaluation of House Bill 657: Mandated Coverage of Habilitative Service of Children with Developmental Delays." 2006. Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission of the Commonwealth of Virginia: 19, 21. <<http://www.tlarc.state.va.us>>
- iii. American Academy of Pediatrics. "Model Contractual Language for Medical Necessity for Children." *Pediatrics* 116.1 (July 2005): 261–62.
- iv. "Fiscal and Policy Note Senate Bill 944." Department of Legislative Services of the Maryland General Assembly. 2007: 2 <[http://www.mlis.state.md.us/2007RS/fnotes/bil\\_0004/sb0944.pdf](http://www.mlis.state.md.us/2007RS/fnotes/bil_0004/sb0944.pdf)>
- v. "Evaluation of House Bill 657: Mandated Coverage of Habilitative Service of Children with Developmental Delays." 4.
- vi. Spake, Amanda. <<http://www.smartmoney.com/mag/index.cfm?story-june2007-autism>>
- vii. "Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities." *Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 919ff. The Office of the General Assembly, PC(USA).

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**Concurrence to Item 15-01 from the Presbyteries of Denver, Greater Atlanta, Mid-Kentucky, New Covenant, and the Twin Cities Area.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 15-01, from the Presbytery of Central Nebraska, with concurrences from the Presbytery of New Covenant, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky, and Presbytery of Denver, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to urge the Board of Pensions, in consultation with the disability-related units of the PC(USA), to expand the definition of “medical necessity” to cover therapies that improve growth and function for children with congenital development disabilities. In addition, Item 15-01 requests that the Board of Pension report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 15-01 be approved.

*Rationale*

The ACSWP concurs with the *Rationale* supporting this overture. In addition, the following points support the approval of the overture:

1. General Assemblies have defined health in an inclusive manner that extends beyond care for specific physical harms and rehabilitation. For example,

a. “Comprehensive health care for all persons includes at least these elements: aid in growth and development, nutrition, prevention of illness, periodic diagnostic evaluation, treatment of disease, extended and home nursing care, rehabilitation, long-term care for chronic disorders, and the appropriate social and economic provisions to make these feasible in the life of a person and his household . . .” (1971 Statement—*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 585–90).

b. “The value of life gives persons the derivative right to acquire the therapy or care [needed] that they might enjoy the quality of life health makes possible. . . .” (1976 Statement—*Minutes*, PCUS, 1976, Part I, pp. 203–7)

2. The 213th General Assembly (2001) recognized the need to assure that the Board of Pensions treat care related to mental disabilities similarly to care related to physical needs: That assembly “urge[d] the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to evaluate, on an annual basis, issues of parity between coverage for mental health and medical and surgical benefits under plans offered by the Board of Pensions and include their evaluation in their annual reports to future General Assemblies” (2001 Statement—*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 419–21).

3. Coverage decisions by the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) should not be based solely on the standards of secular organizations. In fact, as the overture’s rationale notes, the “industry standard” is mixed. Within the church, however, decisions should rest on the church’s policies defining health and the Christian response to persons with disabilities. The policies of the PC(USA) noted above support this coverage.

4. To the extent that families faced with a pregnancy involving a congenital developmental disability take the additional costs involved in caring appropriately for the child into account, the knowledge that such care will be covered by insurance may support a family’s decision to continue the pregnancy. The 1992 policy of the PC(USA) on “Problem Pregnancies and Abortion” supports policies that would reduce the number of abortions by addressing economic issues (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, paragraphs 27.120, 27.121). Providing coverage for habilitative therapies is consistent with these policies.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 15-01 urges the Board of Pensions to expand the definition of medical necessity to include habilitative services for children with congenital developmental disabilities.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s advice and counsel advising approval of this item.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns supports this overture. Parents of children with congenital developmental disabilities face additional complexities to care for these children and hold their family intact. When the parent is a  
218TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2008)

single parent the struggle is often greater. Our systems need to support the value of life that we affirm. As a change in our insurance program this cost will be shared by all participants and therefore be minimal. As brothers and sisters in Christ we willingly share the cost as part of our supporting and sustaining families who serve with us. As ACSWP noted, this cost is covered in the public sphere by companies like Home Depot and Microsoft and is mandated by some states. The ACWC believes the PC(USA) should support a family's capacity to care for and welcome these gifted children from God.

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### BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 15-01

*Comment on Item 15-01—From the Board of Pensions.*

The Board of Pensions advises that Item 15-01 be referred to the Board of Pensions for study and report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Board of Pensions is currently studying the coverage issues that relate to children with congenital problems obvious at birth (e.g. neural tube defects, cerebral palsy), genetic problems (which may or may not be obvious at birth), and developmental problems (e.g. those problems with many potential causes picked up during early life care by screening).

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## Item 15-02

[The assembly approved Item 15-02 as amended. See p. 11.]

*On Directing the Board of Pensions to Provide a Relief of Conscience Plan Report Annually—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.*

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Board of Pensions (BOP) to do the following:

1. Provide annually a Relief of Conscience Plan Report, and to confirm annually with particular churches their participation in the Relief of Conscience Plan.

2. Beginning no later than June 2009, provide an annual Relief of Conscience Plan Report that includes

a. specific details of the Relief Of Conscience (ROC) plan;

b. an explanation of the process for participation in the ROC plan;

c. an accounting of the total number of churches participating in the ROC plan in the previous calendar year;

d. an accounting of the total dollar figure ~~[spent on abortion procedures in the previous calendar year]~~ [paid under the relief of conscience program];

e. an accounting of the total dollar figure ~~[placed into funds to cover medical costs for adopted newborns in previous calendar year;]~~ [dispensed by the Board of Pensions for adoption programs.]

~~[f. an accounting of the total dollar figure distributed for medical costs of adopted newborns in the previous calendar year; and~~

~~[g. the specific process of application for plan members to request funds to cover medical costs of adopted newborns.]~~

3. ~~[Distribute this annual report to all PC(USA) congregations and Plan members, and post on the BOP web site.]~~ [Include this Relief of Conscience Plan report in the Annual Report of the Board of Pensions and make it available on the Board of Pensions' Web site.]

~~[4. Beginning no later than June 2009, send annual notification to each particular church participating in the ROC plan, confirming their inclusion in the Plan.~~

~~[5. Beginning with the 219th General Assembly (2010), include the Relief Of Conscience Plan Report with the Board of Pensions' annual report to the General Assembly.]”~~

### *Rationale*

The current Relief of Conscience (ROC) Plan went into effect in 1998, without a process to assure implementation.

Many pastors and sessions are unaware of the plan and how to request the Relief of Conscience process of dues separation for their congregation. A single page in the Benefits Handbook gives little detail about the plan (see appendix below).

Remembering Paul's admonition in matters of conscience to “Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other” (1 Cor 10:24), we ought to be more thorough and more consistent in our communication on the ROC plan. There are always new pastors and new sessions, unaware of the ROC plan. It is questionable whether a single reference in the handbook gives enough visibility to the availability of ROC dues separation.

There is no process established across presbyteries to provide consistency in the handling of session resolutions regarding ROC. Because this is a matter of deeply held conviction for pastors and congregations requesting the Relief of Conscience process, churches need to receive communication from the Board of Pensions acknowledging their request has been received and that indeed their dues are not being used to cover abortions.

Churches participating in the ROC plan are seeking evidence of the Plan's implementation, and contact with the BOP provides unclear information. (For example, a member of a church participating in the plan had several phone conversations with the BOP, seeking simple bookkeeping statistics of the plan for session discussions. No information was asked that would have breached any confidences, as names or localities were not requested. The BOP staff stated that specific financial statistics of abortion coverage are not even known, and are not directly related to the adoption funds.)

## APPENDIX

### *Dues separation for Relief of Conscience employing organizations*

The Board of Pensions distinguishes between employing organizations that have not sought relief and those certified by their presbyteries of jurisdiction to be Relief of Conscience employing organizations. Through the Relief of Conscience process, the Board of Pensions makes sure dues contributed by employing organizations that object to any medical coverage for abortion-related expenses will never be used to reimburse such expenses.

### *Relief of Conscience*

The Board of Pensions has a process that recognizes differing views among participating employing organizations about the appropriate response to problem pregnancies. The intent is to make sure dues contributed by employing organizations that object to any medical coverage for abortion-related expenses will never be used to reimburse such expenses.

At the same time, reflecting the church's affirmation of each woman's right to make a moral choice when confronted by a problem pregnancy, the Medical Plan provides coverage for abortion-related services, funded by the dues of those employing organizations that have not requested relief.

Established in 1992 and revised in 1998, the Relief of Conscience process separates the incoming dues stream between employing organizations that have not sought relief and those certified by their presbyteries of jurisdiction to be Relief of Conscience employing organizations. Medical claims for abortion procedures are paid from the non-Relief of Conscience dues stream. A dollar amount equal to the cost of abortion claims from the prior year is set aside from the Relief of Conscience dues stream and helps to fund the Board of Pensions' Adoption Assistance Grant program. Then, the dues streams are merged and all other medical claims and costs are paid from the merged dues stream.

The presbytery of jurisdiction grants Relief of Conscience to the employing organization and notifies the Board of Pensions to implement it. Sessions representing their congregations as employing organizations and minister members of presbyteries who are self-paying Benefits Plan members may seek Relief of Conscience. Relief of Conscience is granted to the organization that pays the dues.

The action continues for any succeeding incumbent of the church granted Relief of Conscience. If the pastor of a Relief of Conscience church changes service, the Relief of Conscience status does not follow to the new position.

The full coverage protection of the Medical Plan is available to all Plan members whether or not the church of service is a Relief of Conscience church.

For more information, please call the Board of Pensions.

Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Benefits Administration Handbook, p. 42

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 15-02, from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Board of Pensions to provide a report explaining the process for participating in the Relief of Conscience Plan, an annual confirmation to entities participating in the ROC Plan, and an account of expenditures related to abortion procedures and medical costs for adopted newborns.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the overture be disapproved.

*Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 15-02 be disapproved for the following reasons:

1. The overture misidentifies the judicatory responsible for the relief of conscience (ROC) plan.

a. Presbyteries grant relief of conscience to sessions representing their congregations as employing organizations and to minister members of presbyteries who are self-paying Benefits Plan members.

b. It is the responsibility of presbyteries to develop an appropriate process (if one does not exist) and communicate this process to each session and minister member in the presbytery, including a process of annual notification to ROC churches and members, if desired.

c. As the jurisdictions that grant relief of conscience, it is the responsibility of presbyteries to send the names of those participating in the ROC plan to the Board of Pensions. Presbyteries may choose to do this annually.

2. The overture requests information that, if provided, may violate members' right to privacy.

To protect members' privacy, the Board of Pensions does not release the number of nor the dollar amount spent on particular types of medical procedures. Particularly where the number of claims for a procedure is relatively small, such information could conceivably be used to attribute a procedure to a specific person.

3. Singling out abortion procedures' costs for reporting, or in other ways, implies a negative censure incompatible with the policy of the PC(USA) which states:

Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and insolvable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to address or decide each situation" (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, paragraph 27.090, *Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion*).

We affirm the ability and responsibility of women guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies" (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, paragraph 27.091, *Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion*).

4. The Board of Pensions' Adoption Assistance Program, financed through gifts, legacies, endowments, and half the Christmas Joy Offering, as well as the ROC set-aside (that is equal to the cost of abortion claims), provides additional monies for costs incurred in adoption. This program supports the church's policies to encourage adoption and to support alternatives to abortion for women and families facing problem pregnancies.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

Item 15-02 asks the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Board of Pensions (BOP) to provide a Relief of Conscience Plan Report every year and annually confirm the participation of particular churches in the Plan. By passing this overture, the General Assembly would also instruct the Board of Pensions about data to be included in the Relief of Conscience Plan Report, distribution and publicity of the Report, notification of churches participating in the Plan, and inclusion of the Report with the Board of Pensions' annual report to the General Assembly.

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) advises that this item be disapproved.



*Rationale*

Since 1998, PC(USA) has had a Relief of Conscience Plan. It is the appropriate responsibility of the presbyteries to develop a process that provides Relief of Conscience for churches that request it. Requests are sent from the presbyteries to the Board of Pensions.

Recommendation 2.d. directs the Board of Pensions to monitor and release data on particular medical procedures, specifically abortion, in order to report a dollar figure expended. Medical procedures are reported to the board by a code and are not reported in a way that can be conclusively determined if a pregnancy termination occurred. Additionally, Board of Pensions members trust the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respect their privacy under the law. The BOP cannot monitor the incidence of particular medical procedures.

Abortion is a legal procedure in the United States, and is an available therapy for physicians and their patients to pursue. As an insurer, the board pays for services rendered. Presbyterian policy states “the considered decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy can be a morally acceptable, though certainly not the only or required, decision” (*Special Committee on Problem Pregnancy and Abortion*, 204th General Assembly (1992) *Minutes*, 1992, Part I, paragraph 27.093). Women who are members of the Board of Pensions are entitled to make reproductive decisions with full confidence that health care providers and the Board of Pensions protect their privacy.

Where does this line of inquiry end? There are other medical procedures about which Presbyterians may have ethical concerns (involving reproductive technologies, plastic surgeries, erectile dysfunction, gastrointestinal procedures), but as long as medical treatments are within the law, members have a right to avail themselves of these procedures with an assumption of complete privacy. One person’s right to privacy should not be at risk to satisfy another’s relief of conscience. In order to protect complete anonymity, financial statistics on abortion coverage should not be maintained or released by the Board of Pensions.

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**BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 15-02**

*Comment on Item 15-02—From the Board of Pensions.*

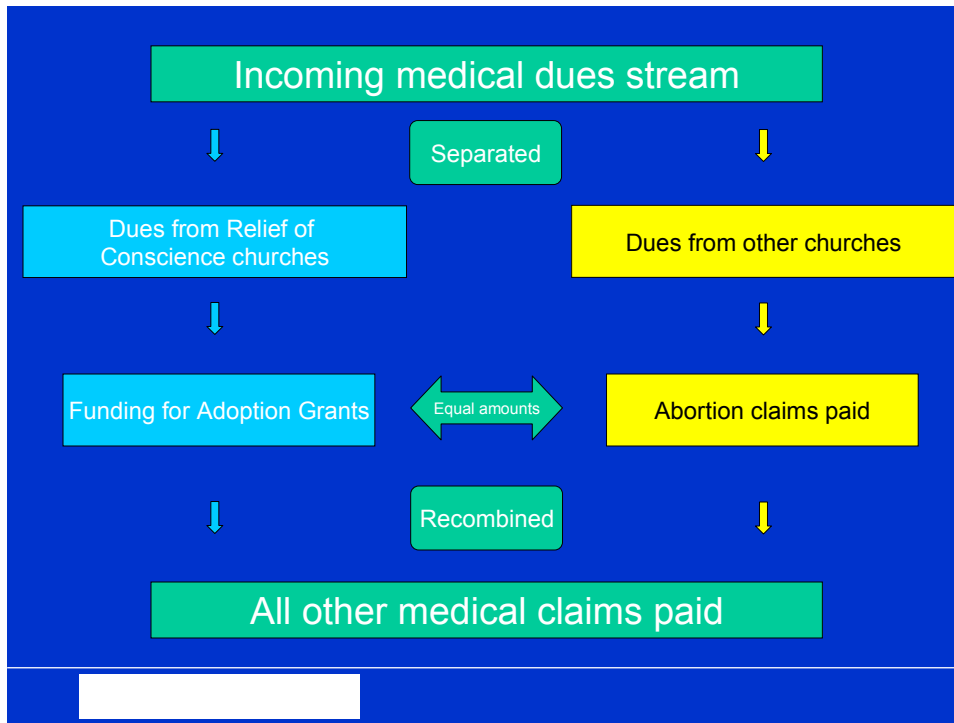
The Board of Pensions advises that the General Assembly disapprove Item 15-02.

*Development and Implementation of Relief of Conscience*

The General Assembly and the Board of Pensions (BOP) worked for years to establish an effective program to relieve the conscience of those dues-paying organizations that objected to the potential use of their dues to pay for medical costs that may be related to abortion procedures. The initial Relief of Conscience process was adopted in response to an overture in 1991. Since that time, the program was reviewed and revised through subsequent General Assembly actions until its current form was adopted in 1998. The BOP has always sought out the opinions and concerns of members representative of the broad spectrum of opinions on reproductive rights of women and moral opposition to abortion procedures present in the PC(USA).

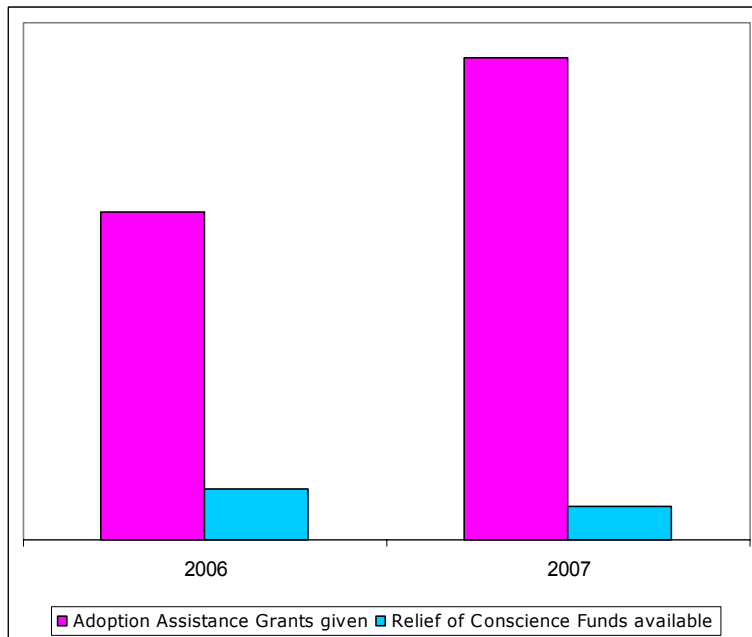
Based on those conversations and approved by General Assembly, the Relief of Conscience (ROC) administrative process allows a church<sup>1</sup> to take a position of conscience that it objects to the possibility that its Medical Plan dues may provide reimbursement for an abortion procedure and requests that its presbytery grant it ROC status. Once the presbytery grants that ROC status and notifies the BOP, the church is placed on the ROC roll. The Medical Plan dues of ROC status members are not used to pay abortion-related procedures; instead a proportionate amount of the ROC dues are diverted into an assistance program that provides adoption expense grants.

As shown on the following slide, incoming medical dues are separated into two streams. Those from ROC churches are carefully tracked to ensure that they are insulated from paying abortion claims.



Abortion claims are paid exclusively from the non-ROC stream and all other medical claims are then paid from the combined remainder.

As also demonstrated on the slide above, a dollar amount equal to the prior years' abortion claims is set aside as partial funding for the Adoption Assistance Grant program. More information about those grants is available here. This dollar amount provides a very small portion of the funding for the Adoption Assistance Grants, as shown below:



*Figures and Statistics*

As the administrator of the Medical Plan, the BOP does not publish statistics related to the number or cost of abortion related procedures covered under the Medical Plan. The BOP only uses Medical Plan information for the payment of claims and related health plan administration operations. This is a matter of policy and is based on a concern for the privacy of our Benefits Plan members.

*Whose Conscience?*

The BOP administers the Medical Plan uniformly based on the fact that the denomination, while expressing reservations about some abortion decisions that may be made, affirms the “ability and responsibility of a woman to make good moral choices” (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 369). Plan members make their own personal choices in the face of a problem pregnancy, taking into account the church’s stance, their own conscience, their personal circumstances and health status, and the available medical options. Thus, the full benefits of the Medical Plan are available to all Plan members, including those serving at churches with ROC status.

Just as this administrative process insulates a ROC church from being forced to pay for an abortion, no Plan member’s medical treatment decisions are being restricted by the ROC status of their employer. Each church has the right to have its dues treated according to its conscience, and each Plan member has the right to seek medical care according to her/his conscience.

*Final General Comments on Relief of Conscience*

The 204th General Assembly (1992) that approved the Report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion, also considered a report from the BOP’s Committee on Conscience. In approving their report, the General Assembly commented:

Relief of Conscience is most appropriately seen in the ethical context of life together as a community of God’s people, rather than as a debate about the ethics of a particular issue like abortion. The overriding concern of relief of conscience issues has to do with the unity of Christ’s church and living out that unity in spite of different perceptions about what God, who alone is Lord of the conscience, would lead us to do or believe through our interpretation of Scripture. The ethics of life together are ignored, if not abused, when either of these conditions prevail:

- a. Those seeking relief of conscience more highly value the triumph of their particular position than they value finding a way by which they may live together peaceably with those from whom they seek to differentiate their belief;
- b. Those who hold the prevailing view of the community more highly value the complete triumph of their position than they value allowing those seeking relief of conscience to find a way to remain in community with them.

The Benefits Plan of the Board of Pensions is a highly visible and tangible expression of our commitment to life together as God’s people in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is a plan for the whole church, not a plan for a collective of individuals. [*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 96–97].

The BOP values all efforts that seek to allow Presbyterians of every stripe to live and work in community.

*Specific Provisions of Item 15-02*

The overture requests several different categories of information be made available and that the BOP make specific communications related to the Relief of Conscience administrative process.

The first category of information, requested in Recommendations 2.a., 2.b., 2.f., and 2.g., is information already available.

- In the case of Recommendations 2.a. and 2.b., this information is available in the BOP Benefits Administration Handbook (an excerpt of which is the appendix to this overture). The complete description of the process for participation in the Relief of Conscience administrative process, found in the Administration Handbook is:

The presbytery of jurisdiction grants Relief of Conscience to the employing organization and notifies the Board of Pensions to implement it. Sessions representing their congregations as employing organizations and minister members of presbytery who are self-paying Benefits Plan members may seek Relief of Conscience. Relief of Conscience is granted to the organization that pays the dues.

It truly is no more complicated than that. A church or self-paying member requests Relief of Conscience from their presbytery. The presbytery grants it and notifies the BOP.

- On Recommendation 2.f., the total paid out to plan members in the form of Adoption Assistance Grants is already listed as part of the BOP reports to the General Assembly. It may be found in the agency summary.
- Considering Recommendation 2.g., there is no administrative paperwork required for application for an Adoption Assistance Grant. The complete process is described on the BOP Website as:

To be eligible for a grant, the parent must be an active member of the Benefits Plan and employed by a local church, governing body, General Assembly agency, or an organization under the control or operation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the time of the adoption.

A grant of \$3,000 for each adoption will be available when the Board of Pensions receives the final legal adoption decree. The program is effective for adoptions that occur on or after January 1, 2006.

The second category of information, requested in Recommendations 2.d. and 2.e., is information that may not be published. These points request the publication of information about medical claims. As mentioned in the background section above, the BOP does not publish statistics related to abortion or abortion-related procedures covered under the Medical Plan. This is a matter of policy and is based on a concern for the privacy of our Benefits Plan members.

Recommendation 2.c. requests an accounting of the number of churches that have been granted Relief of Conscience status. This figure is available upon request to the corporate secretary of the BOP. As of April 8, 2008, ROC status has been granted to 512 churches.

The fourth recommendation of the overture asks the BOP to directly verify the continuation of ROC status with each congregation each year. As noted above, the BOP does not grant relief, presbyteries do. As such, the BOP is willing to report to each presbytery's stated clerk the list of their constituent churches that the BOP has recorded as having been granted relief, but the presbytery should be the governing body that verifies a church's status.

As the overture requests a combination of information already available, information that may not be published, and information that should come from presbyteries not the BOP, the Board of Pensions advises it be disapproved.

#### Endnote

1. Throughout this comment, "church" should be understood to mean a particular church or another employing organization, such as a middle governing body, a validated mission organization or another dues-paying organization with a relationship to the PC(USA), whose staff are members of the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA).

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## Item 15-03

[The assembly approved Item 15-03. See p. 11.]

**The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation to**

- 1. continue its churchwide gifts program, as well as utilize the Foundation's subsidiary, New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., for the benefit of churches, church organizations, and individuals who wish to use the foregoing to make gifts as an expression of Christian faith and stewardship;**
- 2. continue promoting appropriate investment in New Covenant Funds, a family of mutual funds organized with participation by the Foundation in July 1999, which are managed in a way that is consistent with the social-witness principles of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through New Covenant Funds Distributors, Inc.; and**
- 3. explore and initiate ways to enhance its expertise and capacity in support of planned and deferred giving (including wills emphasis) and to explore the services of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A. and New Covenant Funds, that will allow these programs and entities to be ever more effective contributors toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission for the Glory of God.**

#### *Rationale*

Each year, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation trustees ask the General Assembly to endorse the Foundation's work in support of mission and ministry throughout the church. This unbroken series of affirmations allows the Foundation to confidently pursue its ministry among congregations, presbyteries, synods, related organizations, and individual Presbyterians. General Assembly validation of our vital work on behalf of mission and ministry is essential to our effectiveness throughout the church.

A total of 84.3 million dollars was made available through the Foundation for mission in 2007. Additionally, as a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation's efforts to nurture the accumulated resources of Presbyterians to further the mission of the church, call us to grow the resources which support mission giving for the future. New gifts and accounts amounting to almost \$ 40.9 million, including \$ 13.8 million in life income plans, and \$ 27.1 million in current gifts were received over the course of the year.

These striking results are a testament to the power of giving witnessed by the Foundation as it lives its goal of bringing people and mission together. Because of the generosity of faithful Presbyterians, over the past five years the Foundation has made available more than 381.1 million dollars for the work and mission of the church.

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## Item 15-04

[The assembly approved Item 15-04. See p. 11.]

**The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) accept the Foundation's amended bylaws, which have been presented to the General Assembly Council and are expected to be approved by the General Assembly Council in April 2008. [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added is shown as bold, italic.]**

**BYLAWS  
OF  
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) FOUNDATION**  
*(As Amended Fall 2003)*  
*(As Amended February 23, 2008)*

**(AND FOUNDATION CONSTITUENT CORPORATIONS  
LISTED IN ANNEX A HERETO)**  
*(Annex A Amended January 1, 2007)*

**ARTICLE I  
Offices and Fiscal Year**

**Section 1.01. Offices.** The Fiduciary Corporation may have offices at such places within or without the United States of America as the Board of Trustees may from time to time appoint or the business of the Fiduciary Corporation requires.

**Section 1.02. Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the Fiduciary Corporation shall begin on the first day of ~~January~~ *April* in each year.

**ARTICLE II  
Trustees and Members**

**Section 2.01. Selection of Trustees; Members.** The persons who shall be selected from time to time by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ("General Assembly") to be the Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, ("Fiduciary Corporation") shall by virtue of their offices, constitute the Board of Trustees of each Corporation listed in Annex A hereto (which Corporations so listed are referred to collectively in these bylaws as "Foundation Constituent Corporations") and, to the extent that these bylaws are applicable to Foundation Constituent Corporations incorporated under the laws of Illinois, shall also be the members of such Corporations; otherwise the Foundation Constituent Corporations shall have no members as such. The Fiduciary Corporation shall have no members, as such, except the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, hereinafter sometimes referred to as the "Central Treasury Corporation", which shall be a member of the Fiduciary Corporation without vote.

**Section 2.02. Number and Tenure of Trustees.** The Trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation shall be in such number, and for such terms, and may include such a number of ex officio trustees with voice and vote, who shall be elected in such a manner, as the General Assembly may determine. The permanent complement of the Board of Trustees shall consist of nineteen (19) members elected by the General Assembly for four-year terms plus the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council ex officio. An elected Trustee shall be eligible to serve two terms, for a total of eight (8) years. Beginning in 2006, no person may serve more than two terms, full or partial. The number of Trustees may be increased or decreased at any time, as determined by the General Assembly. Persons elected to the Board of Trustees shall begin their term of service immediately upon the adjournment of the General Assembly by which they are elected, and continue for one meeting following the election of their successors.

**Section 2.03. Emeritus Trustees.** Any individual elected as Emeritus Trustee prior to the date of this amendment shall continue to serve in such position with voice but not vote until the conclusion of that term, and will not be included in the total number of Trustees as set forth in Section 2.02 above. After the date of this amendment, no Emeritus Trustees shall be elected.

**ARTICLE III**  
**Board of Trustees**

**Section 3.01. Meetings of Trustees.** Every meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation shall be, without further notice or action, a meeting of the Board of Trustees of each of the Foundation Constituent Corporations.

**Section 3.02. Powers; Liability.**

(a) The Board of Trustees shall have full power to conduct, manage, and direct the business and affairs of the Fiduciary Corporation; and all powers of the Fiduciary Corporation are hereby granted to and vested in the Board of Trustees.

(b) A Trustee of the Fiduciary Corporation shall not be personally liable for monetary damages as such for any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless the Trustee has breached or failed to perform the duties of his or her office under 42 Pa.C.S. Section 8363 and the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of a Trustee pursuant to any criminal statute or the liability of a Trustee for the payment of taxes pursuant to local, state or Federal law.

**Section 3.03. Organization.** At every meeting of the Board of Trustees, the chair or, in the absence of the chair, the vice chair, or a chair chosen by a majority of the Trustees present, shall preside, and the secretary, or, in the absence of the secretary, an assistant secretary, or, in the absence of the secretary and the assistant secretaries, any person appointed by the chair of the meeting shall act as secretary.

**Section 3.04. Place of Meeting.** Meetings of the Board of Trustees may be held at such place within or without the United States of America as the Board of Trustees may from time to time appoint, or as may be designated in the notice of the meeting.

**Section 3.05. Regular Meetings.** Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held at such time and in such place as shall be designated from time to time by resolution of the Board of Trustees; and prior to the meeting designated as the annual meeting for organization, the chair and vice chair shall make recommendations for the appointment of members to committees and election of officers to be voted upon by the Board at the organizational meeting. ~~Members of the Advisory Leadership Team and officers~~ **Officers** may also be elected at any other meeting of the Trustees. At every regular meeting, the Trustees shall transact such business as may properly be brought before the meeting. Notice of regular meetings need not be given unless otherwise required by law or these bylaws.

**Section 3.06. Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held whenever called by the chair of the Board of Trustees or by one-tenth or more of the Trustees by telephone or in writing at least 48 hours (in the case of notice by mail) before the time at which the meeting is to be held. Every such notice shall state the time and place of the meeting.

**Section 3.07. Quorum, Manner of Acting and Adjournment.** Twelve (12) Trustees shall be present at each meeting in order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Every Trustee, whether elected by the General Assembly or ex-officio, shall be entitled to one vote. Except as otherwise specified in the Articles of Incorporation or these bylaws or provided by statute, the acts of a majority of the Trustees present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the acts of the Board of Trustees. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the Trustees present and voting may adjourn the meeting from time to time until a quorum is present. The Trustees shall act only as a Board of Trustees and individual Trustees shall have no power as such, except that any action which may be taken at a meeting of the Trustees may be taken without a meeting if a consent or consents in writing setting forth the action so taken shall be signed by all of the Trustees in office and shall be filed with the secretary of the Fiduciary Corporation.

**Section 3.08. ~~Advisory Leadership Team and Other Committees.~~** The Board of Trustees shall, by resolution adopted by a majority of the Trustees in office, establish an Advisory Leadership Team of not less than five members, one of whom shall be the chair of the Board of Trustees, and may by like action establish **an Executive Committee and may by like action establish** one or more other committees, each such ~~other~~ committee to consist of two or more Trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation. The Board may designate one or more Trustees as alternate members of any committee, who may replace any absent or disqualified member at any meeting of the committee. In the absence or disqualification of a member, and the alternate or alternates, if any, designated for such member, of any committee, the member or members thereof present at any meeting and not disqualified from voting, whether or not the member or members constitute a quorum, may unanimously appoint another Trustee to act at the meeting in the place of any such absent or disqualified member. Each committee of the Board shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

***The Board of Trustees shall function primarily as a body of the whole. In cases of emergency, when the full Board cannot be convened to act as a body of the whole, the Board chair, vice chair and the chairs of the Audit and Corporate Compliance,***

***Board Development and Human Resources, Investment, and Vision and Outreach Committees shall constitute an Executive Committee and*** ~~The Advisory Leadership Team~~ shall have and exercise all of the powers and authority of the Board of Trustees in the management of the business and affairs of the Fiduciary Corporation, except that the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ ***Executive Committee*** shall not have any power or authority as to the following:

- (1) The adoption, amendment or repeal of the bylaws, or the adoption of any amendment of articles or plan or merger, division or consolidation or the approving of the sale, lease or exchange of all or substantially all of the assets of the Fiduciary Corporation or of the dissolution of the Fiduciary Corporation.
- (2) The amendment or repeal of any resolutions of the Board.
- (3) Action on matters committed to a committee having responsibility for supervising or effecting securities transactions.

No committee of the Board of Trustees, other than the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ ***Executive Committee*** or a committee having responsibility for supervising or effecting securities transactions, shall, pursuant to resolution of the Board of Trustees or otherwise, exercise any of the powers or authority vested by these bylaws, the Nonprofit Corporation Law of 1988 or other applicable law in the Board of Trustees as such, but any other committee of the Board of Trustees may make recommendations to the Board of Trustees or ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ ***Executive Committee*** or a committee having responsibility for supervising or effecting securities transactions concerning the exercise of such powers and authority.

A majority of the Trustees in office designated to a committee, or Trustees designated to replace them as provided in this section, shall be present at each meeting to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and the acts of a majority of the Trustees in office designated to a committee or their replacements shall be the acts of the committee.

Each committee shall keep regular minutes of its proceedings in a book or books to be kept for that purpose and shall report such proceedings periodically to the Board of Trustees.

Sections 3.05, 3.06 and 3.07 shall be applicable to committees of the Board of Trustees.

**Section 3.09. Compensation and Expenses.** Except as permitted by the last sentence of Section 5.14 of these bylaws, no compensation of any kind shall be paid directly or indirectly by the Fiduciary Corporation to, and no loan or other extension of credit shall be made for the benefit of, any Trustee, as such, or as an officer or employee of the Fiduciary Corporation. Trustees may be reimbursed for expenses in a manner consistent with any applicable policies adopted by the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“General Assembly Council”) or the General Assembly.

**Section 3.10. Personal Liability of Trustees.** A Trustee of the Fiduciary Corporation shall not be personally liable, as such, for monetary damages for any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:

- (1) The Trustee has breached or failed to perform the duties of his or her office under ~~42 15 Pa.C.S. Section 8363~~ **5712**; and
- (2) The breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness.

The provisions of this Section shall not apply to:

- (1) The responsibility or liability of a Trustee pursuant to any criminal statute; or
- (2) The liability of a Trustee for the payment of taxes pursuant to local, State or Federal law.

The provisions of this Section are cumulative of and shall be in addition to and independent of any and all:

- (1) Other limitations on the liabilities of Trustees of this Fiduciary Corporation, as such, whether such limitations arise under or are created by any statute, rule of law, provision of the articles of incorporation, agreement, vote of the General Assembly, disinterested Trustees or otherwise; and
- (2) Rights of indemnification existing under these bylaws or otherwise.

In any action, suit or proceeding involving the application of the provisions of this Section, the party or parties challenging the right of a Trustee to the benefits of this Section shall have the burden of proof.

**Article IV**  
**Notice - Waivers - Meetings**

**Section 4.01. Notice, What Constitutes.** Whenever written notice is required to be given to any person under the provisions of the articles, these bylaws, the Nonprofit Corporation Law of 1988 or other applicable law, it may be given to such person, either personally or by sending a copy thereof by first class mail, postage prepaid, by telegram, charges prepaid, by overnight delivery, charges prepaid, by facsimile, with confirmation of delivery, or by electronic mail, to his or her address, fax number, or electronic mail address appearing on the books of the Fiduciary Corporation, or in the case of Trustees, supplied by the Trustee to the Fiduciary Corporation for the purpose of notice. If the notice is sent by mail, or by telegraph, or overnight delivery, it shall be deemed to have been given to the person entitled thereto when deposited in the United States mail or with a telegraph office or overnight delivery service for transmission to such person. If the notice is sent by facsimile, it shall be deemed to have been given when a written report of successful transmission has been received. If the notice is sent by electronic mail, it shall be deemed to have been given upon completion of transmission. A notice of meeting shall specify the place, day and hour of the meeting and any other information required by law or these bylaws.

When a meeting is adjourned, it shall not be necessary to give any notice of the adjourned meeting or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting, other than by announcement at the meeting at which such adjournment is taken.

**Section 4.02. Waiver of Notice.** Whenever any written notice is required to be given under the provisions of the articles, these bylaws, the Nonprofit Corporation Law of 1972 or other applicable law, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Except as otherwise required by this section and by Section 8.06 of these bylaws, neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of a meeting need be specified in the waiver of notice of such meeting.

Attendance of a person at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a person attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting, at the beginning of the meeting, to the transaction of any business because the meeting was not lawfully called or convened.

**Section 4.03. Modification of Proposal Contained in Notice.** Whenever the language of a proposed resolution is included in a written notice of a meeting, the meeting considering the resolution may without further notice adopt it with such clarifying or other amendments as do not enlarge its original purpose.

**Section 4.04. Conference Telephone Meetings.** One or more persons may participate in a meeting of the Board or of a committee of the Board by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this section shall constitute presence in person at such meeting.

**ARTICLE V**  
**Officers**

**Section 5.01. Number, Qualifications and Designation.** The officers of the Fiduciary Corporation shall be a president, one or more vice presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, and such other officers as may be elected in accordance with the provisions of Section 5.03 of this Article. Any number of offices may be held by the same person. Officers may but need not be Trustees or members of the Fiduciary Corporation, and shall be natural persons of full age except that the treasurer or assistant treasurer may be a corporation. The Board of Trustees may elect from among the members of the Board a chair of the Board and a vice chair of the Board who shall be officers of the Fiduciary Corporation. ~~The chair of the Board shall be selected from among the members of the Advisory Leadership Team.~~

**Section 5.02. Selection and Term of Office.** The officers of the Fiduciary Corporation shall be selected and their terms of office shall be determined as follows:

- (1) The president, any vice presidents, the treasurer and other executive officers of the Fiduciary Corporation, except those elected by delegated authority pursuant to Section 5.03, shall be elected by the Board of Trustees ~~with the concurrence of the General Assembly Council~~. The president shall be elected for a term of four years, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly, and shall be eligible for reelection. Any vice presidents, the treasurer and other executive officers of the Fiduciary Corporation shall be elected for the term of their employment with the Fiduciary Corporation.
- (2) The office of secretary shall be comprised of a recording secretary and a corporate secretary. The recording secretary shall be the person for the time being in office as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with one or more associates in that office to serve as assistant recording secretary. The corporate secre-



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tary shall be the person for the time being in office as the General Counsel of the Fiduciary Corporation, with one or more associates in that office to serve as assistant corporate secretary.

(3) Subordinate officers elected by delegated authority pursuant to Section 5.03 shall be governed as to their duties and term of service by the terms and conditions of their election.

**Section 5.03. Officers, Committees and Agents.** The Board of Trustees may from time to time elect such officers and appoint such committees, employees or other agents as the business of the Fiduciary Corporation may require, including one or more assistant secretaries, and one or more assistant treasurers, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in these bylaws, or as the Board of Trustees may from time to time determine. The Board of Trustees may delegate to any officer or committee of the Fiduciary Corporation the power to elect subordinate or other officers and to retain or appoint employees or other agents, or committees thereof, and to prescribe the authority and duties of such subordinate or other officers, committees, employees or other agents. ~~Administrative staff positions, including all officers specified in Section 5.02, may be authorized by the Fiduciary Corporation only with the concurrence of the General Assembly Council.~~

**Section 5.04. Resignations.** Any officer or agent may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board of Trustees, or to the president or the secretary of the Fiduciary Corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

**Section 5.05. Removal.** Any elected or appointed officer, committee member, employee or other agent of the Fiduciary Corporation may be removed, either for or without cause, by the Board of Trustees or other authority which elected or appointed such officer, committee, employee or other agent whenever in the judgment of such authority the best interests of the Fiduciary Corporation will be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the contract rights of any person so removed.

**Section 5.06. Vacancies.** A vacancy in any elective or appointive office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause, shall be filled by the Board of Trustees (~~with, where appropriate, the concurrence of the General Assembly Council and,~~ in the case of the president, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly) or by the authority to which the power to fill such office has been delegated pursuant to Section 5.03 of this Article, as the case may be, and if the office is one for which a term is prescribed by or pursuant to these bylaws, shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term. The refusal of the General Assembly to confirm the election of a president shall result in the creation of a vacancy in that office.

**Section 5.07. General Powers.** All officers of the Fiduciary Corporation, as between themselves and the Fiduciary Corporation, shall respectively have such authority and perform such duties in the management of the property and affairs of the Fiduciary Corporation as may be determined by resolutions or orders of the Board of Trustees, or, in the absence of controlling provisions in resolutions or orders of the Board of Trustees, as may be provided in these bylaws.

**Section 5.08. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Board.** The chair of the Board, or in his or her absence, the vice chair of the Board, shall preside at all meetings of the members of the Board of Trustees, and shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be requested of such officers by the Board of Trustees or the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ **Executive Committee**.

**Section 5.09. The President.** The president shall be the chief executive officer of the Fiduciary Corporation and shall have general supervision over the activities and operations of the Fiduciary Corporation, subject, however, to the control of the Board of Trustees. The president shall sign, execute and acknowledge, in the name of the Fiduciary Corporation, deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts or other instruments, authorized by the Board of Trustees, except expressly delegated by the Board of Trustees, or by these bylaws, to some other officer or agent of the Fiduciary Corporation; and, in general, shall perform all duties incident to the office of president, and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to the president by the Board of Trustees or the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ **Executive Committee**.

**Section 5.10. The Vice Presidents.** The vice presidents shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to them by the Board of Trustees, the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ **Executive Committee**, or the president.

**Section 5.11. The Secretary.** The recording secretary, or assistant recording secretary, shall attend all meetings of the Board of Trustees and shall record all the votes of the Trustees and the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees in a book or books to be kept for that purpose. The corporate secretary, or an assistant corporate secretary, shall see that notices are given and records and reports are filed and shall be the custodian of the seal of the Fiduciary Corporation and see that it is affixed to all documents to be executed on behalf of the Fiduciary Corporation under its seal; and, in general, shall perform

all duties incident to the office of corporate secretary, and such other duties relating thereto as may from time to time be assigned to the corporate secretary by the Board of Trustees, the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ *Executive Committee*, or the president.

**Section 5.12. The Treasurer.** The treasurer or an assistant treasurer shall have or provide for the custody of the funds or other property of the Fiduciary Corporation and shall keep a separate book of account of the same to his or her credit as treasurer; shall collect and receive or provide for the collection and receipt of moneys earned by or in any manner due to or received by the Fiduciary Corporation; shall deposit all funds in his or her custody as treasurer in such banks or other places of deposit (including the Central Treasury Corporation) as the Board of Trustees may from time to time designate; shall, whenever so required by the Board of Trustees, render an account showing his or her transactions as treasurer, and the financial condition of the Fiduciary Corporation; and, in general, shall discharge such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to the treasurer by the Board of Trustees, the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ *Executive Committee*, or the president.

**Section 5.13. Officers' Bonds.** Any officer shall give a bond for the faithful discharge of the duties of the office held by such officer in such sum, if any, and with such surety or sureties as the Board of Trustees shall require.

**Section 5.14. Salaries.** The salaries of the officers elected by the Board of Trustees shall be fixed from time to time or as may be designated by resolution of the Board. The salaries or other compensation of any other officers, employees and other agents shall be fixed from time to time by the authority to which the power to elect such officers or to retain or appoint such employees or other agents has been delegated pursuant to Section 5.03 of this Article. All salaries shall be consistent with any general salary structure established by the General Assembly Council. No full-time officer shall be prevented from receiving such salary or other compensation by reason of the fact that he or she is also a Trustee of the Fiduciary Corporation. See also Section 3.09 of these bylaws.

## ARTICLE VI Indemnification of Trustees, Officers, Etc.

### **Section 6.01. Scope of Indemnification.**

(a) The Fiduciary Corporation shall indemnify an indemnified representative against any liability incurred in connection with any proceeding in which the indemnified representative may be involved as a party or otherwise, by reason of the fact that such person is or was serving in an indemnified capacity, including without limitation any liability resulting from any actual or alleged breach or neglect of duty, error, misstatement or misleading statement, negligence, gross negligence or act giving rise to strict or products liability, except:

(1) where such indemnification is expressly prohibited by applicable law;

(2) where the conduct of the indemnified representative has been finally determined pursuant to Section 6.06(d) or otherwise to constitute willful misconduct or recklessness within the meaning of 42 Pa.CS Section 8365(b) or any superseding provision of law sufficient in the circumstances to bar indemnification against liabilities arising from the conduct;

(3) to the extent the liability is finally determined pursuant to Section 6.06(d) or otherwise to be based upon or attributable to the indemnified representative gaining any personal pecuniary profit to which such indemnified representative was not legally entitled; or

(4) to the extent such indemnification has been finally determined in a final adjudication pursuant to Section 6.06(d) to be otherwise unlawful.

(b) If an indemnified representative is entitled to indemnification in respect of a portion, but not all, of any liabilities to which such person may be subject, the Fiduciary Corporation shall indemnify such indemnified representative to the maximum extent for such portion of the liabilities.

(c) The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the indemnified representative is not entitled to indemnification.

(d) For purposes of this Article:

(1) "indemnified capacity" means any and all past, present and future service by an indemnified representative in one or more capacities as a Trustee, officer, employee or agent of the Fiduciary Corporation or a Foundation Constituent

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Corporation, or, at the request of the Fiduciary Corporation, as a director, officer, employee, agent, fiduciary or trustee of another Fiduciary Corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other entity or enterprise;

(2) “indemnified representative” means any and all Trustees, officers and employees of the Fiduciary Corporation, and any other person designated as an indemnified representative by the Board of Trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation (which may, but need not, include any person serving, at the request of the Fiduciary Corporation, as a director, officer, employee, agent, fiduciary or trustee of another Corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other entity or enterprise);

(3) “liability” means any damage, judgment, amount paid in settlement, fine, penalty, punitive damages, excise tax assessed with respect to an employee benefit plan, or cost or expense of any nature (including, without limitation, attorneys’ fees and disbursements); and

(4) “proceeding” means any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, appeal or other proceeding of any nature, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, whether formal or informal, and whether brought by or in the right of the Fiduciary Corporation, a class of its security holders, if any, or otherwise.

**Section 6.02. Proceedings Initiated by Indemnified Representative.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article, the Fiduciary Corporation shall not indemnify under this Article an indemnified representative for any liability incurred in a proceeding initiated (which shall not be deemed to include counter-claims or affirmative defenses) or participated in as an intervenor or amicus curiae by the person seeking indemnification unless such initiation of or participation in the proceeding is authorized, either before or after its commencement, by the affirmative vote of a majority of a quorum of the Trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation. This section does not apply to reimbursement of expenses incurred in successfully prosecuting or defending an arbitration under Section 6.06(d) or otherwise successfully prosecuting or defending the rights of an indemnified representative granted by or pursuant to this Article.

**Section 6.03. Advancing Expenses.** The Fiduciary Corporation shall pay the expenses (including attorneys’ fees and disbursements) incurred in good faith by a Trustee or officer and may, by act of the Board of Trustees (including the votes or consents of interested Trustees), pay the expenses (including attorneys’ fees and disbursements) incurred in good faith by any other indemnified representative in advance of the final disposition of a proceeding described in Section 6.01 upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the indemnified representative to repay such amount if it shall ultimately be determined pursuant to Section 6.06(d) or otherwise that such person is not entitled to be indemnified by the Fiduciary Corporation pursuant to this Article. The financial ability of an indemnified representative to repay an advance shall not be a prerequisite to the making of such advance.

**Section 6.04. Securing of Indemnification Obligations.** To further effect, satisfy or secure the indemnification obligations provided herein or otherwise, the Fiduciary Corporation may maintain insurance, obtain a letter of credit, act as self-insurer, create a reserve, trust, escrow, cash collateral or other fund or account, enter into indemnification agreements, pledge or grant a security interest in any assets or properties of the Fiduciary Corporation, or use any other mechanism or arrangement whatsoever in such amounts, at such costs, and upon such other terms and conditions as the Board of Trustees shall deem appropriate. Absent fraud, the determination of the Board of Trustees with respect to such amounts, costs, terms and conditions shall be conclusive against all security holders, if any, officers and Trustees and shall not be subject to voidability.

**Section 6.05. Payment of Indemnification.** An indemnified representative who is entitled to indemnification shall be entitled thereto within 30 days after a written request for such indemnification has been delivered to the secretary of the Fiduciary Corporation.

**Section 6.06. Indemnification Procedure.**

(a) An indemnified representative shall use such indemnified representative’s best efforts to notify promptly the secretary of the Fiduciary Corporation of the commencement of any proceeding or the occurrence of any event which might give rise to a liability under this Article, but the failure so to notify the Fiduciary Corporation shall not relieve the Fiduciary Corporation for any liability which it may have to the indemnified representative under this Article or otherwise.

(b) The Fiduciary Corporation shall be entitled, upon notice to any such indemnified representative, to assume the defense of any proceeding with counsel reasonably satisfactory to the indemnified representative, or a majority of the indemnified representatives involved in such proceeding if there be more than one. If the Fiduciary Corporation notifies the indemnified representative of its election to defend the proceeding, the Fiduciary Corporation shall have no liability for the expenses (including attorneys’ fees and disbursements) of the indemnified representative incurred in connection with the defense of such proceeding subsequent to such notice, unless (i) such expenses (including attorneys’ fees and disbursements) have been authorized by the Fiduciary Corporation, (ii) the Fiduciary Corporation shall not in fact have employed counsel reasonably satisfactory to such

indemnified representative or indemnified representatives to assume the defense of such proceeding, or (iii) it shall have been determined pursuant to Section 6.06(d) that the indemnified representative was entitled to indemnification to the benefits of this Article shall have the burden of proof. The Fiduciary Corporation shall reimburse an indemnified representative for such expenses under this Article or otherwise. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the indemnified representative may elect to retain counsel at the indemnified representative's own cost and expense to participate in the defense of such proceeding.

(c) The Fiduciary Corporation shall not be required to obtain the consent of the indemnified representative to the settlement of any proceeding which the Fiduciary Corporation has undertaken to defend if the Fiduciary Corporation assumes full and sole responsibility for such settlement and the settlement grants the indemnified representative an unqualified release in respect of all liabilities at issue in the proceeding. Whether or not the Fiduciary Corporation has elected to assume the defense of any proceeding, no indemnified representative shall have any right to enter into any full or partial settlement of the proceeding without the prior written consent of the Fiduciary Corporation (which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld), nor shall the Fiduciary Corporation be liable for any amount paid by an indemnified representative pursuant to any settlement to which the Fiduciary Corporation has not so consented.

(d) Any dispute related to the right to indemnification as provided under this Article shall be decided only by arbitration in the metropolitan area in which the principal executive offices of the Fiduciary Corporation are located at the time, in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules then in effect of the American Arbitration Association, before a panel of three arbitrators, one of whom shall be selected by the Fiduciary Corporation, the second of whom shall be selected by the indemnified representative and the third of whom shall be selected by the other two arbitrators. In the absence of the American Arbitration Association, or if for any reason arbitration under the arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association cannot be initiated, and if one of the parties fails or refuses to select an arbitrator, or the arbitrators selected by the Fiduciary Corporation and the indemnified representative cannot agree on the selection of the third arbitrator within 30 days after such time as the Fiduciary Corporation and the indemnified representative have each been notified of the selection of the other's arbitrator, the necessary arbitrator or arbitrators shall be selected by the presiding judge of the court of general jurisdiction in such metropolitan area. Each arbitrator selected as provided in this subsection is required to be or have been a director or executive officer of a corporation whose shares of common stock were listed during at least one year of such service on the New York Stock Exchange or the American Stock Exchange or quoted on the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations System. The party or parties challenging the right of an indemnified representative to the benefits of this Article shall have the burden of proof. The Fiduciary Corporation shall reimburse an indemnified representative for the expenses (including attorneys' fees and disbursements) incurred in successfully prosecuting or defending such arbitration. Any award entered by the arbitrators shall be final, binding and nonappealable and judgment may be entered thereon by any party in accordance with applicable law in any court of competent jurisdiction, except that the Fiduciary Corporation shall be entitled to interpose as a defense in any such judicial enforcement proceeding any prior final judicial determination adverse to the indemnified representative under Section 6.01(a)(2) or (3) in a proceeding not directly involving indemnification under this Article. This arbitration provision shall be specifically enforceable.

(e) Upon a payment to any indemnified representative under this Article, the Fiduciary Corporation shall be subrogated to the extent of such payment to all of the rights of the indemnified representative to recover against any person for such liability, and the indemnified representative shall execute all documents and instruments required and shall take such other action as may be necessary to secure such rights, including the execution of such documents as may be necessary for the Fiduciary Corporation to bring suit to enforce such rights.

**Section 6.07. Discharge of Duty.** An indemnified representative shall be deemed to have discharged such person's duty to the Fiduciary Corporation if he or she has relied in good faith on information, advice or an opinion, report or statement prepared by:

- (1) one or more officers or employees of the Fiduciary Corporation whom such indemnified representative reasonably believes to be reliable and competent with respect to the matter presented;
- (2) legal counsel, public accountants or other persons as to matters that the indemnified representative reasonably believes are within the persons' professional or expert competence; or
- (3) a committee of the Board of Trustees on which he or she does not serve as to matters within its area of designated authority, which committee he or she reasonably believes to merit confidence.

**Section 6.08. Contract Rights; Amendment or Repeal.** All rights to indemnification under this Article shall be deemed a contract between the Fiduciary Corporation and the indemnified representatives pursuant to which the Fiduciary Corporation and each indemnified representative intend to be legally bound. Any repeal, amendment or modification hereof shall be prospective only and shall not affect any rights or obligations then existing.

**Section 6.09. Scope of Article.** The indemnification of indemnified representatives, as authorized by this Article, shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification or advancement of expenses may be entitled under any statute, agreement, vote of the General Assembly or disinterested Trustees or otherwise, both as to action in an official capacity and as to action in any other capacity. The indemnification provided by or granted pursuant to this Article shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be an indemnified representative in respect of matters arising prior to such time, and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, administrators and personal representatives of such a person.

**Section 6.10. Reliance on Provisions.** Each person who shall act as an indemnified representative of the Fiduciary Corporation shall be deemed to be doing so in reliance upon the rights of indemnification provided by this Article.

**Section 6.11 Interpretation.** The provisions of this Article have been approved and ratified by the General Assembly Council and are intended to constitute Bylaws authorized by Section 5746 of the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law of 1988 and 42 Pa.C.S. Section 8365.

## ARTICLE VII Investments

**Section 7.01. Administration.** ~~Unless otherwise specifically directed in the instrument by which any property, real or personal, is given, granted, conveyed, transferred, bequeathed, devised, assigned to or otherwise vested in the Fiduciary Corporation, including but not limited to its capacity as fiduciary or otherwise, and subject to the general investment policies, adopted from time to time by the General Assembly so far as consistent with the fiduciary responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, the appropriate committee of the Board of Trustees is authorized to invest and reinvest the property thus received or the proceeds of any property thus received and to retain property thus received and investments heretofore or hereafter made if done in the exercise of that degree of judgment and care, under the circumstances then prevailing, which persons of prudence, discretion and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not in regard to speculation, but in regard to the permanent disposition of their funds, considering the probable income to be derived therefrom as well as the probable safety of their capital. The appropriate committee of the Board of Trustees may employ such investment advisors and consultants as it desires to assist it in making investments, reinvestments and retention of investments.~~ *Unless otherwise specifically directed in the instrument by which any property, real or personal, is given, granted, conveyed, transferred, bequeathed, devised, assigned to or otherwise vested in the Fiduciary Corporation, including but not limited to its capacity as fiduciary or otherwise, and subject to the general investment policies, adopted from time to time by the General Assembly so far as consistent with the fiduciary responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, the appropriate committee of the Board of Trustees is authorized to invest and reinvest the property thus received or the proceeds of any property thus received and to retain property thus received and investments heretofore or hereafter made if done in accordance with the Pennsylvania Prudent Investor statute, 20 PA C S 7201 et. seq. The appropriate committee of the Board of Trustees may employ such investment advisors and consultants as it desires to assist it in making investments, reinvestments and retention of investments.*

**Section 7.02. Certain Unrestricted Funds.** With respect to investment of property and funds free of any standard of investment or over which the General Assembly has power of appropriation, the appropriate committee of the Board of Trustees may invest and reinvest such property and funds in such manner as the General Assembly or any body formed by the General Assembly thereto authorized may suggest or require, without reference to the standard provided by Section 7.01 of this Article.

**Section 7.03. Restricted Funds.** Where the terms of the gift or the instrument by which property or funds are received by the Fiduciary Corporation specify or limit the type of investments to be made with such property or funds, the investment or reinvestment of such property or funds shall be made in the discretion of the appropriate committee of the Board of Trustees in accordance with the terms provided or limited in the instrument by which such property or funds are received. In every case where a donor has specified that the principal of the gift be invested and that only the income be expended, the Fiduciary Corporation shall refrain from making any expenditure of principal, and in every case where a donor has specified the purposes for which principal or income may be expended, the Fiduciary Corporation shall refrain from making any expenditure inconsistent with the terms of the gift.

**Section 7.04. Custodians and Nominee Registration.** All investments and securities owned by the Fiduciary Corporation shall be held in the custody of a bank, or a trust company or other depositories as the Board of Trustees, the ~~Advisory Leadership Team~~ *Executive Committee* or another appropriate committee of the Board of Trustees may approve or designate. Investments and securities owned by the Fiduciary Corporation may be held in the name of a nominee which may be the nominee of a bank, or a trust company or other depository, provided the bank or trust company or other depository in the name of whose nominee investments and securities of the Fiduciary Corporation are held first gives a bond or letter to the Fiduciary Corporation where by it assumes full responsibility for the safe custody of the investments and securities and agrees to indemnify the Fiduciary Corporation and its Trustees and officers and employees against any loss or claims by reason of such nominee registration or default or infidelity of such nominee, and that all such investments and securities shall be so designated upon the records of the

bank, or trust company or other custodian so that the ownership of the same in the Fiduciary Corporation shall clearly appear at all times.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Miscellaneous**

**Section 8.01. Corporate Seal.** The Fiduciary Corporation shall have a corporate seal in the form of a design adopted by the 197th General Assembly (1985) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), together with the words: "PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) FOUNDATION -- INCORPORATED 1799 PENNSYLVANIA". The Foundation Constituent Corporations shall each have a corporate seal in the form of a circle containing the words "CORPORATE SEAL".

**Section 8.02. Checks.** All checks, notes, bills of exchange or other orders in writing shall be signed by such person or persons as the Board of Trustees may from time to time designate.

**Section 8.03. Contracts.** Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, the Board of Trustees may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or to execute or deliver any instrument on behalf of the Fiduciary Corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

**Section 8.04. Deposits and Disbursements.** All funds of the Fiduciary Corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Fiduciary Corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board of Trustees may approve or designate, and all such funds shall be withdrawn only upon checks signed by, or bearing the authorized facsimile signature of such one or more officers, employees or agents as the Board of Trustees shall from time to time determine. The name or accounts to which such deposits are made, and the name of the Fiduciary Corporation on checks drawn against such accounts may be "Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)", and may include such other words including the name of the Fiduciary Corporation and an appropriate designation to identify by purpose or otherwise. The Fiduciary Corporation shall designate the Central Treasury Corporation as attorney-in-fact of the Fiduciary Corporation and of each of the Foundation Constituent Corporations for the purpose of disbursing unrestricted income or unrestricted principal of invested funds (and restricted income or restricted principal to the extent specifically authorized by the Board of Trustees) pursuant to appropriations made by the General Assembly or any officer or agency thereof thereunto duly authorized. In the case of disbursements of unrestricted income or unrestricted principal, the personnel of the Central Treasury Corporation, and not the Board of Trustees of the Fiduciary Corporation and the Foundation Constituent Corporations, shall be accountable and responsible for such disbursements.

**Section 8.05. Annual Report of Trustees; Accounting System.** The Board of Trustees shall direct the president and treasurer to present at a regular meeting of the Board in every year a report, verified by such officers, showing in appropriate detail the following:

- (1) The assets, liabilities and fund balances, including the trust funds, of the Fiduciary Corporation as of the end of the fiscal year immediately preceding the date of the report.
- (2) The principal changes in assets, liabilities and fund balances, including trust funds, during the year immediately preceding the date of the report.
- (3) The revenue or receipts of the Fiduciary Corporation, both unrestricted and restricted to particular purposes, for the year immediately preceding the date of the report, including separate date with respect to each trust fund held by or for the Fiduciary Corporation.
- (4) The expenses or disbursements of the Fiduciary Corporation, for both general and restricted purposes, during the year immediately preceding the date of the report, including separate date with respect to each trust fund held by or for the Fiduciary Corporation.
- (5) The number of members of the Fiduciary Corporation as of the date of the report and a statement of the place where the name and address of the current member of the Fiduciary Corporation may be found.

The Central Treasury Corporation and the Fiduciary Corporation shall be subject to a single coordinated accounting system, the elements of which shall be compatible. Financial statements reported on by independent certified public accountants may be statements which have been combined with those of the Central Treasury Corporation.

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The annual report shall be filed with the minutes of the meeting of the Board and copies shall be transmitted to the Central Treasury Corporation, the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly.

**Section 8.06. Amendment of Bylaws.** These bylaws may be amended or repealed, or new bylaws may be adopted either: (1) by the action of a majority of Trustees present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Trustees at which a quorum is present, if ten days' written notice of such proposed amendment, repeal or new bylaws is given to each Trustee, or (2) by the action at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of a majority of all of the Trustees in office, where no notice of such proposed amendment, repeal or new bylaws has been given.

Any such amendment, repeal or new bylaws shall be consistent with the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and with the directions from time to time of the General Assembly. The substance of any proposed amendment, repeal or new bylaws shall first be approved by the General Assembly Council.

**ANNEX A**  
(As Amended January 1, 2007)

**Foundation Constituent Corporations  
of the  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>State of Incorporation</u></b>
The Presbyterian Foundation, Inc. (U.S.)	North Carolina
Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	Pennsylvania
The Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	New York
Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	New York
Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	New York
The Presbyterian Board of Home Mission	New York
Woman's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	New York

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## **Item 15-05**

[The assembly approved Item 15-05 with comment. See p. 11.]

**The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the reelection of Robert E. Leech by the Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation for a third, four-year term as Foundation president and chief executive officer.**

***Comment:* To commend Robert Leech and his staff for their leadership in the fiduciary stewardship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.**

***Rationale***

At its February meeting, the trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation unanimously, and with gratitude to God, called and elected Robert E. Leech to a third term as president of the Foundation subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.

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Robert Leech is a resident of Louisville and a member of Second Presbyterian Church. A lifelong Presbyterian, he has served as an elder and deacon at five churches across the country.

Leech earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ursinus College in Pennsylvania, and a Masters of Business Administration degree from the College of William and Mary. He is also a graduate of the National Trust School and Trust Management School at Northwestern University. Prior to joining the Foundation, Leech spent thirty years in the banking industry.

During his tenure as president, Leech has worked with the Foundation Board to implement a plan to increase overall planned giving to local churches, institutions, and the national church. He has worked with the General Assembly Council to better respond to the stewardship and funds development needs of the church.

Additionally, Leech has improved the financial position of the Foundation by managing expenses and increasing reserves despite a difficult economy. He has coordinated the inclusion of the Foundation's new subsidiary, New Covenant Trust Company, for which he also serves as chief executive officer, with the overall operation of the Foundation. Leech also serves as the president of New Covenant Funds, a family of mutual funds invested in accordance with the social-witness principles of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Finally, Leech worked with the board to create a strategic plan for the Foundation to ensure the organization serves the whole church by nurturing the stewardship of accumulated resources to fund the mission of the church.

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## Item 15-06

[The assembly approved Item 15-06. See pp. 11, 12.]

**The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the following director for New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., that has been elected for the year 2008, consistent with the Deliverance for New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., as approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999) and amended by the 212th and 214th General Assemblies (2000) and (2002), and subject to applicable law: Sharon Z. Fesler, retired, white, female, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Lincoln Trails. Fesler also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.**

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## Item 15-07

[The assembly approved Item 15-07. See pp. 11, 12.]

**The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Board of Directors recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) confirm the election of Marc Lewis as president and publisher of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.**

### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) Board of Directors conducted an extensive search utilizing the services of an executive recruitment firm to identify potential candidates. The PPC Board of Directors unanimously elected Marc Lewis as the president and publisher at their meeting on February 27, 2008.

Lewis holds a marketing degree from the University of Tennessee and an MBA from Vanderbilt University's Owen School of Management. Prior to joining the PPC staff in 1999, Lewis had an extended career at the United Methodist Publishing House.

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## Item 15-D

[The Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing approved Item 15-D. See pp. 11, 12.]

**The Board of Pensions recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) receive the report of certain amendments to the Bylaws of the Board of Pensions (as set forth below).**



*Rationale*

The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church is a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation established by the General Assembly to administer the Benefits Plan and Assistance Programs for the benefit of the ministers and lay employees of the church. The General Assembly reserved the authority to elect the directors of the Board of Pensions and approve amendments to the articles and bylaws to the extent that they relate to the purpose of the Board of Pensions or the General Assembly's right to elect the directors. The Board of Pensions has the authority to approve any other amendments to the bylaws and report any such amendments to the next succeeding General Assembly.

In 2007, the Board of Pensions amended its bylaws to change the name of the Assistance and Retirement Housing Committee to the Assistance Committee, in recognition of the evolving focus of the committee from owning and maintaining retirement homes to providing financial assistance to Benefits Plan members with housing needs.

**BYLAWS**  
**THE BOARD OF PENSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**  
As Amended June 23, 2007

**ARTICLE I**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Section 1.1. Number; Election; Term; Qualifications.** The Board of Directors shall consist of not less than twenty-seven (27) persons and not more than thirty-six (36) persons nominated by or through the General Assembly Nominating Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and elected by the General Assembly in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Manual of the General Assembly.

Election shall be for a term of four (4) years and, except as provided below, a Director shall serve no more than eight (8) consecutive years. The Board may request that a special exception for a different term or extended service period be granted by the General Assembly Nominating Committee. The Board of Directors shall consist of not more than forty percent (40%) ordained ministers of the Church with the remaining Directors being, at all times during their respective terms, lay members of the Church.

**Section 1.2. Annual and Regular Meetings.** A regular meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held at least three (3) times a year, at such places and times as shall from time to time be fixed by the Board of Directors. The second regular meeting in the calendar year shall be the annual meeting of the Corporation.

Written notice of the annual and regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be required to be given to each Director at least five (5) days before the day named for the meeting. Any business may be transacted at any regular meeting. At the annual meeting, in addition to any other business transacted, the President and Treasurer shall present a financial report for the fiscal year immediately preceding, which report shall be filed with the minutes of the annual meeting of the Board.

**Section 1.3. Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairperson and shall be called by the Secretary at the written or oral request of any five (5) Directors of the Board. In each case, written notice of the call shall set forth the purpose of such meeting. Any special meeting shall be held not later than forty (40) days after the call thereof, at such particular date, time, and place as shall be fixed by the Secretary. The Secretary shall give not less than five (5) days notice of the date, time, place and purpose of special meetings. No business shall be transacted at a special meeting other than as set forth in the notice.

**Section 1.4. Waiver of Notice of Meetings.** Whenever written notice is required to be given to any person, it may be given to the person, either personally or by sending a copy by first class or express mail, postage prepaid, courier service, charges prepaid, or by facsimile or electronic mail transmission, to the address (or facsimile number or electronic mail address) supplied by him or her to the Corporation for purpose of notice. If notice is sent by mail or courier service, it shall be deemed to have been given when deposited in the United States mail or with a courier service for delivery to the person or, in the case of facsimile or electronic mail, when receipt has been confirmed. A notice of meeting shall specify the place, day and hour of the meeting and any other information required by law. Except as otherwise provided by law or these Bylaws, when a meeting is adjourned, it shall not be necessary to give any notice of the adjourned meeting, or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting, other than by announcement at the meeting at which such adjournment is taken.

Whenever any notice is required to be given by law or these Bylaws, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of notice. Neither the business to be transacted at nor the purpose of a meeting need be specified in the waiver of notice of the meeting. Attendance of a person at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of the meeting except where a person at-

tends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting, at the beginning of the meeting, to the transaction of any business because the meeting was not lawfully called or convened.

**Section 1.5. Quorum.** A quorum consisting of one-third of the Directors of the Board then in office shall be necessary to commence a duly constituted meeting. Except as otherwise specifically provided by law or in these Bylaws, any action may be taken by a majority of the Directors present at a duly constituted meeting. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentence, any amendment to the Pension Plan of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), other than a benefit reduction or a dues increase (which amendments require the approval in advance of the General Assembly), shall require an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of Directors present at a duly constituted meeting.

The provisions of this section shall also apply to any action of the Corporation taken by a Committee under authority granted in these Bylaws. A quorum consisting of a majority of the Directors then assigned to the Committee shall be necessary to take such action.

**Section 1.6. Absence.** Absence from three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Directors without excuse shall be considered equivalent to a resignation by a member of the Board of Directors. All such absences shall be reported to the Directors at any regular meeting by the Secretary.

**Section 1.7. Presence by Telephone.** With the permission of the Chairperson and for extenuating circumstances, one or more persons may participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors or of a committee thereof by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating can hear each other. Such participation shall constitute presence in person at such meeting.

**Section 1.8. Removal of Directors.** At the recommendation of the Board Development and Governance Committee, a director may be removed from office, without assigning any cause, by an affirmative vote of the greater of 1) a two-thirds vote of the directors present at any duly called meeting of the Board or 2) a majority of the directors then in office and entitled to vote on the matter. If any director is removed, the resulting vacancy shall be filled in the manner provided in Section 1.1 of the Bylaws for regular election of directors.

## ARTICLE II OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

**Section 2.1. Officers: Designation, Election and Compensation.** The Officers of the Corporation shall be the Chairperson, two or more Vice Chairpersons, and the following Senior Officers (who shall not be Directors): President; one or more Vice Presidents; Treasurer and Secretary; together with such other officers as shall from time to time be elected by the Board of Directors which other officers may also be designated as Senior Officers. The Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons shall be elected by the Board of Directors from its own members to serve without salary. The President shall be elected by the Board of Directors with confirmation by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The President-elect may assume the position of president with full authority of that office upon election by the Board of Directors and before the next General Assembly at which confirmation will be sought. If the General Assembly declines to confirm the President-elect, the position will be declared vacant immediately with no further action required on the part of the Assembly. All Senior Officers shall be elected by the Board of Directors to serve at salaries to be fixed by the Board of Directors. All Senior Officers shall be corresponding members of the Board but without the right to vote.

**Section 2.2. The Chairperson.** The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Corporation, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. The Chairperson shall--

--appoint all standing and special committees and the chairperson of each, except the Board Development and Governance Committee;

--nominate the Board Development and Governance Committee members and chairperson for election by the full Board;

--be a member ex officio of all committees;

--unless and until otherwise directed by the Board of Directors, designate from time to time who shall represent the Corporation and the Board of Directors at any meeting of any General Assembly, Synod, Presbytery, or any other Judicatory, Committee, Commission or Board of the Church or at any meeting of representatives or Boards of other denominations; and

--upon the recommendation of the President, appoint such officers of the Corporation as corresponding Directors, but without the right to vote, to such Committee or Committees to which they are assigned as staff support by the President.

**Section 2.3. The Vice Chairpersons.** The Vice Chairpersons shall, in an order determined by the Board of Directors, preside in the absence of the Chairperson, and shall perform all the duties of the Chairperson in the event of absence or disability of the latter.

**Section 2.4. The President.** The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Corporation and shall report to and be responsible to the Board of Directors for the overall management of the operations of the Corporation. The President shall

--report to the Board of Directors at each regular meeting of the Board and to the Standing Committees of the Board whenever and in such form as requested;

--serve as a corresponding member of all committees of the Board of Directors, but without the right to vote;

--ensure that all rules, regulations, trusts and provisions applicable to all of the funds of the Corporation and their administration and all of the policies adopted by the Board, are complied with at all times;

--submit to the Board of Directors for its consideration, the Board's Report for presentation to the General Assembly each year;

--oversee the internal audit function of the Board; and

--perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may designate from time to time.

**Section 2.5. The Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall report to and be responsible to the President. The general responsibilities of this position shall include the following:

--the oversight, care and custody of all funds held by the Corporation;

--the care and custody of the financial documents of the Corporation; and

--the performance of such other duties as the President or the Board of Directors may designate from time to time.

**Section 2.6. The Secretary.** The Secretary shall report to and be responsible to the President. The records of the proceedings of the Corporation, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee shall be kept by or under the supervision of the Secretary. The general responsibilities of this position shall include the following:

--the recording of all votes of the corporation and the preparation of the minutes of all Corporation, Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings in a book kept for that purpose;

--the preparation, in consultation with the President, of the Board's Report to the General Assembly; and

--the performance of such other duties as the President or the Board of Directors may designate from time to time.

**Section 2.7. Senior Officers.** The Board of Directors may, upon the recommendation of the President, elect one or more Vice Presidents or other Senior Officers as may be deemed advisable. The duties and conditions of employment of any Senior Officer shall be confirmed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 2.8. Assistant Officers.** The Board of Directors may, upon the recommendation of the President, elect one or more Assistant Secretaries, Assistant Treasurers, Assistants to the President, or other Assistant Officers, as may be deemed advisable and the President may prescribe their duties, conditions of employment and compensation.

**Section 2.9. Vacancies.** Vacancy in any office or position, other than the office of Director or President, by reason of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or other cause shall be filled in the manner provided in Section 2.1, 2.7 or 2.8 of these Bylaws for regular election or appointment to such office or position. Upon notice that a vacancy in the office of the President will or has occurred, the Chairperson shall appoint a Search Committee for the Board of Directors, which committee shall consist of not less than five (5) members and shall include one elected member designated by the General Assembly Council.

### ARTICLE III ADVISORS AND COUNSEL

**Section 3.1. Designation, Selection and Compensation.** The Officers and the Board shall be assisted in carrying on the business of the Corporation by Pension Actuarial, Medical Actuarial and Legal Counsel, and such other counsel as the Board of Directors may deem necessary from time to time for the proper conduct of the business of the Corporation. Counsel may consist of individuals, partnerships, corporations, or other entities.

**Section 3.2. Actuarial Counsel.**

(a) **Pension Actuarial Counsel** shall function as the Board's actuary for pension, death, disability, optional death, optional supplemental disability and optional retirement savings benefits under the direction of the Pension Committee or any Senior Officer designated by it. Such counsel shall submit an Annual Pension Actuarial Report to the Board of Directors through the Pension Committee and shall render such other actuarial services as may be requested by the Board of Directors or any Senior Officer.

(b) **Medical Actuarial Counsel** shall function as the Board's actuary for the medical plans and programs under the direction of the Healthcare Committee or any Senior Officer designated by it. Such counsel shall submit an Annual Medical Actuarial Report to the Board of Directors through the Healthcare Committee and shall render such other actuarial services as may be requested by the Board of Directors or any Senior Officer.

**Section 3.3. Legal Counsel.** Legal Counsel shall function under the direction of the Legal Committee and the President and shall render such legal services as may be requested by the Board of Directors or any Senior Officer.

**ARTICLE IV  
COMMITTEES**

**Section 4.1. Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee shall consist of not less than seven (7) Directors including the Chairperson, the Vice Chairpersons and the Chairperson of each of the following nine committees: Investment, Healthcare, Assistance, Pension, Social Responsibility, Legal, Personnel, Board Development and Governance, and Audit, together with such other Directors as may be appointed by the Chairperson. It shall meet at the call of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. In the interim between the regular meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall perform the duties of and have all the powers vested in the Board of Directors. Any action of the Board taken by the Executive Committee pursuant to this interim authority shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the Corporation and reported to the full Board of Directors at the next meeting. A quorum consisting of a majority of the Directors of the Executive Committee shall be necessary to constitute a duly authorized meeting.

**Section 4.2. Investment Committee.** The Investment Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) Directors of the Board of Directors. The Investment Committee shall be responsible for the supervision of the investment of all funds held by the Corporation. The Investment Committee may select, review and terminate the engagement of one or more financial entities as investment managers as it deems appropriate and shall report such actions to the Board of Directors at its next meeting. Each such investment manager approved by the Investment Committee may be given the authority, under the supervision and approval of the Investment Committee and within such investment guidelines approved from time to time by the Board of Directors, to invest and reinvest the portion of the funds held by the Corporation, including trust funds, placed in its custody. All investments shall be made in accordance with the provisions of all applicable laws.

The investment of all funds held by the Corporation shall be subject to asset allocation policies and investment guidelines developed by the Investment Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

**Section 4.3. Social Responsibility Committee.** The Social Responsibility Committee shall consist of those Directors serving as regular or alternate Directors of the General Assembly Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, and any other Directors designated by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. It shall advise the Board of Directors with respect to questions of social responsibility in investment.

**Section 4.4. Healthcare Committee.** The Healthcare Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) Directors of the Board of Directors. The Healthcare Committee shall be responsible for the oversight of the administration of the medical plans of the Benefits Plan and such other welfare plans and program as the Board determines appropriate. It shall also review studies of the Plan's effectiveness, consider possible Plan changes and recommend proposed Plan amendments to the Board of Directors for the aforementioned benefits. It shall confer with and receive advice from the Medical Actuarial Counsel of the Corporation in such actuarial matters as it deems necessary or as the Board of Directors or the President may designate from time to time for the aforementioned benefits.

**Section 4.5. Assistance Committee.** The Assistance Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) Directors of the Board of Directors. It shall develop for the Board of Directors' approval the policies according to which the Board's programs of financial aid and retirement housing supplements are to be administered. The Committee shall also be responsible for the oversight of the funds development and gift administration programs of the Board. The Committee shall regularly review the recommendations of the Board's staff for financial aid and/or retirement housing supplements to individuals in light of the established policies and recommend proper action to the Board of Directors.

The Committee shall also develop for the Board of Directors' approval the policies according to which such retirement housing units as may from time to time be owned by the Board shall be administered. It shall review and recommend to the Board of Directors proper action of the following: (1) the acquisition or disposition of retirement housing units; (2) the annual operating budget of each retirement housing unit; and (3) proposed expenditures for maintenance, repairs, alterations or improvement of retirement housing units which exceed an amount to be set by the Committee from time to time.

**Section 4.6. Pension Committee.** The Pension Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) Directors of the Board of Directors. The Pension Committee shall be responsible for the oversight of the administration of the pension, retirement savings, death and disability plans of the Benefits Plan and such other retirement plans and programs as the Board determines appropriate. It shall also review studies of the Plan's effectiveness, consider possible Plan changes and recommend proposed Plan amendments to the Board of Directors for the aforementioned benefits. It shall confer with and receive advice from the Pension Actuarial Counsel of the Corporation in such actuarial matters as it deems necessary or as the Board of Directors or the President may designate from time to time for the aforementioned benefits. It shall also be the Committee responsible for recommending any proposed Experience Apportionments to the Board of Directors.

**Section 4.7. Legal Committee.** The Legal Committee shall consist of not less than three (3) Directors of the Board of Directors. It shall consult with the Board of Directors and Legal Counsel to the Corporation, as it deems necessary, and discharge such duties in connection therewith as the Board of Directors or the President may designate from time to time.

**Section 4.8. Board Development and Governance Committee.** The Board Development and Governance Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) Directors of the Board of Directors. It shall provide leadership development to the Board of Directors, including succession planning, continuing education and periodic Board self-evaluations. It shall also recruit and propose candidates for election to the Board of Directors for presentation to the General Assembly Nominating Committee, nominate candidates to the Board of Directors for election to the offices of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and perform such other duties in connection therewith as the Board of Directors may designate from time to time.

**Section 4.9. Audit Committee.** The Audit Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) Directors. It shall receive, review and report to the Board of Directors the results of the independent annual audit of the accounts of the Corporation and management letter and shall recommend to the Board of Directors proposed changes and other responsive actions based upon such review. It shall meet periodically with the Director of Internal Audit to assure that proper controls and security are being observed at the Corporation. It shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors or the President may designate from time to time.

**Section 4.10. Personnel Committee.** The Personnel Committee, which shall be a subcommittee of the Executive Committee, shall consist of not less than three (3) Directors of the Board of Directors. The committee shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors on matters of personnel. It shall perform such duties in connection with personnel as the Board of Directors may designate from time to time. It shall confer with the President on personnel matters as the Board of Directors deems necessary, or as the President may designate from time to time.

**Section 4.11. Informal Committee Action.** If all the Directors of a committee shall severally or collectively consent, in writing, to any action to be taken by the Committee, such action shall be a valid committee action as though it had been authorized at a formal meeting of such Committee.

## ARTICLE V STANDARD OF CARE

**Section 5.1. Standard of Care: Justifiable Reliance.** Director shall stand in a fiduciary relation to the Corporation and shall perform his or her duties as a Director, including duties as a member of any committee of the Board upon which the Director may serve, in good faith, in a manner the Director reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the Corporation and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, skill and diligence, as a person of ordinary prudence would use under similar circumstances. In performing his or her duties, a Director shall be entitled to rely in good faith on information, opinions, reports or statements, including, without limitation, financial statements and other financial data, in each case prepared or presented by any of the following:

- (1) One or more officers or employees of the Corporation whom the Director reasonably believes to be reliable and competent in the matters presented;
- (2) Counsel, public accountants or other persons as to matters which the Director reasonably believes to be within the professional or expert competence of such person; or

(3) A committee of the Board upon which the Director does not serve, duly designated in accordance with law, as to matters within its designated authority, which committee the Director reasonably believes to merit confidence.

A Director shall not be considered to be acting in good faith if the Director has knowledge concerning the matter in question that would cause his or her reliance to be unwarranted.

**Section 5.2. Presumption.** Absent breach of fiduciary duty, lack of good faith, or self-dealing, actions taken by the Board, committees of the Board, or by individual Directors, or any failure to take any action, shall be presumed to be in the best interests of the Corporation.

**Section 5.3. Notation of Dissent.** A Director who is present at a meeting of the Board, or of a committee of the Board, at which action on any corporate matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken unless his or her dissent is entered in the minutes of the meeting or unless the Director files a written dissent to the action with the Secretary of the meeting before the adjournment thereof or transmits the dissent in writing to the Secretary immediately after the adjournment of the meeting. The right to dissent shall not apply to a Director who voted in favor of the action. Nothing in this Section shall bar a Director from asserting the minutes of the meeting incorrectly omitted his or her dissent if, promptly upon receipt of a copy of the minutes, the Directors notifies the Secretary, in writing, of the asserted omission or inaccuracy.

## ARTICLE VI

### LIMITATION OF LIABILITY, INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE

**Section 6.1. Limitation of Liability.** A Director of the Corporation shall not be personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken, or any failure to take action, unless such Director has breached or failed to perform the duties of his or her office under Subchapter B of Chapter 57 of the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law of 1988, as amended (the "Act"), as from time to time amended, or any successor provision, and the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness. This provision shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of a Director pursuant to any criminal statute or the liability of a Director for payment of taxes pursuant to local, state or federal law. Any repeal or amendment of this Section shall be prospective only and shall not increase, but may decrease, a Director's liability with respect to actions or failures to act occurring prior to such change.

**Section 6.2. Mandatory Indemnification of Directors and Officers.** The Corporation shall indemnify and defend, to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law (including but not limited to the indemnification provided by Subchapter D of Chapter 57 of the Act, each Director or officer (including each former Director or officer) of the Corporation who was or is made a party to or a witness in, or is threatened to be made a party to or a witness in, any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was an authorized representative of the Corporation, against all expenses (including attorneys' fees and disbursements), judgments, fines (including excise taxes and penalties) and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with such action, suit or proceeding if he or she acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in, or not opposed to, the best interests of the Corporation and, with respect to any criminal proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, or conviction or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent shall not of itself create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to, the best interests of the Corporation and, with respect to any criminal proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

**Section 6.3. Mandatory Advancement of Expenses to Directors and Officers.** The Corporation shall pay expenses (including attorneys' fees and disbursements) incurred by a Director or officer of the Corporation referred to in Section 6.2 hereof in defending or appearing as a witness in any civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding described in Section 6.2 hereof in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding. The expenses incurred by such Director or officer shall be paid by the Corporation in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding only upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of such Director or officer to repay all amounts advanced if it shall ultimately be determined that he or she is not entitled to be indemnified by the Corporation as provided in Section 6.5 hereof.

**Section 6.4. Permissive Indemnification and Advancement of Expenses.** The Corporation may, as determined by the Board of Directors from time to time, indemnify to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law, any person who was or is a party to or a witness in or is threatened to be made a party to or a witness in, or is otherwise involved in any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was an authorized representative of the Corporation, both as to action in his or her official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding such office or position, against all expenses (including attorneys' fees and disbursements), judgments, fines (including excise taxes and penalties), and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with such action, suit or proceeding. The Corporation may, as determined by the

Board of Directors from time to time, pay expenses incurred by any such person by reason of his or her participation in any action, suit or proceeding referred to in this Section 6.4 in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding only upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of such person to repay such amount if it shall ultimately be determined that he or she is not entitled to be indemnified by the Corporation as provided in Section 5.5 hereof.

**Section 6.5. Scope of Indemnification.** Indemnification under this Article shall not be made by the Corporation in any case where a court determines that the alleged act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is expressly prohibited by law or any successor statute in effect at the time of such alleged action or failure to take action.

**Section 6.6. Insurance.** The Corporation shall purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of each Director and officer against any liability asserted against or incurred by such Director or officer in any capacity, or arising out of such Director's or officer's status as such, whether or not the Corporation would have the power to indemnify such Director or officer against such liability under the provisions of this Article. The Corporation shall not be required to maintain such insurance if it is not available on terms satisfactory to the Board of Directors or if in the business judgment of the Board of Directors, either (i) the premium cost for such insurance is substantially disproportionate to the amount of coverage, or (ii) the coverage provided by such insurance is so limited by exclusions that there is insufficient benefit from such insurance. The Corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person referred to in Section 6.4 hereof against any liability asserted against or incurred by such person in any capacity, whether or not the Corporation would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability under the provisions of this Article.

**Section 6.7. Funding to Meet Indemnification Obligations.** The Corporation may, in lieu of or in addition to the purchase and maintenance of insurance referred to in Section 5.6 hereof, establish and maintain a fund of any nature or otherwise secure or insure in any manner its indemnification obligations, whether arising under or pursuant to this Article or otherwise.

**Section 6.8. Miscellaneous.** Each Director and officer of the Corporation shall be deemed to act in such capacity in reliance upon such rights of indemnification and advancement of expenses as are provided in this Article. The rights of indemnification or advancement of expenses provided by this Article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights in which any person seeking indemnification or advancement of expenses may be entitled, shall continue to a person who has ceased to be an authorized representative of the Corporation, and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such person. Indemnification and advancement of expenses under this Article shall be provided whether or not the indemnified liability arises or arose from any threatened, pending or completed action by or in the right of the Corporation. Any repeal or modification of this Article by the Board of Directors of the Corporation shall not adversely affect any right of protection existing at the time of such repeal or modification to which any person may be entitled under this Article.

**Section 6.9. Definition of Corporation.** For purposes of this Article, references to the "Corporation" shall include, in addition to the resulting corporation, any constituent corporation absorbed in a consolidation or merger which, if its separate existence had continued, would have had power and authority to indemnify its authorized representatives so that any person who is or was an authorized constituent corporation shall stand in the same position under this Article with respect to the resulting or surviving corporation as he or she would have with respect to such constituent corporation if its separate existence had continued.

**Section 6.10. Definition of Authorized Representative.** For purposes of this Article, the term "authorized representative" shall mean a Director, officer, employee or agent of the Corporation or of any subsidiary of the Corporation, or a trustee, custodian, administrator or fiduciary of any employee benefit plan established and maintained by the Corporation or by any subsidiary of the Corporation, or a person serving another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise in any of the foregoing capacities at the request of the Corporation.

## ARTICLE VII MISCELLANEOUS

**Section 7.1. Execution of Documents.** All documents requiring official signatures under the seal of the Corporation shall be signed by the Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, the President, or any Vice President with the affixation of the seal attested by the Secretary, Treasurer, an Assistant Secretary, or an Assistant Treasurer. All checks, drafts, acceptances, endorsements (other than for deposit) and all properly authorized notes, guarantees and evidences of indebtedness of the Corporation whatsoever shall be signed by such one or more officers or agents of the Corporation, subject to such requirements as to countersignatures or other conditions as the Board of Directors from time to time may determine. Facsimile signatures on checks may be used as authorized by the Board of Directors.

**Section 7.2. Audit of Accounts.** There shall be an annual audit of accounts of the Corporation by certified public accountants to be selected by the Board of Directors.

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**Section 7.3. Seal.** The common or corporate seal of the Corporation is and shall be an impression approved by the Board of Directors bearing the words “The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Incorporated 1876, Pennsylvania.”

**Section 7.4. Deposits.** Monies deposited in banks or trust companies shall be in the name of the Corporation.

**Section 7.5. Loans.** No loans shall be made to any member of the Board of Directors or any officer or employee of the Corporation.

**Section 7.6. Legacies and Gifts.** Legacies and gifts not specifically designated to be endowment or trust funds, may be used for the general purposes of the Corporation.

**Section 7.7. Borrowing; Disposition of Real Estate.** The Board of Directors shall have authority to approve the borrowing of money or the purchase, sale, lease, or other disposition of any real estate of the Corporation.

**Section 7.8. Conflict of Interest.** The Board of Directors shall adopt a policy establishing a process for identifying and avoiding potential conflicts of interest among the elected directors, senior management and the business of the Board.

**Section 7.9. Filing of Shareholder Resolutions.** The General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (which body has been authorized by the General Assembly of that Church to receive and act upon recommendations of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment pertaining to the filing of shareholder resolutions) is authorized to file for and in the name of the Corporation shareholder resolutions with corporations in which the Corporation owns stock and in which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation does not own stock provided that pursuant to instructions from the General Assembly, said Council has agreed to assume full responsibility for such filing, including any and all expenses and liabilities incident thereto and has agreed to reimburse and indemnify the Corporation, its officers, and its Directors against any and all expenses, judgments and other liabilities arising out of or pertaining to any and all legal actions initiated in response to such filing by the corporation with which the resolution is filed, the shareholders of such corporation, the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and by any other party, and provided further that such filing shall be done only in those situations where the said Council decides that the facts so warrant. The authorization to file shareholder resolutions for and in the name of the Corporation shall include the authority and responsibility for performing the requisite research, correspondence, visitation with corporate officials, filings with government agencies, and participation in shareholder meetings in support of such resolution.

**ARTICLE VIII  
AMENDMENTS**

**Section 8.1** Subject to the limitations set forth herein, these Bylaws may be amended by a majority of the Directors in office at any regular meeting or any special meeting provided written notice of any amendment or amendments is given to each Director at least fifteen (15) days prior to such meeting. The Board of Directors shall not have the power to amend these Bylaws so as to change 1) the provisions in the first paragraph of Article 1.1 providing for the nomination of Directors by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the election of those Directors by the General Assembly and 2) the provision in Article 2.1 that requires General Assembly confirmation of the President-elect, without prior approval of the General Assembly. Whenever these bylaws require a specific number or percentage of votes to approve an action, the provision of the bylaws setting forth that requirement shall not be amended or repealed by any lesser number or percentage of votes. Any amendment to these Bylaws adopted by the Board of Directors shall be reported to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any amendment of the bylaws shall take effect when adopted unless otherwise provided in the resolution adopted to effect the change.

As amended June 23, 2007  
February 25, 2006  
July 16, 2005  
March 1, 2003  
March 11, 2000  
October 24, 1998  
July 12, 1997  
February 26, 1994  
February 23, 1991



## Item 15-E

[The Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing approved Item 15-E. See pp. 11, 12.]

The Board of Pensions recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) receive the report regarding the following amendments to the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Plan”) that the Board of Pensions’ adopted since the 217th General Assembly (2006):

1. The following experience apportionments in the Pension Plan and the corresponding amendments of Appendix B of the Benefits Plan (the History of Experience Apportionment table):

a. *For Plan Year 2006 (Effective July 1, 2007)*

- A 3.7 percent (3.7%) increase in retirement and survivor’s pension benefits for members and eligible survivors receiving benefits as of July 1, 2007; and

- A 3.7 percent (3.7%) increase in accrued pension credits as of December 31, 2006, for active, disabled, and terminated vested members in the Pension Plan as of July 1, 2007.

b. *For Plan Year 2007 (Effective July 1, 2008)*

- A 3.8 percent (3.8%) increase in retirement and survivor’s pension benefits for members and eligible survivors receiving benefits as of July 1, 2008; and

- A 3.8 percent (3.8%) increase in accrued pension credits as of December 31, 2007, for active, disabled, and terminated vested members in the Pension Plan as of July 1, 2008.

2. The following disability benefit increases in the Death and Disability Plan and the corresponding amendments of Appendix C of the Benefits Plan (the History of Disability Benefit Increases table):

a. *For Plan Year 2006*

- A four percent (4.0%) increase in disability benefits for those receiving such benefits on December 31, 2006, beginning July 1, 2007.

b. *For Plan Year 2007*

- A four percent (4.0%) increase in disability benefits for those receiving such benefits on December 31, 2007, beginning July 1, 2008.

3. Section 2.1 of the Pension Plan, effective January 1, 2008, as described below.

4. Section 8.1(b) of the Pension Plan, effective January 1, 2007, as described below.

5. Section 13.4(b)(1) of the Medical Plan, effective January 1, 2008, as described below.

### *Rationale*

1. *Benefits Plan Amendments*

The process for amending the Plan is established in the Plan document (Article XIX). The Board of Pensions has the sole discretion and authority to adopt Plan amendments.

- Amendments to the Pension Plan (Articles VI, VII, VIII and IX) that are in the nature of a benefit reduction or a Pension Plan dues increase are only effective upon approval of the General Assembly. The Board of Pensions must provide written notice of its intent to submit such Pension Plan amendments to the General Assembly and the Plan members, local churches, and presbyteries at least sixty (60) days prior to the commencement of the General Assembly.

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- All other amendments to the Plan adopted by the Board of Pensions must be reported to the next succeeding General Assembly and to the members, local churches, and presbyteries in a reasonable manner.

Since the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Board of Pensions has not adopted any amendment to the Pension Plan that requires the approval of General Assembly prior to becoming effective.

Since the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Board of Pensions granted experience apportionments and disability benefit increases for Plan Years 2006 and 2007 and adopted other amendments to the Pension and Medical Plans. A summary of the amendments to the Plan is provided below. The effective date of the amendments is January 1, 2008, unless otherwise noted.

A letter advising the Benefits Plan members, local churches, and presbyteries of this report and the amendments was mailed on March 20, 2008. The letter and a complete copy of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (2008) are available on the Website of the Board of Pensions at [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org) or by calling 1-800-PRES-PLAN (1-800-773-7752).

## 2. *Pensions Plan Amendments*

### a. *Experience Apportionment Grants*

The Pension Plan provides in Section 7.3 that the Board of Pensions may determine, in its sole discretion, that sufficient Pension Plan assets have accumulated, due to favorable investment and actuarial experience, over and above those required for actuarial reserves, general contingency reserves, and other special reserves, to grant an experience apportionment.

The Board of Pensions is pleased to report to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that in the judgment of the board of directors of the Board of Pensions, sufficient Pension Plan assets were in hand at the end of Plan Years 2006 and 2007 as a result of cumulative favorable investment and actuarial experience to permit experience apportionments. Therefore, the Board of Pensions approved the following experience apportionment grants for the Pension Plan and the corresponding amendments of Appendix B of the Benefits Plan (the History of Experience Apportionment table):

#### (1) *For Plan Year 2006 (Effective July 1, 2007)*

- A 3.7 percent (3.7%) increase in retirement and survivor's pension benefits for members and eligible survivors receiving benefits as of July 1, 2007.

- A 3.7 percent (3.7%) increase in accrued pension credits as of December 31, 2006, for active, disabled, and terminated vested members in the Pension Plan as of July 1, 2007.

#### (2) *For Plan Year 2007 (Effective July 1, 2008)*

- A 3.8 percent (3.8%) increase in retirement and survivor's pension benefits for members and eligible survivors receiving benefits on July 1, 2008.

- A 3.8 percent (3.8%) increase in accrued pension credits as of December 31, 2007 for active, disabled, and terminated vested members in the Pension Plan on July 1, 2008.

### b. *Other Pension Plan Amendments*

#### (1) *Effective Salary Definition Amendment*

The definition of Effective Salary in Section 2.1, Definitions, was amended and restated effective January 1, 2008. The amendment excludes employer matching contributions to the Retirement Savings Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) from Effective Salary. The intent is to increase employee participation in the Retirement Savings Plan by encouraging employers to offer a matching contribution to employee elective deferrals. The definition now reads as follows:

**“EFFECTIVE SALARY.** Any compensation received during a Plan Year by a Benefits Plan Member from an employing organization, including but not limited to any sums paid as a housing (including utilities and furnishings) allowance. Effective Salary shall also include any deferred compensation (funded or unfunded) credited to or contributed on account of a Member by an employing organization during a Plan Year, with the exception of any amounts contributed as an employer contribution to the Retirement Savings Plan under a matching contribution program that is available to at least all employees of the employer in same employment classification, and any salary reduction contributions to a plan or other arrangement providing a tax-favored benefit. Effective Salary does not include amounts received for reimbursement of professional ex-

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penses through an accountable reimbursement plan or Social Security amounts up to fifty percent (50%) of a minister's Self-Employment Contributions Act obligations. With respect to a Member eligible for a housing allowance, the amount for housing is calculated as follows: if a Manse is provided, the amount shall be at least thirty percent (30%) of all other compensation described above; if no Manse is provided, the amount shall be the actual housing allowance."

(2) *Eligibility Requirements for Retirement*

The eligibility requirements for retirement were modified, effective January 1, 2007, to clarify that a termination of service is required before a member may receive retirement benefits from the Pension Plan either in the form of a lump-sum distribution or a retirement pension. Section 8.1(b) now reads that a member of the Pension Plan shall be entitled to initiate retirement benefits if the member has terminated employment with his or her most recent eligible service employer.

2. *Death and Disability Plan Amendments*

a. *Disability Benefit Increases*

The Death and Disability Plan provides in Section 11.3(h) that the Board of Pensions may determine, in its sole discretion, that sufficient Death and Disability Plan assets have accumulated, due to favorable investment and actuarial experience, over and above those required for actuarial reserves, general contingency reserves, and other special reserves, to grant a disability benefit increase.

The Board of Pensions is pleased to report to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that, in the judgment of the board of directors of the Board of Pensions, sufficient Death and Disability Plan assets were in hand at the end of Plan Years 2006 and 2007 as a result of cumulative favorable investment and actuarial experience to permit disability benefit increases. Therefore, the Board of Pensions approved the following Disability Benefit Increases in accordance with Section 11.3(h) of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

(1) *For Plan Year 2006*

- A 4 percent (4.0%) increase in disability benefits for those receiving such benefits on December 31, 2006, beginning July 1, 2007.

(2) *For Plan Year 2007*

- A 4 percent (4.0%) increase in disability benefits for those receiving such benefits on December 31, 2007, beginning July 1, 2008.

3. *Medical Plan Amendments*

Since the 217th General Assembly (2006), the Board of Pensions adopted several amendments to the Medical Plan in response to changes in vendors and federal law and the commencement of the Medicare Prescription Drug Program.

*Changes to Prescription Drug Program*

Section 13.4(b)(1) of the Medical Plan was amended to implement the preferred home delivery model for maintenance medications under the Prescription Drug Program. Effective January 1, 2008, the Plan provides that, in addition to the existing copayment amounts described in 13.4(b)(1)(a)–(c) of the Medical Plan, the member shall also be responsible for an additional copayment of \$5 for each generic drug prescription, \$10 for each brand-name drug prescription, and \$15 for each non-formulary prescription drug refill at a retail pharmacy beyond the first two fills of the prescription.

Increased utilization has resulted in double digit increases in the overall cost of the Prescription Drug Program each year. Encouraging the use of the mail order option for maintenance medications was one of the few options the Board of Pensions had to reduce Plan costs without reducing benefits for members. It was projected that if all members moved to the use of mail order for maintenance medications, estimated annual savings to the Medical Plan would be approximately \$2 million and Plan members themselves would save another \$1 million. While the savings on any one prescription are not large, the cumulative savings are significant since approximately 300,000 prescriptions for maintenance medications are filled each year.

There were two basic options available to the Board of Pensions to increase the use of mail order services, mandatory or preferred home delivery. The Board of Pensions chose the preferred home delivery model, with an effective date of January 1, 2008. Under this model, members will continue to have the option of using a retail pharmacy; however, a surcharge will apply to make up for the higher cost of filling the prescription.

## Item 15-Info

### A. *The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 2006–2007 Agency Summary*

*Marking the 291st anniversary of the beginning of the work now carried on by this board and presented to the 218th General Assembly (2008) meeting in San Jose, California, June 2008.*

The responsibilities assigned to the Board of Pensions by the General Assembly are:

- The design and administration of a comprehensive program of retirement, death, disability, medical, and optional benefits for ministers, missionaries, and other church workers.
- The design and administration of a program of financial assistance to help meet needs that are beyond the scope of the pension and benefits program.
- The establishment and operation of a retirement housing program for eligible retirees and their spouses.
- The receipt, investment, and disbursement of the funds required to support these plans and programs for the sole and exclusive benefit of members and beneficiaries of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other beneficiaries of the assistance and retirement housing programs.

This report incorporates by reference the 2006 and 2007 Annual Reports of The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in which the financial information for the Board of Pensions and the Plans and Programs it administers is presented.

#### 1. *The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides pension benefits, death and disability benefits, medical benefits, optional benefits (supplemental death benefits, supplemental disability benefits, dental coverage, long-term care insurance, and a retirement savings plan), and a retirement and financial planning education program. The *Book of Order* (G-14.0534) mandates that all ministers of the Word and Sacrament in installed positions must participate in the Benefits Plan. A particular church may also enroll other church employees in the Benefits Plan. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament in non-installed positions and employees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or affiliated organizations may also be enrolled in the Benefits Plan.

The Affiliated Benefits Program (ABP) offers the same benefits, including the Retirement Savings Plan but excluding the Pension Plan, to employing organizations for certain nonmandated employees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or affiliated organizations.

The 215th General Assembly (2003) approved changes to the Benefits Plan amendment process to accommodate biennial meetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The right to amend the Benefits Plan is reserved solely to the Board of Pensions. Amendments to the Plan that constitute a reduction in Pension Plan benefits or an increase in Pension Plan dues are effective only upon approval by the General Assembly. The bylaws of the Board of Pensions require approval of a two-thirds majority of directors present at a duly constituted meeting to amend the Pension Plan except for a benefit reduction or a dues increase (which amendments require the approval of the General Assembly). The Board of Pensions must provide sixty days' notice to the General Assembly, Plan members, local churches, and presbyteries of any amendment requiring General Assembly approval and reasonable notice of any other amendment to the Benefits Plan.

#### 2. *The Community Nature of the Benefits Plan*

The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), administered by the Board of Pensions, is designed to care for and protect the community of Benefits Plan members as a whole.

An employing organization's cost of providing benefits for its employees enrolled for pension, medical, death, and disability benefits is not based on their marital status, gender, family size, or age. The dues contributed by the employing organization are instead based on a percentage of the participating members' salaries and represent that organization's share of the cost of protecting the entire community. The salaries used to determine the dues for the Pension Plan, the Death and Disability Plan, and the Medical Plan are subject to both minimum and maximum salary amounts.

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In order to assist lower-paid employees, no employee accrues benefits at less than the median salary for his or her employment classification (i.e., ministers of the Word and Sacrament, lay exempt, lay nonexempt). In order to contain the cost of healthcare, there are caps on medical deductibles and copayment expenses for higher paid members.

Affiliated Benefits Program medical dues are determined by an employing organization's benefits subsidy and the participation levels selected by its members. Some members may choose employee-only coverage, while others may choose to cover an entire family. This flexibility is one of the key advantages of the Affiliated Benefits Program.

3. *Pension Plan and Death and Disability Plan Amendments*

a. *Pension Experience Apportionment and Disability Benefit Increases*

The designs of the Pension Plan and the Death and Disability Plan provide for the granting of pension experience apportionments and disability benefit increases. When deciding to grant experience apportionments, the directors of the Board of Pensions consider increases in the cost of living, investment and actuarial experience, level of reserves, and questions of fundamental fairness for all participants in the Plan. Effective July 1, 2007, a 3.7 percent experience apportionment and a 4.0 percent disability benefit increase were granted. The directors of the Board of Pensions approved a 3.8 percent experience apportionment and a 4.0 percent disability benefit increase to be effective July 1, 2008. Towers Perrin, actuarial advisors for the Board of Pensions, reported that there continued to be sufficient funds on hand to meet the obligations to current and future retirees and disabled members after recognizing the increased liability generated by the 2007 and 2008 apportionments and disability benefit increases.

(1) *History of the Pension Apportionments and Disability Benefit Increases*

A major function of experience apportionments is to help the pension credits of active members and the retirement income of pensioners keep pace with inflation. The disability benefit increases serve the same function for those receiving disability income payments. In Table I, the recent experience apportionments and disability benefit increases are compared to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a measure of inflation in consumer goods and services.

<b>TABLE I</b>						
<b>Experience Apportionments and Disability Benefit Increases</b>						
<b>Compared to Consumer Price Index (CPI)</b>						
<b>2002–2007</b>						
	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
Pension*	0.0 %	2.0 %	3.0 %	3.6 %	3.7 %	3.8%
Disability*	0.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
CPI	2.4	1.9	3.3	3.4	2.5	4.1
* Experience apportionments and disability benefit increases become effective the year following the year shown.						

(2) *Impact of Experience Apportionments*

For the years 1998 through 2007, Table II shows the number of ordained minister Plan members (with at least fifteen years of service) retiring at or after age sixty-five and the average annual amount of their pensions at the time of retirement. By applying the experience apportionments granted over the past ten years, the Benefits Plan has been able to fulfill its intent to shelter both pension credits and retirement income from the inroads of inflation. The average pension with an inflationary increase based solely on the CPI is shown for comparison.

<b>TABLE II</b>				
<b>Average Annual Pensions (1998–2007)</b>				
			<b>Value of Average Pension in 2007</b>	
<b>Year of Retirement</b>	<b>Number of Retirements</b>	<b>Average Annual Plan Pension at Retirement</b>	<b>Reflecting Inflationary Increases</b>	<b>Reflecting Experience Apportionments</b>
1998	157	23,698	30,406	33,033
1999	168	27,110	33,870	34,353

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2000	153	27,651	33,410	32,146
2001	173	31,661	37,652	35,735
2002	151	30,039	34,886	33,905
2003	172	32,015	36,488	36,135
2004	129	31,822	35,110	35,213
2005	133	32,186	34,344	34,579
2006	123	35,158	36,599	36,459
2007	141	32,763		

b. *Administrative Changes to the Pension Plan and Death and Disability Plan*

The eligibility requirements for retirement were modified, effective January 1, 2007, to clarify that a termination of service is required before a member may receive retirement benefits from the Plan, either in the form of a lump-sum distribution or a retirement pension.

Effective January 1, 2008, the definition of Effective Salary was modified to exclude employer matching contributions to the Retirement Savings Plan from Effective Salary. The purpose of this change is to increase employee participation in the Retirement Savings Plan by encouraging employers to provide a matching contribution.

4. *Medical Plan*

In 2006 and 2007, Highmark, as the host “Blue Card” plan, continued to deliver on its commitment to network efficacy, measured by both broad member access and deep provider discounts. Combined savings to the Medical Plan and to its members generated by network use were in excess of \$110 million each year, contributing a level of continued stability to the Plan’s reserves.

While the reserve stability and the 2005 plan year experience allowed the Board of Pensions to hold dues at 19 percent for the 2006 plan year, the risk of reserve erosion made it necessary for the Board of Pensions to raise dues to 19.5 percent for 2007. The overall experience for both 2006 and 2007 was aligned with more optimistic forecasts, but, because the medical care trend continues to significantly outpace payroll increases, it was prudent to take the 2007 dues action. Since that measure had the desired effect, no change in dues was made by the Board of Pensions for 2008.

In addition to more moderate trends in the Medicare Supplement Plan, the advent of the Medicare Part D pharmacy program in 2006 created a relatively stable cost environment for eligible retirees. Specifically, to encourage plan sponsors like the Board of Pensions to continue their Medicare Supplement programs, the Federal government began providing subsidies linked to the value of the Medicare D Prescription Drug Program. In anticipation of receiving this subsidy, individual monthly subscription dues were reduced from \$194 to \$174 (or 10 percent) per month for each subscriber in 2006. Without this subsidy, dues otherwise would have been increased by approximately 15 percent. Having qualified for the Medicare Part D subsidy again in 2007, the Board of Pensions was able to hold these rates constant for 2007 and 2008.

A key strategy for the 2006 plan year was to focus on health management and employee wellness. The Board of Pensions promoted appropriate use of preventive care benefits by offering, on a pilot program basis, \$100 to eligible members who completed all recommended screenings and exams. Early utilization results were a somewhat disappointing 20 percent, but, with additional outreach and conversion from the pilot program to a fully operational plan component early in 2007, the rate of participation by eligible members did increase. The Board of Pensions also initiated lifestyle behavior change programs with the introduction of the Mayo Clinic Tobacco Quitline in October 2006 and encouraged member use of a 24/7 nurse hotline. By the end of 2006, approximately 2,500 Medical Plan participants were actively engaged with CareAllies in the Board of Pensions Disease Management program that targets diabetes and cardiac conditions.

The Board of Pensions’ behavioral health vendor relationship transitioned from ValueOptions to CIGNA Behavioral Health (CBH) in 2006 through a cooperative purchase with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. This relationship with CBH includes care management and claims processing services for mental health and substance abuse as well as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) component. This transition provided another opportunity to promote the EAP program, resulting in an almost 100 percent increase in utilization of EAP-related services by Plan members.

Through its coalition purchasing partnership with other denominations, the Board of Pensions again entertained bids from two competing pharmacy benefit management companies in 2006. The Express Scripts bid was at least as favorable as that submitted by a competitor, resulting in a decision to renew that relationship through 2009. Despite the administrative

cost efficiencies of this arrangement, increased utilization has resulted in double digit increases in the overall cost of the Prescription Drug Program each year. Encouraging the use of the mail order option for maintenance medications was one of the few options the Board of Pensions had to reduce Plan costs without reducing benefits for members. It was projected that, if all members moved to the use of mail order for maintenance medications, estimated annual savings to the Medical Plan would be approximately \$2 million and Plan members themselves would save another \$1 million. While the savings on any one prescription are not large, the cumulative savings are significant since approximately 300,000 prescriptions for maintenance medications are filled each year.

There were two basic options available to the Board of Pensions to increase the use of mail order services, mandatory or preferred home delivery. The Board of Pensions chose the preferred home delivery model, with an effective date of January 1, 2008. Under this model, members will continue to have the option of using a retail pharmacy; however, a surcharge will apply to make up for the higher cost of filling the prescription.

Concurrent with the decision to increase medical dues for 2007, the Board of Pensions implemented new and expanded initiatives to increase personal health stewardship. These initiatives included offering the \$100 Preventive Incentive to more than 18,000 Plan members aged fifty and older and the expansion of its Disease Management Program to address fourteen additional conditions, including, among others, lower back pain, oncology needs, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and depression. This expanded Disease Management program has resulted in the active engagement of more than 5,000 members struggling with chronic conditions. An additional health management initiative included the launching of a customized Mayo Clinic e-health portal, EmbodyHealth, and the Mayo Clinic Health Risk Assessment (HRA). EmbodyHealth provides active members and their families with a credible and reliable online source of independent health information, tools, and resources from one of the most trusted names in healthcare. Approximately 8,000 members have registered on the site. By completing the online HRA, participants obtain a personalized report that identifies their specific health risks and directs them to available health improvement resources.

The Affiliated Benefits Program (ABP) continues to function as a viable option for many employing organizations that want to provide comprehensive medical coverage, and/or disability and death benefits to their employees. By design, its aggregate experience has been self-supporting since its inception. Following back-to-back years of 15 percent dues increases in 2004 and 2005, the ABP had no increase in 2006. Dues for 2007 and 2008 rose 8.8 percent and 9.2 percent, respectively, consistent with revenue growth for the Traditional Medical Plan. Enrollment has declined slightly, ending 2007 at 1,951 members. This number reflects a decrease of just over 7 percent from the 2005 Plan year. To help retain this business, the Board of Pensions continues to hold an annual ABP informational forum in conjunction with the Regional Benefits Consultations.

The 213th General Assembly (2001) asked the Board of Pensions to comment in its future reports about the parity of mental health benefits provided through the Benefits Plan by “Urg[ing] The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to evaluate, on an annual basis, issues of parity between coverage for mental health and medical and surgical benefits under plans offered by the Board of Pensions and include their evaluation in their annual reports to future General Assemblies” (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 48–49). Other than the addition of a disease management program for depression, there have been no changes since the last report that would affect the parity of these benefits. The Board of Pensions believes that the parity standard continues to be satisfied.

## 5. *Assistance Program*

### a. *Overview*

In keeping with its promise to care for those who devote their lives to the church, the Board of Pensions’ Assistance Program helps advance the mission of the church in two key ways:

- by providing an important safety net to church workers and their families whose needs exceed the bounds of the Benefits Plan and personal resources, and
- by strengthening the church’s future leadership by providing strategic assistance and support to pastors who need it.

Support for this program comes from gifts, legacies directed to the Board of Pensions, endowment income, and one half of the undesignated portion of the Christmas Joy Offering.

### b. *Retirement Housing Program*

The Retirement Housing Program was initiated in 1883 to provide housing for eligible ministers. This program consists of the Homes Program, which offers affordable housing in properties owned by the Board of Pensions, and the Housing Sup-

plement Program, which gives financial assistance to help retirees maintain their own homes or move to retirement communities.

(1) *The Homes Program*

Persons who have served in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for twenty years or more are eligible for the Homes Program. Rents in this program are structured so that residents pay according to their ability, contributing the lesser of:

- thirty percent of their total annual income, excluding post-retirement earned income, or
- an appraised fair rental value of the home.

The Homes Program presently consists of two individual homes and twenty-two houses in a cluster called El Sombroso Oaks in Los Gatos, California. Homes related to various governing bodies of the church also provide services under contract with the Board of Pensions.

(2) *Transition to the Housing Supplement Program*

More ministers are purchasing homes during the course of their ministry than in earlier generations. This reality has lowered the demand for church-related retirement housing. Recognizing this shift, the Board of Pensions requested permission from the 200th General Assembly (1988) to change the Homes Program from one based solely on homes owned by the Board of Pensions to one based on housing assistance supplements. The General Assembly approved this change in strategic direction and authorized the sale of properties then owned and received thereafter, with the proceeds going to the Housing Supplement Program. The General Assembly withheld approval for the sale of two housing communities operated by the Board of Pensions and instructed it to continue its "ownership and management of the clusters at Morganwood (Swarthmore, Pennsylvania) and El Sombroso Oaks (Los Gatos, California) with no further sale of these clusters without General Assembly Approval" (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 97).

The 214th General Assembly (2002) approved the sale of Morganwood, a cluster of twenty-nine housing units. On October 29, 2003, an agreement of sale for Morganwood was signed with Swarthmore College, a Quaker-affiliated institution adjacent to the Morganwood property. The proceeds from the sale are used to support the Retirement Housing Program and provide subsidies to current Morganwood residents. Under the agreement of sale, the current residents are entitled to continue living in their units until they choose to vacate them or at the expiration of twenty years from the closing date (January 14, 2004), whichever is earlier. The Board of Pensions provides subsidies to the continuing Presbyterian residents of Morganwood who are related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Board of Pensions. These subsidies totaled approximately \$170,300 for 2006 and \$161,800 for 2007. Each year, the Board of Pensions reviews the subsidies with the residents to determine their future needs.

Similarly, the 215th General Assembly (2003) approved an affiliation agreement between Southern California Presbyterian Homes (SCPH) and Westminster Gardens. The agreement was signed by all parties and the certificate of authority was received from the Department of Social Services in California, effective May 4, 2004.

Westminster Gardens, Duarte, California, was established in 1949, by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., to care for retired missionaries. Since its founding, this retirement community has been available for retired church workers and their spouses. The denomination assigned responsibility for the oversight of the affairs of Westminster Gardens to the Board of Pensions in 1972.

As part of the affiliation agreement with SCPH, the Board of Pensions guaranteed a line of credit, obtained by Westminster Gardens, to a maximum of \$3,500,000 for a period not to exceed five years. The line of credit was for the initial phase of rehabilitation work on the Westminster Gardens property and was secured by a promissory note and deed of trust in favor of the Board of Pensions. This line of credit was paid in full on December 27, 2006. As a result, the guarantee on the line of credit provided by the Board of Pensions was also cancelled on December 27, 2006.

Under the terms of the affiliation agreement, the Board of Pensions is providing rent subsidies to residents who are related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Board of Pensions. The total amount of the subsidy was \$281,500 in 2006, and \$231,500 in 2007. These payments were in addition to the direct assistance provided to qualifying residents under the Board of Pensions Income and Housing Supplements Programs.

Over the long term, the Board of Pensions expects to continue to reduce the number of retirement homes it owns and operates and focus its efforts on providing financial assistance for the housing needs of eligible retirees and their spouses.



c. *Financial Assistance Programs*

The financial assistance programs provide emergency and ongoing financial aid for members of the pension and health-care plans and, for some programs, other employees of Presbyterian churches. They also work to strengthen future leadership for the church by providing strategic assistance and support to pastors.

In recent years, the Board of Pensions has introduced a number of pilot programs as it seeks to be more proactive in addressing the needs of church workers. These pilot programs are intended to complement the traditional assistance programs.

The financial assistance programs have been organized under three overarching categories:

(1) *Church Workers: Urgent Financial Needs*

(a) *Shared Grants*

These grants are designed to meet the financial needs that an active or retired church worker is unable to handle. The objective is to help the person who has a financial problem with everyday needs or medical/dental costs not covered by the Benefits Plan or insurance. A grant is shared by a governing body and/or an employing organization and the Board of Pensions. Annual Shared Grants are usually approved for a calendar year but are disbursed monthly. Other Shared Grants are approved for a one-time payment or can be a monthly disbursement for a period of less than a calendar year.

(b) *Emergency Assistance Grants*

These grants are provided for one-time, special needs when no other financial resources are available. At times, members may have special needs that are beyond the scope of the Benefits Plan. Occasionally, governing bodies and employing organizations are unable to participate in a Shared Grant because of insufficient funds.

(c) *Adoption Assistance Grants*

These grants are distributed to members of the Benefits Plan who adopted a child (under age 21) on or after January 1, 2006. The monies for these grants come from gifts to the Assistance Program and the Relief of Conscience Fund. One grant of \$3,000 is given for each eligible adopted child to help defray the cost of the adoption. Adoption Assistance Grants were made totaling \$57,000 in 2006, and \$84,000 in 2007.

(d) *Transition-to-College Assistance Grants*

These grants are distributed to eligible members of the traditional Benefits Plan who have a child enrolled as a full-time freshman at an accredited college or university and whose adjusted gross income is below twice the churchwide median salary. The grants are meant to help mitigate transitional, one-time expenses, such as the purchase of a computer or dorm room furnishings, that are not covered by traditional financial aid. (This is a three-year pilot program begun in 2007.)

(2) *Retired Church Workers: Financial and Housing Needs*

(a) *Income Supplements*

These supplements are designed to raise the monthly income of retired church workers and their surviving spouses whose total annual income from all sources is below levels established by the Board of Pensions. The guidelines for the Income Supplement program are reviewed each year. The guideline levels for 2007 were \$24,600 for a single person and \$29,520 for a married couple. For 2008, the levels are \$25,700 and \$30,840, respectively.

(b) *Housing Supplements*

These supplements provide financial assistance to help eligible retirees and their surviving spouses remain in their own homes or move to a retirement facility. Each year the guideline for the Housing Supplements program is reviewed. The maximum annual income level guideline for Housing Supplement eligibility in 2007 was \$34,400. For 2008, it is \$36,000. (This program provides the financial assistance component of the Retirement Housing Program for eligible retirees.)

(3) *Pastors: Vocational Leadership Needs*

(a) *Seminary Debt Assistance Grants*

These grants are provided to ministers of the Word and Sacrament serving in the first seven years of ministry after ordination. To be eligible, a minister of the Word and Sacrament must be in a full-time, called, pastoral position in a PC(USA) church of less than 150 members with a budget of less than \$250,000. An eligible minister may receive a grant of up to \$2,500 per year for up to four years to help repay loans incurred while pursuing education leading to a Master of Divinity degree. (This pilot program has been extended through 2010.)

(b) *Middle Governing Body Grants*

These are matching grants of up to \$20,000 that are provided to a synod or a group of three or more presbyteries to help them conduct continuing education events focused on practical skills training for pastors. (This is a three-year pilot program begun in 2006.)

(c) *Sabbath Sabbatical Support Grants*

A three-year pilot program begun in 2008, these grants are designed to help pastors serving congregations of less than 200 members take sabbaticals that will strengthen their skills and renew their ministries. The grants are for \$3,000. This program is administered in cooperation with synods and presbyteries.

(d) *Presbyterian CREDO*

Presbyterian CREDO is modeled after a very successful program of the Church Pension Fund of the Episcopal Church. Its mission is to provide opportunities for clergy to examine significant areas of their lives and to prayerfully discern the future direction of their vocation as they respond to God's call in a lifelong process of practice and transformation. During an eight-day, faith-based conference, Presbyterian CREDO helps ministers examine vocational, financial, health, and spiritual aspects of their ministries and discover how these seemingly disparate parts of their lives intersect. The CREDO experience is designed to trigger personal discovery through guided reflection, introspection, and dialogue. Each participant commits to extensive reflection through pre-conference instruments that focus on personal and professional wellness. In 2006, the Board of Pensions conducted three CREDO conferences with the assistance of Episcopal CREDO. In 2007, four Presbyterian CREDO conferences were held. There will be seven conferences in 2008.

d. *Funds Development*

In response to the continuing and emerging needs of ministry and the challenges facing those who serve the church, the Board of Pensions entered a more deliberate phase in its funds development effort in 2005.

The Christmas Joy Offering remains a vital financial support to the Assistance Program, and the Board of Pensions continues to work with the racial ethnic schools and the staff of Mission Education and Promotion to promote this denomination-wide offering.

In examining long-term trends in the usage of the Assistance Program and in consultation with the larger church, the Board of Pensions has determined that financial support beyond half of the Christmas Joy Offering is required to meet the increasing demands on existing programs and to fund new programs to meet emerging needs.

To ensure communication with other national entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that are also seeking contributions, the Board of Pensions designed and hosted an Executive Funds Development Forum to agree on and implement "Principles of Funds Development." In 2003, the agency leaders agreed to use these principles as a basis for coordinating their efforts.

The Board of Pensions has selected a theme for funds development communications ("Keeping Our Promises") and established the capability for online contributions through the Board of Pensions Web site, [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org). It also established a planned giving initiative to encourage deferred gifts and approved a gift acceptance policy. Finally, as a means to describe its programs and communicate opportunities for financial support, the Board of Pensions published a booklet in 2007 that describes in detail the Assistance Program and its theological foundations.

6. *Conflicts of Interest and Ethics*

The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has policies covering conflicts of interest and ethics. The directors and employees have complied with those policies.

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**B. *New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.***

New Covenant Trust Company, N.A. (NCTC) was chartered January 2, 1998, as the first Nationally Chartered Trust Company owned by a not-for-profit foundation. The NCTC serves as back-office service provider for the Foundation and the endowment funds it holds as fiduciary for the benefit of the General Assembly, local congregations, and other Presbyterian-affiliated organizations. The company also serves as investment adviser to New Covenant Funds and trustee of various types of trust instruments in which there is a Presbyterian or Presbyterian-related beneficial interest. The Board of the NCTC has

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enacted policies and procedures to ensure compliance with banking and securities law and provides oversight of the delivery of trust services to the Presbyterian community.

The distributing broker dealer for the Funds, through whom the Foundation and NCTC employees are licensed, is New Covenant Funds Distributor, Inc. (“the Distributor”), a wholly owned subsidiary of NCTC. The distributor is subject to oversight by the NCTC board and thus, ultimately the Foundation and the General Assembly.

The Foundation and NCTC consistently strive to deliver superior service to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and seek to enhance the vehicles available to Presbyterians to express their Christian faith and generous stewardship. We are also exploring ways to partner with Presbyterian and related organizations in the delivery of enhanced trust services, such as personal trusts, wholly charitable trusts, and charitable remainder trusts. The NCTC now accepts IRA accounts and provides life and legacy financial planning. These estate-planning devices provide an opportunity to care for loved ones while providing for planned giving opportunities.

The following individuals have been confirmed by former General Assemblies and continue in their service as directors of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.

*Former Foundation Trustees*

Karen C. Anderson, CPA, White, female, married, lay, under 50, Synod of the Pacific; Lynwood L. Battle Jr., retired, black, male, single, lay, over 50, Synod of the Covenant; George J. Hauptfuhrer III, investment adviser, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of South Atlantic; Robert A. McNeely, banker, black, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Southern California; Richard J. Seiwel, (former adjunct trustee), investment adviser, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of the Trinity; B. Cary Tolley III, tax attorney, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of South Atlantic.

*OGA Designee*

Doska D. Ross, OGA staff, white, female, single, lay, over 50, Synod of Living Waters.

*GAC Designee*

Currently, there is a vacancy in the position for the GAC designated board member while we await a nomination by the GAC.

*NCTC Staff*

Robert E. Leech, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Living Waters.

*Other*

Bruce K. Dudley, estate planning attorney, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Living Waters; Susan R. Ingram, manager, treasury, white, female, married, lay, under 50, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic; Charles H. Self III, investment manager, black, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Lincoln Trails.



## Item 16-01

[The assembly approved Item 16-01 with amendment. See p. 33.]

*On Reaffirming Our Common Faith in Jesus Christ—From the Presbytery of East Tennessee.*

The Presbytery of East Tennessee overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to

1. affirm as sisters and brother[s] in Christ[,] our common faith in~~[, and allegiance to,]~~ Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; and

2. request that~~[, at his discretion,]~~ the Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008) ~~[say before every vote]~~ [when calling for the vote say:] ~~[‘As sisters and brothers in Christ,]~~ [‘Sisters and brothers,] sharing our common faith in~~[, and allegiance to,]~~ Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, [and walking humbly with our God,] let us proceed to vote on the question before us.

### *Rationale*

In the PC(USA), individuals professing faith are asked, “Who is your Lord and Savior?” They respond, “Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.”

Persons ordained and installed as officers and ministers of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA) affirm faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

The PC(USA) desperately needs an affirmation of common ground.

Our mutual affirmation of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is the common ground that allows us to talk about any and all issues.

Without this common faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, there is not an issue we can address together.

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## Item 16-02

[The assembly approved Item 16-02 with comment. See pp. 33–34.]

*A Call to Seek God for Spiritual Renewal of the Church—From the Presbytery of San Joaquin.*

The Presbytery of San Joaquin overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to call upon each congregation and presbytery of the PC(USA) to gather in Solemn Assemblies within the next two years, to seek God for spiritual renewal of the Church of Jesus Christ, following the command of God through the prophet Joel<sup>1</sup>.

### *Comment:*

Realizing that worship is our response to God’s love for us and that we pray for God to “put a new and right spirit within [us]” (Ps. 51:10), we invite each congregation and presbytery of the PC(USA) to gather in times each sets aside for spiritual renewal through intentional gatherings such as spiritual assemblies, which may include personal and community worship, meditation, confession, forgiveness, fasting, and prayer.

Recognizing the biblical value of solemn assemblies for spiritual renewal, we request the Office of Theology and Worship to make available materials to include rich varieties of worship, Bible study, prayer, Christian meditation, and other spiritual disciplines.

### *Rationale*

For decades the PC(USA) has attempted to turn the tide of decline in mission and membership, but to little avail. We have also labored to serve as salt and light in a society that appears to be growing darker with the passage of time. It seems that our efforts, as well intentioned as they have been, have been insufficient.

We can point to many causes for the ills of our great church, but we will have little hope of remedy until we embrace the reality that we cannot cure ourselves. But, that does not mean we are beyond hope. A study of history reveals that when churches and nations have fallen upon hard times and the people of God have turned to God for remedy, God has often given a fresh lease on Life<sup>2</sup>.

One means by which the people of God have sought God's remedies has been through Solemn Assemblies. Such gatherings are described frequently in Scripture, including those called by Moses, David, Nehemiah, and Joel, and the meeting of Jesus' disciples in the upper room following His ascension. Solemn Assemblies are simply times for God's people humbly to ask for God's perspective, to listen carefully, to confess our sins, to receive forgiveness in Jesus Christ, and to be freed to grow toward the fullness of the grace and truth that characterize our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>3</sup>.

No matter what our theological perspectives might be, we are united in our common need of God's grace. The call to Solemn Assembly is a call to join as one at the foot of the cross of our Lord and to beseech His mercy, in light of the promise of 2 Chronicles 7, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (vs. 14).

Further information is available at [www.heartrest.org](http://www.heartrest.org)

#### Endnotes

1. Joel 2:12-17.
2. Joel 1ff; "One of the most amazing instances of the fruit of a Solemn Assembly is the Revival of the General Assembly in the Church of Scotland in 1596" ("The Solemn Assembly," R. O. Roberts, p. 7.).
3. John 1:14.

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**Concurrence to Item 16-02 from the Presbytery of Stockton.**

## Item 17-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 17-01. See p. 16.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Youth Participation at the General Assembly.*

That the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) direct the Office of the General Assembly to celebrate youth and affirm their unique gifts and talents by welcoming and encouraging their full participation at each General Assembly, including service as volunteers.

### ***Rationale***

In 2008, youth (ages 12–17) from Central Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia, offered to volunteer at the General Assembly. Examples of the volunteer opportunities offered that the youth wished to provide were: ushering during worship, assisting with registration and ticket sales, and exhibit hall monitors. The youth were not allowed to volunteer at the 218th General Assembly (2008) due to an age restriction that all volunteers be at least eighteen years old.

In polity, theology, and witness, the gifts of youth are upheld, honored, and experienced in community through full participation in the life of the church. This resolution is to extend the reach of their inclusion beyond local congregations and into the General Assembly.

**POLITY:** The *Book of Order* outlines our understanding of membership in the church, participation by non-members, and presents a standard that is consistent in its inclusion of women and men of all ages.

Chapter III: The Church and Its Mission: Section G-3.0401b

b. [The Church is called] to a new openness to its own membership, by affirming itself as a community of diversity, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, and conditions, and by providing for inclusiveness as a visible sign of the new humanity.

Chapter IV: The Church and Its Unity: Section G-4.0403

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church. (G-9.0104a)

Chapter V: The Church and Its Members: Section G-5.0301a

Persons not members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are entitled to the following privileges:

a. All persons are welcome to participate in the life and worship of this church.

Chapter IX: Governing Bodies: Section G-9.0104a

a. Governing bodies of the church shall be responsible for implementing the church's commitment to inclusiveness and participation as stated in G-4.0403. All governing bodies shall work to become more open and inclusive and shall pursue affirmative action hiring procedures aiming at correcting patterns of discrimination on the basis of the categories listed in G-4.0403.

**THEOLOGY:** In Scripture, we hear God's claim on us all as members of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12–26). The church, as the body of Christ, is woven together with these many different members, yet we are all connected to and dependent on each other. Just as the eye cannot say to the hand "I have no need of you" (1 Cor. 12:21), neither can one age demographic say to another "I have no need of you." While not all members have the same function (Rom. 12:4), Scripture clearly describes that all gifts are welcomed and needed to be the body of Christ (Rom. 12:4–8).

God's call is to all and extends to all ages. The stories of God's call to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:11–16), Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4–10), and David (1 Sam. 16:6–13) contain a consistent message of youth being called as prophets and leaders.

**WITNESS:** Asked why they wanted to be able to volunteer at the General Assembly, the youth from Central said:

"Every person is a child of God and we should all be able to participate." "Through full participation, we honor the gifts of everyone." "We want to take on more responsibility and involvement." "It will be more fun if we can serve." "We want to be a part of the church now and not have to wait until we are eighteen." "We want to experience the sense of community that comes with being part of the direction of the church."

Hearing and experiencing the witness of youth in our congregations has helped us understand how vitally important their faith is to them and how critical it is that we value their gifts and support their full participation in the life of the church. Experiences we have had in our church communities that compel us to share them with the General Assembly are:

Youth as church officers: elders and deacons;

Youth leadership in worship: youth Sunday, youth choir, youth handbell choir, lector, liturgist, ushering;

Youth leadership in mission: domestic and international mission trips, night shelter, foot clinic, outreach and advocacy center, AIDS walk, Hunger Walk;

Youth leadership in education: vacation Bible school group leaders, youth committee co-chair, youth committee members, assisting with younger children during congregational events.

The Reverend Jonathan Scanlon, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta  
Elder Marie Andrews, Presbytery of Western Reserve

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## Item 17-1NB

[The assembly approved Item 17-1NB. See p. 16.]

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) direct the Office of Ministry with Youth to**

- 1. provide the resource center or resource contact person of each presbytery with a copy of the DVD *Soul Searching* to enhance the outreach to teens; and**
- 2. prepare a study guide to accompany the DVD.**

### *Rationale*

A major component of the information gathering completed by the Assembly Committee on Youth was the viewing of the documentary *Soul Searching: A Movie About Teenagers and God*, a creative representation of the findings of the National Study of Youth and Religion (<http://www.youthandreligion.org>). The committee found this DVD and the study it represents to be eye-opening resources of great value. As many of our congregations struggle to connect meaningfully with youth and young adults, it was the judgment of the vast majority of the committee that congregations and presbyteries would gain helpful insights from viewing this film.

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## Item 17-2NB

[The assembly approved Item 17-2NB. See p. 16.]

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008)**

- 1. Asks commissioners to take back to their churches and presbyteries the recommendation to develop a mentoring program for young people in their congregations and presbyteries, and to prayerfully and seriously consider being a mentor to at least one young person and enhance walking humbly with God.**
- 2. Direct the Office of Ministries with Youth to**
  - a. affirm the importance of the use of mentors in the spiritual formation of youth, with attention to “tweens” (ages 9–12), teenagers (ages 13–18), and also to young adults (ages 18+);**
  - b. create and/or identify, and to disseminate tools and appropriate educational materials for training mentors and emphasizing active listening;**
  - c. develop worship and programmatic resources to celebrate the rites of passage for “tweens,” “teens,” and young adults, and to commission their mentors.**
  - d. include on the PC(USA) Website a page to report on the experiences of mentors.**



*Rationale*

The Assembly Committee on Youth identified several key needs of youth after considering all the information gathered. Among these was the need for acceptance and belonging, for adults to listen with respect, for leadership development, and for a safe place to question and learn the language of faith. The committee felt that many of these needs are best addressed through the development of quality relationships between adults and young people. It was the desire of the committee that such relationships be encouraged through the creation of mentoring programs within congregations and for the development of resources to support such programs. This was of such great importance to members of the committee that they desired immediate implementation by those gathered at this assembly.

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**Item 17-3NB**

[The assembly approved Item 17-3NB. See p. 16.]

**The 208th General Assembly (2008) directs the Moderator of the General Assembly to appoint a task force to seek input from youth, young adults, and adults to continue the dialogue begun at this assembly; find and present model programs; and focus on the needs and development of youth ministries, and report back to the 219th General Assembly (2010) specific recommendations for designing and conducting various youth ministries under a “new vision” for youth. The task force would be composed of ten youth and young adults, ages 15–21, and five adult mentors. The task force would meet four times prior to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

*Rationale*

It is undeniable that investing valuable General Assembly time and energy to consider youth, a crucial generation in our faith communities, was an essential exercise and is one that merits more time, attention, and resources that could be offered in the short time available at the General Assembly. Though the committee sought to discern God’s vision for youth and the PC(USA), this is a task that will require more time and more intensive youth involvement for its adequate completion. The Assembly Committee on Youth has begun an important dialogue that should be continued in a task force with a two-to-one youth-to-adult ratio. We became convinced that youth are best equipped to articulate the needs and possibilities for effective youth ministry and for a more comprehensive inclusion of youth in the life and mission of the church, but also that intergenerational collaboration contributes to fruitful discernment. It is the understanding of the committee that there are existing funds allocated within the budget of Office of Ministries with Youth that could be appropriately redirected to this effort.

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**Item 17-4NB**

[The assembly approved the referral of Item 17-4NB to the Youth Ministry Task Force. See p. 16.]

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) refers the following matter to the task force created if Item 17-3NB is approved:**

- a. The inclusion of both youth (ages 12–18) and young adults (post-secondary school);**
- b. That congregations increase their efforts at fulfilling their commanded responsibility to nurture youth and young adults in their calling as disciples of Jesus Christ; and**
- c. That congregations set as their goal the nurture of youth and young adults, confirmed as active members of the church, to become full partners in the life and mission of the Church.**

*Rationale*

In order to facilitate the continuation of the committee dialogue, the committee wishes to pass on the above matters to the task force for their continued consideration.

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## Item 17-5NB

[The assembly approved Item 17-5NB. See p. 16.]

**That the 218th General Assembly (2008) urge the Office of the General Assembly to consider the following recommendation to the 219th General Assembly (2010): Since the age range of YADs is currently 17–23, the designation of youth advisory delegate is not a fitting description of these delegates. Therefore, we urge the official name of these persons be changed to young adult advisory delegates (YAADs).**

### *Rationale*

A widely accepted definition of youth is ages 12 to 18. As the age range of YADs is 17–23, most fall outside of this accepted definition of youth. Out of respect for the young adults who embrace this crucial role, we urge the adjustment of the name to more adequately reflect reality.

A Comment on Process: While the committee feels positively about the business generated through the implementation of the process of communal discernment, the committee leadership feels it is important to note that the limited time available to committees of the General Assembly presents substantial challenges to the learning of and full implementation of a discernment model.

## **SECTION THREE**

### **SUPPLEMENT:**

Roll of the General Assembly,  
Standing Rules,  
Commissioning Service,  
Moderators and Clerks,  
Members of Entities Elected by the General Assembly,  
Necrology List



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ROLL OF COMMISSIONERS AND YOUTH ADVISORY DELEGATES

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YAD Christopher Kinney

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Elder Chandlee Gill  
Rev. Kirianne Weaver  
Elder Daniel Rogers  
YAD Keith Coombs

**ARKANSAS**

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Elder Art Ritter  
Rev. John E King  
Elder Dawn Scarborough  
YAD Nate Pyle

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Elder Bumsoo Kim

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Rev. Roger Powers  
Elder Mike Billings  
Rev. Walter Peters  
Elder Adrienne Knight  
YAD Melissa Kardish

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Elder George Gardner  
Rev. Paul Wierman  
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Rev. John Hamilton  
Elder Pam Watts  
Rev. LaVerne Davenport  
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Rev. John Barlow  
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Elder Kim Kambak  
Rev. Sung Man Kim  
Elder Sandi Schwarm  
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Elder Susan Peterson  
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Elder Nancy Nutter  
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Elder Bobby Overcash  
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Rev. David Grove  
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 Rev. Mark Patterson  
 Elder Ron Urzua  
 YAD Mark Tapia

**SANTA FE**

Rev. David Preininger  
 Elder John Robertson  
 YAD Janelle Chavez

**SAVANNAH**

Rev. Greg Garis  
 Elder John Ricks  
 YAD Jacob Douylliez

**SCIOTO VALLEY**

Rev. David Downton  
 Elder Bill Acklin  
 Rev. Dana Knapp  
 Elder Joyce Smith  
 Rev. Ginny Teitt  
 Elder Brenda Wilson  
 YAD Michael DiBartola

**SEATTLE**

Rev. James Patten  
 Elder Gary Ireland  
 Rev. Randy Butler  
 Elder Rick Boogaard  
 Rev. Jesse Mabanglo  
 Elder Steve Aeschbacher  
 YAD Hanna Kahl

**SHENANDOAH**

Rev. Richard Reifsnnyder  
 Elder Paul Dana  
 Rev. Sarah Hill  
 Elder Mary Lou Cox  
 Rev. Daniel Williams  
 Elder Mack Wilson Jr.  
 YAD Emily Peterson

**SHENANGO**

Rev. Glenn Hink  
 Elder David Braymer  
 Rev. Bill Hoffman  
 Elder Debbie Carr  
 YAD Addie Domske

**SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY**

Rev. Monty Clendenin  
 Elder Meredith Byram  
 Rev. Greg Bentley  
 Elder Lyle Wilson  
 YAD Caitlin Gilliland

**SIERRA BLANCA**

Rev. Clyde Davis  
 Elder Stephen Hardin  
 YAD Austin Provencher

**SOUTH ALABAMA**

Rev. Steven Kurtz  
 Elder Toby Gurley

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

Rev. Janis Christensen  
 Elder Peri Erdmann  
 Rev. Carolyn Visser  
 Elder Linda Matkins  
 YAD Lea Kleinjan

**SOUTH LOUISIANA**

Rev. Lisa Lani Easterling  
 Elder Catherine J. McGowen  
 Rev. Frederick N. Seay  
 Elder Todd Mulford  
 YAD Amber Ellington

**SOUTHEASTERN ILLINOIS**

Rev. Rodger Allen  
 Elder Coralee Lawder  
 Rev. Cindy Shepherd  
 Elder Dennis Bartlow  
 YAD Elizabeth Peters

**SOUTHERN KANSAS**

Rev. Arlene Patrick  
 Elder Mary Knecht  
 Rev. Ben Ray  
 Elder Jan Luttrell  
 YAD Cindy Eschliman

**SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND**

Rev. Paul Terry  
 Elder Lisa Baker  
 Rev. Joan Withers-Priest  
 Elder Janet Houser  
 YAD Kwame Gyampo

**SUROESTE**

Rev. Carmen J Torres-Cordero  
 Elder Angel Casaus-Urrutia  
 YAD Jennifer Perez-Ortiz

**STOCKTON**

Rev. Paul Fandl  
 Elder Bruce Bush  
 YAD Joshua Clegg

**SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY**

Rev. Douglas Horne  
 Elder Laura Lawson  
 YAD Jennifer Peak

**TAMPA BAY**

Rev. Douglas McMahon  
 Elder Kathy Bardin  
 Rev. Timothy Black  
 Elder Elizabeth Ward  
 Rev. James Hatch  
 Elder H Brian Lewry  
 Rev. Kathleen Trautwein  
 Elder J Allen MacKenzie  
 YAD Christina Fullerton

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**TRANSYLVANIA**

Rev. Melissa Sevier  
Elder Ronnie Grigsby  
Rev. Rollin Tarter  
Elder Julie Maggard  
YAD Nora Weston

**TRES RIOS**

Rev. Jim Miles  
Elder Kay Long  
YAD Brittney Springer

**TRINITY**

Rev. Robert Scotland  
Elder Joann Scotland  
Rev. D Lee Bowling  
Elder Ann Felten  
Rev. Judy Bowling  
Elder Rudy Long  
YAD Sally Ann McKinsey

**TROPICAL FLORIDA**

Rev. William Stepp  
Elder Eric Young  
Rev. Mary Wright  
Elder Delores Baker  
YAD Kadeem Lovell-Martin

**TWIN CITIES AREA**

Rev. April Davis Campbell  
Elder Sue Goodspeed  
Rev. Walter F Chuquimia  
Elder Terry Schermer  
Rev. Andrew Lindahl  
Elder Thomas Soulen  
Rev. Cynthia Ray  
Elder Brenda Tiefenbruck  
YAD Dale Utt

**UPPER OHIO VALLEY**

Rev. John Brown  
Elder Robert Starck  
Rev. Andrew Woods  
Elder Jeanne Cox  
YAD Kayla Cline

**UTAH**

Rev. Nancy Cormack-Hughes  
Elder Marilyn Collins  
YAD Mia Levetan

**UTICA**

Rev. Judith Westerhoff  
Elder Betsy Allen  
YAD Joanna Gallo

**WABASH VALLEY**

Rev. Gretchen Seidler-Gibbs  
Elder Lesly Casper  
Rev. Nancy C Kahaian  
Elder Darcy Metcalfe  
Rev. Robert Leach  
Elder Michael A Shurn  
YAD Ali DeVries

**WASHINGTON**

Rev. Thomas Ribar  
Elder Elizabeth Todd  
Rev. Joseph Rychcik  
Elder Judith Scott  
YAD Eric Bowman

**WEST JERSEY**

Rev. Lynne Manilla  
Elder Hank Heidler  
Rev. John Sheldon  
Elder Cricket Cohen  
YAD Michael Mishkovsky

**WEST VIRGINIA**

Rev. George Spransy Jr  
Elder Nancy Baldwin  
Rev. Adrian Pratt  
Elder Bob Hutton  
YAD Kelly Stephens

**WESTERN COLORADO**

Rev. Max Kendrick  
Elder Katrina Jameson  
YAD Lizy Thorne

**WESTERN KENTUCKY**

Rev. Jon Faraone  
Elder David Dossett  
YAD Ellen Bravard

**WESTERN NEW YORK**

Rev. William James Hardy  
Elder Gregg Borland  
Rev. Eric Ledermann  
Elder Joanne Martin  
YAD Katherine Boswell

**WESTERN NORTH  
CAROLINA**

Rev. Martin Harkey  
Elder Lois Camp  
Rev. Maggie Lauterer  
Elder J. D. Waldrop  
Rev. Laura Long  
Elder Kathy Parse  
YAD Elizabeth Hill

**THE WESTERN RESERVE**

Rev. James R Gilbert  
Elder Marie Andrews  
Rev. Francis P Miller II  
Elder Rose Stackhouse  
YAD Courtney Payne

**WHITEWATER VALLEY**

Rev. Frank Mansell  
Elder William Johnson  
Rev. Steve Matthies  
Elder Mark Moore  
Rev. Linda Philabaun  
Elder Kristy Quinn  
YAD Jenna Gunnoe

**WINNEBAGO**

Rev. Richard Moore  
Elder Jess Wakefield  
Rev. Susan Phillips  
Elder Kathalyn Smith  
YAD Meghan Keller

**WYOMING**

Rev. Steven Frank  
Elder Freda Dixon  
YAD Erin Weisshaar

**YELLOWSTONE**

Rev. Dan P Krebill  
Elder Michael Gapay  
YAD Karrie Bostrom

**YUKON**

Rev. Tamara Letts  
Elder Marjorie Poggas  
YAD Megan Penayah

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**THEOLOGICAL STUDENT ADVISORY DELEGATES (TSAD)**

Marjorie Ackerman	Pittsburgh Seminary	Emily Miller	Louisville Seminary
Caroline Blakely	Princeton Seminary	Sarah Montgomery	Union - PSCE
Marcie Brozyna	Palmer	Jeffrey Schooley	Pittsburgh Seminary
Peter Bynum	Union—PSCE	Suzanne Swartz	San Francisco Seminary
Scott Clark	San Francisco Seminary	Brenton Thompson	McCormick Seminary
Brian Coulter	Columbia Seminary	Matthew Thompson	Austin Seminary
Amy Florence	Princeton Seminary	Jonathan Tony	Gordon Conwell Seminary
Sarah Feltman Hegar	Austin Seminary	Grant VanderVelden	Dubuque Seminary
Danilie Hilerio-Villanueva	Evangelical Seminary—PR	Ryan White	San Francisco Seminary
Bill Honor	Johnson C. Smith Seminary	Christopher Williams	Dubuque Seminary
Olive Mahabir	Johnson C. Smith Seminary	Kathy Wolf	Columbia Seminary
Emily McGinley	McCormick Seminary	Karin Wright	Louisville Seminary
Derrick McQueen	Auburn Seminary		

**MISSIONARY ADVISORY DELEGATES (MAD)**

Annette George	Thailand	Sue Kinsler	Republic of Korea
Sue Ellen Hall	Sudan	Walt Shepard	Democratic Republic of Congo
Kathryn Hoffman	India	David Wiseman	Guatemala
Tracey King	Spanish Evangelical Church	Jeannene Wiseman	Guatemala

**ECUMENICAL ADVISORY DELEGATES (EAD)**

Lowell Almen	Evangelical Lutheran Church, America	Mulumba M. Mukundi	Presbyterian Community Congo
Avak Asadourian	Armenian Apostolic Church, Iraq	Not Assigned	Int. Council Community Churches
Manuel Covarrubias Bravo	Presbyterian Church of Chile	Eliezer M. Pascua	UCC in the Philippines
Didier Crouzet	Reformed Church of France	William D. Pool	Uniting Presbyterian Church, Southern Africa
Yvonne A. Isidora-Gumbs	United Protestant Church of Curacao	Janice Sloan	African Methodist Episcopal Church
Jacob Se Jang II	Korean Presbyterian Church in America	Hiroko Ueda	United Church of Christ in Japan
Lecton R Kaluah	CCA Presbyterian	Eric Williams	Church of God in Christ
Prem Masih	Church of North India		

**CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

**Stated Clerk, Associate, and Assistant Stated Clerks**

Loyda Aja	Associate Stated Clerk	Martha Miller	Associate Stated Clerk
Kerry Clements	Associate Stated Clerk	Marcia Myers	Assistant Stated Clerk
Deborah Davies	Assistant Stated Clerk	Gradye Parsons	Stated Clerk-Elect
Lesley Davies	Assistant Stated Clerk	Kerry Rice	Assistant Stated Clerk
Laurie Griffith	Assistant Stated Clerk	Joan Richardson	Assistant Stated Clerk
Frederick Heuser Jr.	Associate Stated Clerk	Doska Ross	Assistant Stated Clerk
Jill Hudson	Associate Stated Clerk	Margery Sly	Assistant Stated Clerk
Evelyn Hwang	Assistant Stated Clerk	Valerie Small	Assistant Stated Clerk
Clifton Kirkpatrick	Stated Clerk	Mark Tammen	Associated Stated Clerk
Joyce Lieberman	Assistant Stated Clerk	Julia Thorne	Assistant Stated Clerk
Carlos Malave	Assistant Stated Clerk	Robina Winbush	Associate Stated Clerk
Jewel McRae	Assistant Stated Clerk	Sharon Youngs	Assistant Stated Clerk

**Moderators of Earlier Assemblies**

Fahed Abu-Akel	Freda A. Gardner	Jack Rogers
Susan Andrews	Joan Gray	Rick Ufford-Chase
John M. Buchanan	Charles A. Hammond	Herbert D. Valentine
Marj Carpenter	Harriet A. Nelson	Benjamin M. Weir
David Dobler	Syngman Rhee	

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Synod Executives**

Alaska-Northwest Covenant	Joyce Emery Marie T. Cross	Pacific Puerto Rico	Robert Brink Edwin Quiles
Lakes and Prairies	Philip Brown	Rocky Mountains	Zane Buxton
Lincoln Trails	David Crittenden	S. California and Hawaii	Margy Wentz
Lincoln Trails	Carol McDonald	South Atlantic	Reg Parsons
Living Waters	Terry Newland	Southwest	Jan DeVries
Mid-Atlantic	John Winings	Sun	Judy Fletcher
Northeast	Clint McCoy Jr.	Trinity	Bruce Stevens

**Theological Institution Presidents**

Union—PSCE	Brian Blount	Johnson C. Smith Seminary	Mark Lomax
Dubuque Seminary	Jeffrey Bullock	Columbia Seminary	Laura Mendenhall
San Francisco Seminary	Philip Butin	Louisville Seminary	Dean K. Thompson
McCormick Seminary	Cynthia Campbell	Princeton Seminary	Iain R. Torrance
Pittsburgh Seminary	William J. Carl III	Auburn Seminary	Barbara Wheeler

**Advisory Committee on the Constitution**

William Chapman	John Matta	Daniel Saperstein
Paul K. Hooker	Frances Pitts	James Wilson
Alyson Janke	Stewart Pollock	Mark Scarberry
Catherine MacDonald		

**Committee on the Office of the General Assembly**

James Babcock	Stephen Grace	Cathy Ulrich
John Baugh	Kent Grimes	Kathleen Walker
Helen Cochrane	Dennis Hughes	John Wilkinson
Barbara Corwin	Jerrold Lowry	Robert Wilson
Barbara Campbell Davis	John Purcell	

**General Assembly Committee on Representation**

Stanley Bhasker

**General Assembly Nominating Committee**

Janet Schlenker

**Permanent Judicial Commission**

Wendy Warner

**General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations**

Ed Chan

**Committee On Review—OGA**

John Cairns

**Committee On Review—GAC**

Bill Longbrake

**Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee**

Chris Lenocker

**Form of Government Task Force**

Cynthia Bolbach  
Sharon Davison

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Stated Clerk Nomination Committee**

Stephen Grace

**General Assembly Council**

Frank Adams  
Carol Adcock  
Joey B. Bailey  
Charles Easley Sr.  
Susan Ezell  
Curtis Kearns Jr.

Mary M. King  
Linda Knieriemen  
Michael Kruse  
Dale Morgan  
Manley Olson

Karen Schmidt  
Allison Seed  
Tom Taylor  
Linda B. Valentine  
Mary Lynn Walters

**Advisory Committee On Social Witness Policy**

B. Gordon Edwards

**Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns**

F. William Gray

**Advocacy Committee For Racial Ethnic Concerns**

Noushin Framke

**Committee On Theological Education**

Joel Weible

**Presbyterian Youth Connection**

Gregory Carlisle  
Nancy Cooper

**Board Of Pensions**

Jefferson Aiken  
Robert Maggs

**Presbyterian Foundation**

Timothy Clark  
James Hudson  
Robert Leech

**Presbyterian Publishing Corporation**

Ken Godshall  
Marc Lewis

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment & Loan Program, Inc.**

Mickie Choi-Hoe

**ECUMENICAL ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES**

Rev. Luis Perez Alanoca	Independent Presbyterian Church of Bolivia	Rev. Maays Elisyah Baura, S. Th.	Christian Church in South Sulawesi
The Reverend Frank Kwame Anku	Evangelical Presbyterian Church	Deacon Erika Brooks	Lithuanian Evangelical Reformed Church, Chicago
Sr. Mauricio Argueta	Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Costa Rica	The Reverend Dimitrios Boukis	Greek Evangelical Church
Rev. Pastor Manuel Nzoh Asumu	Reformed Presbyterian Church of Equatorial Guinea	Rev. Te-Chien Chang	The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan
Rev. Lipana M. Bappa	United Church of Christ in Nigeria (HEKAN)	Rev. Peter Cheyne	Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Ecumenical Advisory Representatives (*Continued*)**

Rev. Doug Chial	World Council of Churches	Shagufta Nargis Noreen	Church of Pakistan
Rev. Elisa Muñoz de Bulmes	Presbyterian Church of Venezuela	Rev. Herbert Anim Opong	Presbyterian Church of Ghana
Helis Hernan Barraza Diaz	Presbyterian Church of Colombia	Rev. Jeronimo Ernesto Panda	Evangelical Reformed Church of Angola
Rev. Martha Raquel Nino Duran	Reformed Synod of Colombia	The Rev. Soo-Kil Park	Korean Christian Church in Japan
Dr. J.J. Kobus Gerber	Dutch Reformed Church	Rev. Claudio Pasquet	Waldensian Evangelical Church
Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson	Reformed Church in America	Rev. Assir Pereira, Moderator	Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil
Rev. Benoni E. Hernandez	United Evangelical Church of Christ (Philippines)	Rev. Kumbuke Piyadasa	The Presbyterian Church in Sri Lanka
Rt. Rev. Tan Cheng Huat	The Presbyterian Church in Singapore	Rev. Joel Ruml	Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren
Rev. Sandhya Jha	Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	Rev. Bas Plaisier	Protestant Church in the Netherlands
The Reverend Stephen Kendall	Presbyterian Church in Canada	Rev. Dirk Reinken	The Episcopal Church Reformed Church in Zimbabwe
The Very Rev. Sheilagh Kesting	The Church of Scotland	Rev. Wilbert Runyowa	The United Church of Canada
Rev. Kyung In Kim	The Presbyterian Church of Korea	Nora Sanders	Moravian Church in America
Dr. Michael Kinnamon	National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.	Rev. Dr. Robert E. Sawyer	Evangelical Church of the River Plate, Argentina
Rev. Melissa Knight	Cumberland Presbyterian Church	Rev. Juan Abelardo Schvindt	Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
Rev. Elrose Fredrick Lyngdoh	Presbyterian Church of India	Rev. Jae-Il Seo	Mara Evangelical Church
Bishop Earl McCloud	African Methodist Episcopal Church	Rev. C. Sitlo, General Secretary	Congregational Christian Church in Samoa
Rev. Jun Minami	The Church of Christ in Japan	Rev. Elder Esekielu Situfu Tanielu	Reformed Church of Hungary
Rev. Manoel de Souza Miranda	United Presbyterian Church of Brazil	Rev. Zoltán Tarr	Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria
Rev. Titus Risimati Mobbie	Evangelical Presbyterian Church in S.A.	The Reverend Yakubu Ishaya Tsojon	Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal
Rev. Ik Bai Moon	Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Bolivia	Dr. David Valente	United Church of Christ
Rev. Joseph Musiitwa	Reformed Presbyterian Church in Uganda	Rev. Lydia Veliko	The Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (FSPC)
Rev. Olivier Munyansanga Ndayizeye	Presbyterian Church in Rwanda	Rev. Thomas Wipf	Spanish Evangelical Church
		Dr. Pedro Zamora	China Christian Council
		Jing Zhang	

**ECUMENICAL GUESTS**

Rev. Dr. & Mrs. Seong Gi Cho	Presbyterian Church of Korea	Elder & Mrs. Jung Soo Oh	Presbyterian Church of Korea
Rev. Serge Fornerod	Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches	Rev. & Mrs. Hee Jong Park	Presbyterian Church of Korea
Elder Patricio Contesse Gonzales	Presbyterian Church of Chile	Henna Plaisier	Protestant Church in the Netherlands
Rev. & Mrs. Chang Man Jang	Presbyterian Church of Korea	Young-Hee Rho	Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
Professor Junko Kikuchi	Church of Christ in Japan	Lydie Rumlová	Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren
Rev. & Mrs. Dong Woon Kim	Presbyterian Church of Korea	Rev. Michael Trice	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Rev. & Mrs. Young Tae Kim	Presbyterian Church of Korea	Atalua Tanielu	Congregational Christian Church in Samoa
Rev. Gerson Lacerda	Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil		
Elder & Mrs. Ki Hwan Lee	Presbyterian Church of Korea		
Rev. & Mrs. Seok Hyeong Lee	Presbyterian Church of Korea		
Elder & Mrs. Soo Keun Li	Presbyterian Church of Korea		
Rev. Milton Mejia	Presbyterian Church of Colombia		

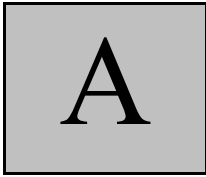




# Standing Rules of the General Assembly

[AS AMENDED BY THE 218TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2008).]

## STANDING RULES FOR MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY



### Sources of Business for the Meeting

1. **Papers in General**
  - a. Papers to Be Considered
  - b. Received Less Than 60 Days Prior to General Assembly
2. **Reports of Entities, Commissions, and Committees**
  - a. Reports Deadline
  - b. Budget Consultation
  - c. Appropriate Background Information
  - d. Report Length
3. **Overtures**
  - a. Definition
  - b. Writing Overtures
  - c. Submitting Overtures
  - d. Distributing Overtures
  - e. Overture Advocate
4. **Communications and Resource Material**
  - a. Provide Comment or Advice
  - b. Forty-five Day Deadline
  - c. Resource Materials
  - d. Advice and Counsel Memoranda
5. **Advisory Committee on the Constitution Report**
  - a. Report
  - b. Presented Directly to General Assembly
6. **Entity and Synod Minutes**
  - a. Submit for Review
  - b. Review Process
7. **Presbytery Reports**
8. **Commissioners' Resolutions**
  - a. Who May Propose
  - b. Deadline
  - c. Existing General Assembly Policy
  - d. May Not Amend *Book of Order*
  - e. Already Before Assembly
  - f. Same Issues as Previous Assembly
  - g. Referral
  - h. Referral Declined

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### 1. Papers in General

#### Papers to Be Considered

a. The General Assembly shall consider only those papers delivered to the Stated Clerk in compliance with Standing Rule A and any other papers whatsoever that have been delivered to the Stated Clerk. Ordinarily, such papers shall have been forwarded to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly.

#### Received Less Than 60 Days Prior to General Assembly

b. All papers intended for consideration by the General Assembly that are forwarded to the Stated Clerk and postmarked less than sixty days, but no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be reviewed by the Stated Clerk, who shall determine whether or not to refer them to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. The Stated Clerk

shall report to the committee regarding those papers not referred.

## 2. Reports of Entities, Commissions, and Committees

### Reports Deadline

a. All reports from entities, commissions, and committees of the General Assembly shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk on or before 120 days prior to the convening of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall publish these reports (print or electronic) and distribute them so that they shall reach the commissioners thirty days before the convening of the General Assembly.

### Budget Consultation

b. An entity, commission, or committee submitting a report with a recommendation that affects the work or budget of another entity(ies) shall submit evidence that a consultation has been held with the affected entity(ies).

### Appropriate Background Information

c. Committees, agencies, or corporations presenting reports shall provide the appropriate background information necessary to interpret or understand the recommendations or responses to referrals to the members of the General Assembly committees to which the business is referred. Any and all documents or publications referred to in these reports that require approval by the assembly for publication and distribution to the church, including but not limited to curriculum, study papers/guides, position papers, and program resources, shall be made available to commissioners at the time the reports are published.

### Report Length

d. All reports shall be limited to ten thousand words except the report of the General Assembly Council, the length of which shall be determined by the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council. A request for an exception to the length of a report shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no later than forty-five days prior to the deadline for the submission of the report and shall include the anticipated length of the report. The Stated Clerk may assess a fee of the entity or committee whose report exceeds ten thousand words for the costs incurred in printing and distributing the excess pages. Payment of the fee shall be submitted to the treasurer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation. If the Stated Clerk and the representatives of any body are unable to agree, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall determine the length of the report.

## 3. Overtures

### Definition

a. Overtures are items of business that must have been approved by a presbytery or a synod and shall request the General Assembly to take a particular action, or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution. (See *Book of Order*, G-11.0103t(3).)

### Writing Overtures

b. The stated clerk of a presbytery or synod considering an overture to the General Assembly shall:

(1) Examine the most recently published *Minutes of the General Assembly* to determine if a similar overture has already been passed.

(2) Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether the desired action has been voted by any previous General Assembly.

(3) Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether a similar overture has already been proposed in order that the presbytery or synod may concur with the existing overture.

(4) Draft the overture in the following form:

“The Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_ overtures the [# of the assembly] General Assembly [(year)] of the PC(USA) to [state the specific action the General Assembly is asked to take].”

To this shall be appended a rationale, stating the reasons for submitting the overture.

**Submitting Overtures**

c. Submitting Overtures

(1) Overtures proposing an amendment to the *Constitution* or requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* (see *Book of Order*, G-18.0301a and G-13.0112c) must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, and shall be promptly referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (see *Book of Order*, G-13.0112d and G-18.0300).

(2) All overtures that have financial implications for current or future years' budgets must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly. Overtures with financial implications not received within the designated time limit shall not be considered, but shall be returned to the originating governing body.

(3) All other overtures intended for consideration by the General Assembly shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly.

(4) Overtures not received within the designated time limits shall not be considered, but shall be returned to the originating governing body for reconsideration.

(5) Presbyteries or synods submitting overtures with a recommendation(s) that affects the work or budget of a General Assembly entity(ies) shall submit evidence that the affected entity(ies) has (have) been consulted. If such evidence is not submitted, the Stated Clerk shall recommend that the overture be received and referred to a future session of the General Assembly so that consultation may take place.

(6) In the event that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly receives an overture similar to one already proposed (excluding the rationale), she or he shall inquire of the presbytery or synod in question whether it would be willing to concur with that existing overture or desires to withdraw the overture. A presbytery or synod concurring with an overture may submit additional rationale for its action, provided that it does not duplicate the rationale provided by the overturing body. The concurrence and any additional rationale will be printed with the original overture in the Reports to the General Assembly.

**Distributing Overtures**

d. Overtures that do not propose constitutional amendment or interpretation, and that are postmarked at least sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be published (print or electronic) in the reports distributed by the Stated Clerk. Overtures received in the same manner, postmarked no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be distributed to the commissioners before the convening of the General Assembly.

**Overture Advocate**

e. Overture Advocate

(1) Each presbytery or synod that submits an overture shall notify the Stated Clerk of the name of a commissioner or some other person in attendance at the General Assembly who has been designated as the advocate for the overture. The overture advocate shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.)

(2) In the event that the assembly refers an overture to a General Assembly entity for further consideration (and not simply for implementation), the presbytery or synod submitting the overture shall be invited by the Stated Clerk to designate an overture advocate for the assembly meeting at which the entity's response to the overture is presented. The overture advocate shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.)

#### 4. Communications and Resource Material

**Provide**

a. Communications and resource material provide comment or advice on business already

<b>Comment or Advice</b>	<p>under consideration by the assembly and shall neither contain nor constitute business to be considered by the assembly. Communications may be directed to the General Assembly</p> <p>(1) by entities of the General Assembly that desire to comment on a single item of business coming before the General Assembly from any source other than their own entity, but which do not introduce new business,</p> <p>(2) by organizations in which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds membership, and</p> <p>(3) by other denominations in correspondence with the General Assembly.</p>
<b>Forty-five Day Deadline</b>	<p>b. All communications intended for consideration by the General Assembly shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly.</p>
<b>Resource Materials</b>	<p>c. Resource material (except for previously published books), including advice and counsel memoranda from advocacy and advisory committees, shall be prepared as necessary by entities of the General Assembly and shall not exceed 1,000 words on each item of business referred. This material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the assembly meeting, who shall then publish (print or electronic) and distribute the material to all commissioners prior to the assembly.</p>
<b>Advice and Counsel Memoranda</b>	<p>d. Advice and counsel memoranda are resources prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns for the purpose of providing information about existing policy, current work on specific topics, recent developments, and other factors useful to commissioners as they consider issues before the assembly.</p>
<b>5. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Report</b>	
<b>Report</b>	<p>a. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report to the General Assembly its findings along with its recommendations on all questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the <i>Book of Order</i>, including proposals for constitutional change. “The General Assembly shall vote on the recommendations, and may amend or decline to approve them” (<i>Book of Order</i>, G-13.0112d). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report any editorial changes made to the <i>Book of Order</i> since its last report to the General Assembly.</p>
<b>Presented Directly to General Assembly</b>	<p>b. The report of the committee shall be presented directly to the General Assembly. The General Assembly may take action on the recommendations immediately, or it may refer them to an assembly committee for consideration by that committee and report to the General Assembly for action later during the same session of the General Assembly.</p>
<b>6. Entity and Synod Minutes</b>	
<b>Submit for Review</b>	<p>a. Entities and synods required to submit minutes for review by the General Assembly shall submit such minutes on a calendar year basis so as to present minutes of all meetings for the calendar year (from January 1 through December 31) preceding the year in which is held the session of the General Assembly to which such minutes are submitted. The minutes shall contain the attestation that they have been approved by the entity or synod submitting them in the manner regularly in use within that body.</p>
<b>Review Process</b>	<p>b. Minutes of General Assembly entities will be reviewed in accordance with the “Guidelines for Preparation of Minutes of Agencies” as printed in the <i>Manual of the General Assembly</i>. Minutes of the synods will be reviewed in accordance with “Guidelines for Reviewing Synod Records” as printed in the <i>Manual of the General Assembly</i>. In addition, the provisions of <i>Book of Order</i>, G-9.0409, shall apply, including whether:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) The proceedings have been correctly recorded;</li> <li>(2) The proceedings have been regular and in accordance with the <i>Constitution</i>;</li> </ol>

- 
- (3) The proceedings have been prudent and equitable;
  - (4) The proceedings have been faithful to the mission of the whole church;
  - (5) The lawful injunctions of the General Assembly have been obeyed. (*Book of Order*, G-9.0409)

## 7. Presbytery Reports

Each presbytery shall act upon all papers sent to the presbytery to be voted upon in ample time to permit the stated clerk of the presbytery to mail the results to the Stated Clerk so that they are received no later than two weeks before the convening of the General Assembly. The response of the presbytery shall be mailed to the Stated Clerk by certified mail.

## 8. Commissioners' Resolutions

### Who May Propose

a. Any two commissioners may propose an item of new business, known as a commissioners' resolution, for assembly consideration by delivering it in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk's designee. No commissioner may sign more than two resolutions.

### Deadline

b. The Stated Clerk shall determine and announce at the first meeting at which business is conducted the deadline for receipt of commissioners' resolutions. The deadline shall not be earlier than twenty-four hours after the assembly has convened.

### Existing GA Policies

c. In the preparation of a resolution, commissioners are urged to be aware of existing General Assembly policies relevant to their proposal and, where appropriate, to make reference to these policies.

### May Not Amend *Book of Order* Already Before Assembly

d. Commissioners' resolutions shall not contain business that requires an amendment to or interpretation of the *Constitution* (see *Book of Order*, G-18.0301(a)).

e. The Stated Clerk shall not transmit as new business any resolution that deals with matters of business already before the General Assembly, nor transmit any resolution whose purpose can be achieved by the regular process of amendment and debate.

### Same Issues as Previous Assembly

f. Should the commissioners' resolution deal with substantially the same issue considered by one of the two previous sessions of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall recommend that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures take one of the following actions on the commissioners' resolution: "refer to a subsequent assembly," "decline for consideration," or "take no action."

### Referral

g. If the proposed resolution does deal with new business, the Stated Clerk shall transmit it to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures with a recommendation for its referral.

### Referral Declined

h. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures may decline to refer proposed items of new business if it decides that the matters proposed are already before the assembly or that the purpose of the proposals can be reached by the process of amendment and debate. Proposed items of business not referred, whether declined by the Stated Clerk or the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, shall be identified in the first report of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures distributed to commissioners after the period docketed for committee meetings, with a brief description of the content and a statement of the reasons for declining the proposed business. Twenty-five percent of commissioners present and voting is required to overturn action of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures to decline, take no action, or refer a commissioners' resolution to a subsequent assembly. If a commissioners' resolution affects a substantial change in an existing social witness policy, the Stated Clerk should recommend to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures that it be referred to the next General Assembly.



# B

## Commissioners, Delegates, and Other Participants at the Meeting

1. **Commissioners**
  - a. Election
  - b. List Delivered by 120 Day Deadline
  - c. Able to Attend
  - d. Entitlements, Expenses
  - e. Newly Created Presbytery's Commissioners
  - f. Missionary Advisory Delegate
  - g. Ecumenical Advisory Delegate
2. **Advisory Delegates**
  - a. Definition
  - b. Categories
  - c. Voting Privileges
  - d. Youth Advisory Delegates
  - e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates
  - f. Missionary Advisory Delegates
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3. **Corresponding Members**
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  - b. Entitled to Speak, Not Vote
4. **Advisory Committee on the Constitution**
5. **Other Participants**
  - a. Special Guests
  - b. Ecumenical Representatives
  - c. Resource Persons
  - d. Presbytery Staff
  - e. Ecumenical Visitors
  - f. Interfaith Representatives
6. **List of Participants**

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<b>Election</b>	<b>1. Commissioners</b> a. Each presbytery shall elect commissioners to the General Assembly in accordance with <i>Book of Order</i> , G-13.0102. The number of commissioners attending General Assembly will be based on the number of active members, including resident clergy members of presbytery. The figures for active members will be taken from the information recorded in <i>Minutes of the General Assembly</i> , Part II, <i>Statistics</i> of the year in which per capita apportionment is assessed for the year in which General Assembly meets.
<b>List Delivered by 120 Day Deadline</b>	b. Presbyteries shall elect commissioners in sufficient time to permit the list of commissioners to be delivered to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are commissioned.
<b>Able to Attend</b>	c. Ministers and elders considered for election as commissioners must be able to be in attendance for the duration of the General Assembly.
<b>Entitlements, Expenses</b>	d. Commissioners shall be entitled to speak under the rules, and to vote and present motions in meetings of the General Assembly and of assembly committees to which they are assigned. Commissioners shall be reimbursed for approved expenses.
<b>Newly Created Presbytery's Commissioners</b>	e. In the case of a newly created presbytery, the presbytery shall be entitled to elect commissioners to the General Assembly if the qualifying enrollment of ministers and congregations in that presbytery shall have been completed by December 31 of the year preceding the assembly meeting (see <i>Book of Order</i> , G-13.0102).

<b>Alternates</b>	<p>f. Presbyteries may elect alternates in number up to, but not exceeding, the number of commissioners to which the presbytery may be entitled. Such alternates shall be seated with other visitors to the assembly.</p>
	<p><b>2. Advisory Delegates</b></p>
<b>Definition</b>	<p>a. Advisory delegates are persons who are active members in one of the constituent churches or governing bodies of the General Assembly (or, in the case of ecumenical advisory delegates, of a denomination of Christians designated by the General Assembly) who are selected to attend the meeting of the General Assembly in an advisory role so that the assembly may be assured of hearing and taking cognizance of their special viewpoints.</p>
<b>Categories</b>	<p>b. There shall be four categories of advisory delegates: youth, theological student; missionary, and ecumenical. The expenses of each advisory delegate shall be paid by the General Assembly (see Standing Rule I.3.) on the same basis as the expenses of commissioners (see Standing Rule B.2.f.(2) below for exception).</p>
<b>Voting Privileges</b>	<p>c. Advisory delegates shall be assigned to assembly committees as voting members and shall have the privilege of the floor of the General Assembly without vote. Only voting members shall have the privilege of proposing or seconding a motion. When certain issues come before a plenary session of the General Assembly, the advisory delegates may be polled prior to the vote of commissioners to determine their advice.</p>
<b>Youth Advisory Delegates</b>	<p>d. Youth Advisory Delegates</p> <p>(1) Each presbytery shall appoint an active member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who shall be between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three years on the date the General Assembly convenes, to be a youth advisory delegate.</p> <p>(2) Each presbytery will request each candidate for youth advisory delegate to submit an application/questionnaire and be interviewed by an appropriate presbytery committee in order to ensure the selection of the best qualified person to serve as youth advisory delegate. The youth ministries staff shall prepare and distribute to each presbytery a sample/suggested questionnaire for use in reviewing candidates for election as youth advisory delegates.</p>
<b>Theological Student Advisory Delegate</b>	<p>e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates</p> <p>There shall be a delegation of theological student advisory delegates each year: two from each of the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); one from each of the theological institutions in a covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and one each from three selected other theological seminaries. The selection process for these delegates is as follows:</p> <p>(1) Each theological institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate three students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. Two of these students shall be designated by the institution as delegates and the other student shall be designated as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery, or a student nominated by the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, who shall transmit the names of the two students to be delegates to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.</p> <p>(2) Each theological institution in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate two students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. One of these students shall be designated by the institution as the delegate and the other student as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.</p>



(3) All non-Presbyterian theological school represented by corresponding members on the Committee on Theological Education and one additional non-Presbyterian theological seminary shall be asked to nominate one theological student advisory delegate and one alternate. The additional non-Presbyterian seminary shall be chosen on a rotating basis, descending alphabetically, from those that have at least twelve Presbyterian enrollees (either inquirers or candidates under the care of a presbytery) as of October 1 in the year preceding the assembly.

(4) Nominated students shall have at least one more year of study following the assembly remaining in their degree program. The Stated Clerk shall forward the name of the nominated students to the presbyteries of jurisdiction for election and confirmation.

**Missionary  
Advisory  
Delegates**

f. Missionary Advisory Delegates

(1) There shall be eight missionary advisory delegates who shall be chosen by the Worldwide Ministries Division from persons who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and mission personnel assigned by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in another country in which this church is engaged in mission. To the degree possible, the selection shall provide a global geographical representation with no two delegates representing the same country or geographical area and rotating the geographical representation. The Worldwide Ministries Division shall notify the Stated Clerk at the time these persons are named.

(2) The expenses to the General Assembly of each missionary advisory delegate shall include transportation only from the point of entry or domicile of the delegate in the United States and return.

**Ecumenical  
Advisory  
Delegates**

g. Ecumenical Advisory Delegates

There shall be up to fifteen ecumenical advisory delegates. Ten of these delegates shall be from churches outside of the United States. No more than five shall be from member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Ecumenical advisory delegates shall be selected by the highest ecclesiastical authorities of their churches, in response to the invitation of a previous General Assembly. The assembly shall extend such invitations at the recommendation of the General Assembly Council upon nomination by the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

### 3. Corresponding Members

**Definition**

a. The following persons shall be corresponding members: Moderators of earlier General Assemblies; the Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, and other members of the staff of the Office of the General Assembly as designated by the Stated Clerk; the members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly; the members of the GAC Executive Committee and staff of the General Assembly Council, and of the divisions and related entities designated by the council; all members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution; the executives of synods; one person designated by each entity reporting directly to the General Assembly, including permanent, special, and advisory committees (additional persons may be designated by such bodies if authorized by the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly in consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly); and the presidents (or their designee) of the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and seminaries related by covenant agreement.

**Entitled to  
Speak, Not Vote**

b. Corresponding members shall be entitled to speak, under the rules, in meetings of the General Assembly and of assembly committees on matters related to the work of the body represented, but they may neither vote nor present motions.

#### 4. Advisory Committee on the Constitution

During the General Assembly, three or more members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution [this committee] shall be present at the session of the General Assembly to advise the General Assembly and its Moderator on constitutional matters (*Book of Order*, G-13.0112e).

#### 5. Other Participants

##### Special Guests

a. The assembly, out of honor, courtesy, recognition, and the need for information and resource material, may recognize other persons as guests or observers. As such, they may be invited by the General Assembly to speak to the assembly for the purpose of conveying greetings or messages, or bringing enlightenment or information germane to the decision-making process. An assembly committee may extend a similar invitation at its own meeting.

##### Ecumenical Representatives

b. Ecumenical representatives are individuals sent at the initiative of another church to be the official representative of that church. The Stated Clerk shall announce to member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches the date and place of the next meeting of the General Assembly. When officially certified through appropriate ecclesiastical channels at least forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, these persons shall be welcomed as guests of the General Assembly and introduced to the governing body through the report of the assembly committee addressing ecumenism. The assembly shall assume the expense and housing of such guests on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.

##### Resource Persons

c. The assembly may welcome persons invited by the General Assembly Council or another entity of the General Assembly for the purpose of establishing or affirming particular ecumenical, mission, or program relationships, or assisting the entity in the presentation of particular items of business. Any expense reimbursement shall be the responsibility of the inviting entity.

##### Presbytery Staff

d. The presbytery's executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery's stated clerk shall be supplied with all reports and materials related to the General Assembly, but shall not be entitled to speak in plenary meetings or in meetings of assembly committees unless called upon by a moderator to provide information.

##### Ecumenical Visitors

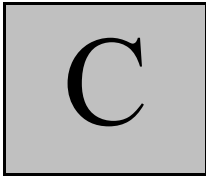
e. Ecumenical visitors are individuals attending a session of the General Assembly at their own initiative. These persons are welcomed to the assembly as unofficial visitors. The assembly shall assume no expenses for these ecumenical visitors.

##### Interfaith Representatives

f. Interfaith Representatives—Three observers of other faiths or religious traditions, who shall be representatives chosen by recognized religious bodies of non-Christian religious traditions and/or faith communities shall be present at the assembly at the invitation of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations. The interfaith representatives shall be present with the church in its deliberations, and to speak to the assembly for the purpose of conveying greetings or messages, or bringing information germane to the decision-making process. The assembly shall assume the expense of housing and on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.

#### 6. List of Participants

Upon request, the Stated Clerk shall make available the list of participants registered for a session of the General Assembly to entities of the General Assembly, governing bodies of the denomination, educational institutions, ministers of the Word and Sacrament, elders, and independent organizations composed primarily of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A fee will be charged for lists or mailing labels to cover the costs incurred for printing, postage, and handling.



## Formation of Committees and Referral of Business

1. **Assembly Committee Structure**
  - a. Number and Designation of Assembly
  - b. Committee Assistants
  - c. Assembly Committee Moderator and Vice Moderator
  - d. Assembly Committee on Business Referral
  - e. Orientation
2. **Assigning Commissioners to Assembly Committees**
  - a. Committee Assignments
  - b. Notification of Assignment
  - c. Assignment List Provided
  - d. Random Selection Process
3. **Referring Business**
  - a. Recommendation for Referral of Business
  - b. General Assembly Action on Referrals
  - c. How Referred
  - d. Referral Considered by One Committee
  - e. Referring Overtures to Committees
4. **Tentative Document**

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<b>Number and Designation of Assembly Committees</b>	<b>1. Assembly Committee Structure</b> <p>a. The Stated Clerk shall propose the number and designation of assembly committees to the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall present the proposed committee structure to the General Assembly for consideration and ratification at the first assembly meeting at which business is transacted. In making these proposals, the Stated Clerk shall consult with the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities, and may consult with other persons.</p>
<b>Committee Assistants</b>	<p>b. The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly for appointment the names of persons to serve as committee assistants for the duration of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall consult with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly before recommending persons to serve as committee assistants. Persons proposed shall not be commissioners to the General Assembly or staff members of entities of the General Assembly or any person who is a member of the General Assembly Council or any person who is a member of any other entity of the General Assembly. A committee assistant shall be appointed to provide staff services to each assembly committee. The appointments shall be made in accordance with <i>Book of Order</i>, G-4.0403.</p>
<b>Assembly Committee Moderator and Vice Moderator</b>	<p>c. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall appoint a commissioner to be moderator and a second to be vice moderator of each committee. Final appointment shall be made only after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and then also with representatives of the General Assembly Committee on Representation regarding the inclusivity mandated in the <i>Book of Order</i>, G-4.0403 and G-9.0104. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including any committees dealing with finance and budgets, shall be elders. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees should be women. No more than one person from any one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator or vice moderator. All synods shall be equitably represented.</p>
<b>Assembly Committee on Business Referral</b>	<p>d. The moderators and vice moderators of the assembly committees, as a group, shall function as the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. The moderator and vice moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall function as the moderator and vice moderator of this committee as well. This committee shall report to the assembly for its action at the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business.</p>

**Orientation** e. The Stated Clerk shall conduct an orientation for moderators, vice moderators, and committee assistants of assembly committees no less than three weeks prior to the convening of the General Assembly. The orientation shall include information regarding business likely to be referred to each committee; suggested procedures for dealing with business referred to committees, especially the use of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*; utilization of available resources, both persons and materials; and preparation and presentation of assembly committee reports. The Stated Clerk, following consultation with the General Assembly Council, may invite persons designated by the council as General Assembly resource coordinators to participate in the orientation. During this orientation, the Assembly Committee on Business Referral shall meet and carry out the duties given it by these rules. The Assembly Committee on Business Referral shall also meet, if necessary, just prior to the convening of the assembly and its function shall end at the convening of the assembly.

## 2. Assigning Commissioners to Assembly Committees

**Committee Assignments** a. Forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner and advisory delegate to one of the assembly committees by the random selection process described in this standing rule.

**Notification of Assignment** b. No later than thirty days before the convening of the assembly, commissioners shall receive the number and designation of committees. At the same time that the number and designation of committees is communicated, the Stated Clerk shall notify each person of the assignment, the time of their first meeting, and the necessity to confirm appropriate housing and travel arrangements.

**Assignment List Provided** c. The Stated Clerk shall provide a list of the assignments to those who need it to facilitate the work of the General Assembly.

**Random Selection Process** d. Commissioners and advisory delegates shall be assigned to assembly committees by random selection as follows:

(1) The Stated Clerk shall divide the presbyteries into six regional districts. Each district shall be composed of one or more presbyteries so arranged that, insofar as possible, the presbyteries in the district have contiguous boundaries and the numbers of commissioners in the several districts are approximately equal. Within each district the presbyteries shall be arranged alphabetically. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be listed alphabetically in two parallel lists: the first containing the names of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament; the second, the elders. In those cases where the presbytery has not designated commissioners, the position shall be listed as vacant so that the name may be inserted later when the Stated Clerk is notified. The names of moderators and vice moderators of assembly committees shall be removed from the list and the names below them shall be moved up to fill the vacated positions. The minister commissioners and vacant positions for minister commissioners shall be numbered in sequence. The list of elder commissioners in each district shall be rotated downward so that no elder commissioner is opposite a minister commissioner from the same presbytery. Separate lists of groups identified in *Book of Order*, G-4.0403, shall be prepared, insofar as it may be practical, to assure the most equitable distribution of such commissioners to the various committees in accordance with *Book of Order*, G-4.0402.

(2) The Stated Clerk shall list the youth advisory delegates in one list arranged in the alphabetical order of the presbyteries that designated the delegates. In any case where the presbytery has not designated a youth advisory delegate, the position shall be listed as vacant so that the name may be inserted later when the Stated Clerk is notified.

(3) The Moderator shall pick by lot a number from one to ten. This number shall identify the number of the name in the first column of names in each district in which the assignment will begin. It will also identify the number of the youth advisory delegates in which assignment will begin.

(4) The Moderator shall then pick by lot a second number equal from one to the number equaling the total number of committees. This number shall identify the assembly committee in the order in which the committees are arranged in the standing rules to which the first assignment of members shall be made.

(5) The assignment of members of the assembly committees shall then proceed in sequence. When initial assignments have been made to all committees in sequence so that the committees with the fewest number of commissioners are full, additional assignment shall be made to the other committees in the same manner, until all commissioners and youth advisory delegates have been assigned to committees.

(6) The Stated Clerk shall assign missionary advisory delegates and ecumenical advisory delegates to assembly committees in consultation with those delegates. Ordinarily not more than two persons in each of these categories shall be assigned to any one assembly committee.

(7) Theological student advisory delegates will be assigned to committees at the same time and in the same way as are commissioners to ensure their full participation and attendance.

(8) Names of commissioners and advisory delegates received after these assignments have been made shall be inserted in the appropriate position in the original list and assigned to the committee to which that position was assigned.

### 3. Referring Business

#### Recommendation for Referral of Business

a. The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a recommendation for the referral of all items of business coming before the General Assembly.

#### General Assembly Action on Referrals

b. After making any necessary changes, this committee shall present the prepared referrals to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral so that it may recommend referrals to the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business. Ordinarily, this committee shall recommend referrals to the General Assembly for its action. When the General Assembly is not scheduled to meet in time to act on its recommendation, the committee may refer business. Such referrals shall be reported to the General Assembly at its next business meeting.

#### How Referred

c. Items of business to be considered by the General Assembly shall be referred in one of the following ways:

(1) for consideration by an assembly committee and recommendation for action by the General Assembly;

(2) for consideration and action by an assembly committee with a report of the action to the General Assembly;

(3) for consideration by the General Assembly through its inclusion in a consent agenda;

(4) for consideration by the General Assembly in a plenary business session.

#### Referral Considered by One Committee

d. Each item of business referred to a committee shall ordinarily be considered by only one assembly committee, but in no case should there be more than one committee making a recommendation on an item of business. Business of a related nature shall be assigned to a single committee insofar as possible.

#### Referring Overtures to Committees

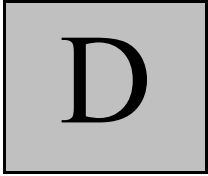
e. The Stated Clerk shall present such items of business to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with a recommendation for their referral. In the event that the presbytery or synod disagrees with the referral recommendation, this procedure shall be followed: The presbytery or synod shall be entitled to submit a written statement regarding the background and intent of the overture at the time the overture is initially being considered

for referral by the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. If, after that committee makes its recommendation, the presbytery or synod still disagrees with the referral recommendation, the presbytery or synod shall notify the Stated Clerk, in writing, of its disagreement. The overture advocate will then be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture at a special meeting of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral that shall be held no more than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the convening of the assembly.

#### **4. Tentative Docket**

a. The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a tentative docket. After making any necessary adjustments, this committee shall present a proposed docket to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral so that it may recommend the docket to the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business.

b. The reports and recommendations of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly regarding the initial docket of the General Assembly and referrals of business shall be referred to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with any items of business not included in them (see Standing Rules I.4.b.(3) and I.4.b.(4)). Review of the minutes of the synods pursuant to G-13.01031 and of statement(s) of compliance with decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission by governing bodies, reported by the Stated Clerk pursuant to IV.B.2.d. of the Organization for Mission, shall be assigned to the same assembly committee. Following the convening of the assembly, such matters shall be directed to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.



## Beginning of the General Assembly Meeting

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Registration and Seating</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Registration of Commissioners and Delegates</li> <li>b. Commissioners with Disabilities</li> <li>c. Assigned Seats</li> <li>d. Alternates</li> <li>e. Ecumenical Representatives</li> <li>f. Presbytery Staff Seating</li> <li>g. Access to Commissioner and Advisory Delegate Seating</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Quorum</b></li> <li>3. <b>Committee Moderators and Overture Advocates Meeting</b></li> </ol> |
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### 1. Registration and Seating

#### Registration of Commissioners and Delegates

a. The Stated Clerk shall enroll commissioners and delegates on the opening day of the General Assembly and at such other times as may be necessary. The Stated Clerk shall determine any question that may arise regarding registration of commissioners and delegates. Any complaints regarding such decision shall be received by the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures.

#### Commissioners with Disabilities

b. A commissioner certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be entitled to designate a person to function as an assistant without vote during all proceedings of the General Assembly, including executive sessions and committee meetings, in order that the commissioner may fully participate in those proceedings. The expenses of the assistant shall be paid for by the General Assembly on the same basis as expenses of commissioners. The Stated Clerk shall also enroll assistants to commissioners who have been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance.

#### Assigned Seats

c. The Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner, advisory delegate, and corresponding member to a seat in advance of the meeting. They shall occupy the assigned seats during each meeting of the General Assembly at which business may be transacted. An assistant to commissioner who has been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be assigned a seat adjacent to the commissioner. The Stated Clerk shall assign seats to commissioners and delegates in a manner that shall assure that the most favorable seats, with regard to the platform, will be assigned to delegations from the various presbyteries in turn through an annual rotation of space assignments.

#### Alternates

d. When a principal commissioner is replaced by an alternate prior to or during the course of an assembly session, whether for the remainder of the session or for a period of time during the session, the alternate shall assume that assembly committee position and seat assignment.

#### Ecumenical Representatives

e. Ecumenical representatives shall be seated on the floor of the assembly in a section clearly designated for such guests.

#### Presbytery Staff Seating

f. The presbytery's executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery's stated clerk shall be provided assigned seating in proximity to the area that corresponding members are seated.

**Access to  
Commissioner  
and Advisory  
Delegate Seating**

g. The only persons who shall be permitted access to the commissioner and advisory delegate seating area during plenary sessions are commissioners, advisory delegates, assistants enrolled by the Stated Clerk to assist commissioners having a disability warranting assistance, the Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, and other staff and assembly assistants who are assigned responsibilities that require access to this area, including assisting at the floor microphones, delivery of official messages to commissioner and advisory delegates, and locating commissioners who are needed on the platform. The Stated Clerk will provide special credentials for the particular staff and assembly assistants who are authorized to enter the commissioner/advisory delegate seating area.

**2. Quorum**

At the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business, the Stated Clerk shall recommend to the General Assembly that the roll call of commissioners be established by registration. Alternately, the Stated Clerk may call the roll of commissioners and advisory delegates by calling the names of absentees as they appear on the roll. After any needed corrections have been made, the Stated Clerk shall announce whether or not a quorum is present (see *Book of Order*, G-13.0105). When commissioners and advisory delegates subsequently register, they shall be seated by the General Assembly. A commissioner who has not registered may not be seated and may not vote.

**3. Committee Moderators and Overture Advocates Meeting**

The Office of the General Assembly shall, on the first business day of the assembly, before committees meet to consider business, organize a forum where assembly committee moderators shall meet with overture advocates to discuss procedures for participation in committee discussion of business related to the overture that they are advocating.



# E

## Committee Meetings

1. **Committee Leadership and Support**
  - a. Moderator and Vice Moderator
  - b. Recorder
  - c. Committee Assistant
2. **Procedures for Assembly Committees**
  - a. Open Meeting
  - b. Parliamentary Procedures
  - c. Use of Resources
  - d. Preparation of Resource Material
  - e. Privilege of Floor
  - f. Overture Advocates/  
Signer of Commissioners' Resolution
  - g. Responsibilities of Overture Advocate
3. **New Business**
  - a. Consider Only Matters Referred
  - b. Proposing Amendment to *Constitution*
  - c. Constitutional Matters
  - d. Approval Requirement
  - e. Presentation of
  - f. Referral to Advisory Committee
4. **Organizational Meeting**
5. **Public Hearings**
  - a. Schedule
  - b. Time Limits for Presentations
  - c. Hearing Form
6. **Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures**
  - a. Responsible for Referral of Business
  - b. Coordination Between Committees
  - c. Distribution of Materials
  - d. Requests to Schedule Event
7. **Reports of Assembly Committees**
  - a. Writing the Report
  - b. Content
  - c. Fiscal Implications
  - d. Identify Entity
  - e. GAC to Determine Entity
  - f. Votes Recorded
  - g. Confer with Entity Affected by Action
  - h. Minority Report

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### 1. Committee Leadership and Support

#### Moderator and Vice Moderator

a. The moderator shall preside over the committee's deliberations. The moderator may request the vice moderator to preside and to assist in the work of the committee.

#### Recorder

b. Each committee shall have available to assist in its work a recorder appointed by the Stated Clerk. The recorder shall be appointed from a pool of individuals who will already be attending the General Assembly, including staff members, local volunteers, and others. The recorder shall keep an accurate record of the actions of the committee with the votes on each indicating the number of committee members voting in the affirmative, or negative, or those abstaining; and shall assist in drafting the committee report.

#### Committee Assistant

c. Each committee shall have available to assist in its work a committee assistant. The committee assistant may address the committee offering suggestions regarding procedure, but shall not participate in its deliberations on any issue before the committee as an advocate of one position or view regarding its action. The committee assistant shall assist the committee in securing desired resources.

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## 2. Procedures for Assembly Committee Meetings

- Open Meetings** a. Meetings of assembly committees shall be open to the public (as space permits) provided, however, that the committee may go into executive session at any time in accordance with the Open Meeting Policy, printed in the *Manual of the General Assembly*. Ordinarily, the committee assistant will be expected to remain with the committee in executive session.
- Parliamentary Procedure** b. The deliberations of the committee shall be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.
- Use of Resources** c. Each committee shall determine the use to be made of the resource material or resource persons available to assembly committees. Each assembly committee shall determine whether or not to permit the distribution of particular materials to the committee members.
- Preparation of Resource Material** d. Resource material (except for previously published books or interpretive brochures), including advice and counsel memoranda, that provides background or advice on items of new business, including commissioners' resolutions, shall be prepared as necessary by entities of the General Assembly and shall not exceed 1,000 words on each item of business referred. This material shall be submitted to the assembly committee leadership team prior to presentation to the assembly committee to which the business has been referred. A hard copy of this resource material, accompanied by a disk copy, shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall consider any request that is made to distribute this resource material to the full assembly.
- Privilege of Floor** e. During the deliberations of the committee, in contrast to public hearings, only the following persons may speak:
- (1) Members of the committee;
  - (2) Committee assistant, when recognized by the committee moderator;
  - (3) Persons with special expertise, including elected members or staff members of General Assembly entities;
  - (4) Overture advocates and signers of commissioners' resolutions (see below in this standing rule) who shall be entitled to speak when the overture or resolution or response to the referral of an overture is first considered by the committee; and then shall have the same privilege of the floor as other persons with special expertise listed in Standing Rule E.2.e.(3) above;
  - (5) Persons invited by the committee through a majority vote of the committee; and
  - (6) Representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, who may speak to overtures, commissioners' resolutions, or other business on which the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has presented advice or recommendations, or matters that propose amendments to the *Constitution*, or that affect compatibility with other provisions of the *Constitution*.
  - (7) In the event that business being considered by an assembly committee has been referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for advice, representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall be entitled to speak.
  - (8) The committee moderator shall provide that the total time allotted to persons, other than members of the committee, who speak for or against a recommendation be equal so far as possible.
- Overture Advocates/ Signer of Commissioners' Resolution** f. Overture advocates and one signer of each commissioners' resolution shall be responsible for being available at the time selected by any assembly committee considering the matter. The overture advocate or one of the signers of a commissioners' resolution shall be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture or resolution immediately after the motion is made and seconded, placing the overture or resolution on the floor of the committee or subcommittee, or immediately after any motion that might logically be expected to affect the overture or resolution is moved and seconded, and during debate of such motions to correct misunderstandings or to clarify.

**Responsibilities of Overture Advocate** g. Overture advocates who have been designated by their presbytery or synod to speak to the response from a General Assembly entity to a referral of an overture shall be responsible for being available at the time selected by the assembly committee considering the response. The overture advocate shall be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture immediately after the motion is made and seconded, placing the response to the referral of the overture on the floor of the committee or subcommittee, or immediately after any motion that might logically be expected to affect the response is moved and seconded, and during debate of such motions to correct misunderstandings or to clarify.

### 3. New Business

**Consider Only Matters Referred** a. Each assembly committee shall consider only matters referred to it by the General Assembly. No assembly committee may initiate new business except as it relates to the business of the particular assembly committee.

**Proposing Amendment to Constitution** b. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the *Constitution* or requiring an interpretation of the *Constitution* by the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-18.0301b and G-13.0112c) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

**Constitutional Matters** c. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters (*Book of Order*, G-13.0112e) shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter so referred and report its findings and recommendations, which may include proposals for constitutional change, to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The assembly committee shall vote on the recommendations and may amend or decline to approve them. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee.

**Approval Requirement** d. Recommendations and reports to the assembly regarding such new business must be approved in assembly committees by three-fourths of the committee members voting on the matter.

**Presentation of** e. New business, other than that described in this standing rule, must be presented in accordance with Standing Rule A.8.

**Referral to Advisory Committee on the Constitution** f. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the *Constitution* (*Book of Order*, G-18.0301a and b) or requiring an interpretation of the *Constitution* by the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-13.0112c) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters (*Book of Order*, G-13.0112e) shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter referred and report its findings and recommendations (which may include proposals for constitutional change) to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee.

### 4. Organization Meeting

a. Ordinarily, the initial meeting of each assembly committee shall be an organizational meeting in private session for up to one hour for the purpose of developing intergroup dynamics and determining procedural matters, such as approval of the committee's agenda and consideration of the style in which the committee plans to operate.

b. During this executive session, business items before the committee shall not be discussed or acted upon.

## 5. Public Hearings

### Schedule

a. Each committee, with the exception of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, shall schedule at its convenience one or more public hearings on matters before it.

### Time Limits for Presentations

b. The committee may limit the time for the presentation by any person during a public hearing, including an elected member or staff member of an entity of the General Assembly. If the time allotted for the public hearing is not sufficient to accommodate all the persons wishing to speak, a method shall be approved by the assembly committee that ensures that an equal number of persons on each side of an issue have an opportunity to speak. Any person denied the right to speak at the hearing may appeal to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures on the basis that the method employed in selecting speakers was not fair.

### Hearing Form

c. Any person who wishes to be heard in a public hearing shall sign up on a hearing form, posted in a public place in the building in which the assembly is being held, no later than the close of business on the second day of the General Assembly or one hour after the subsequent referral of business to the committee by the General Assembly. The location of hearing forms shall be announced during the first session of the assembly. In the event that an issue is expected to be controversial, those wishing to speak shall be asked to indicate whether they wish to speak for or against the recommendation.

## 6. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures

### Responsible for Referral of Business

a. This committee shall neither retain any items of business for its own consideration, nor suppress any matter that comes before it. However, business that substantially duplicates matters already before the assembly may be declined by this committee and reported to the assembly with a statement of the committee's action.

### Coordination Between Committees

b. This committee shall keep itself informed of the subjects being considered by the other assembly committees, and, when any subject is taken up by more than one committee, this committee shall advise the moderators of those committees regarding ways to avoid redundant or inconsistent recommendations.

### Distribution of Materials

c. This committee shall determine whether or not particular materials may be distributed to the commissioners and delegates to the General Assembly, and specify the time and manner of distribution of any authorized by it. Particular materials distributed in assembly committees shall not be distributed to the full assembly without the approval of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, including the time and manner of distribution.

### Requests to Schedule Event

d. The committee shall review requests from entities of the General Assembly, governing bodies, other entities related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any way, or coalitions in which this denomination or any of its entities participate, to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings, or other events of any kind during those hours when the General Assembly or its committees are in session.

## 7. Reports of Assembly Committees

### Writing the Report

a. The moderator, vice moderator, committee assistant, and recorder, together with such other persons as the moderator may designate, shall draft the report of the committee following the sample form provided by the Stated Clerk.

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<b>Content</b>	b. The reports of assembly committees shall contain only (1) the recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly, and, where necessary, a brief statement of the committee's reasons for such recommendations, and (2) the actions taken by the committee on items referred to the committee for action. Material necessary to identify the item of business and brief explanations may be included in the report. Extensive background information and detail contained in other documents in the hands of the commissioners shall not be included.
<b>Fiscal Implications</b>	c. Each assembly committee shall include with each recommendation or action in its report statements advising the General Assembly whether or not the recommendation or action has fiscal implications affecting any budget under consideration by the assembly.
<b>Identify Entity</b>	d. Recommendation for assembly action, or action taken by the committee, shall identify the entity that is directed to carry out and report back to the General Assembly regarding the matter dealt with by the recommendation or action.
<b>GAC to Determine Entity</b>	e. When the entity to which an assembly action is directed is a part of the General Assembly Council, such as a division or related entity, the Stated Clerk shall automatically amend the language so that the action is directed to the General Assembly Council. The council shall determine which entity shall carry out the responsibility and report to the assembly on the matter.
<b>Votes Recorded</b>	f. The votes recorded in the assembly committee on each recommendation or action shall be included in the report for the information of the commissioners, but shall be omitted from the <i>Journal</i> of the General Assembly.
<b>Confer with Entity Affected by Action</b>	g. If the report of an assembly committee proposes or records an action affecting the interests of an entity of the General Assembly or of a governing body other than the General Assembly, it shall be the responsibility of that assembly committee to confer with the representative(s) designated by the entity or governing body concerned before proposing such action to the General Assembly or taking such an action.
<b>Minority Report</b>	h. Minority Report <p>(1) A minority of the members of an assembly committee, or an individual member of an assembly committee, may submit in writing views that differ from those in the committee report. If the moderator of the committee shall affirm in writing that the positions expressed as recommendations for action by the assembly in a written minority report were presented to the whole committee during its consideration of the matter, the Stated Clerk shall reproduce the minority report and distribute it with the report of the committee.</p> <p>(2) A minority report must be appropriate for consideration as a substitute motion (see <i>Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 2000, p. 510</i>).</p>



# F

## General Assembly Plenary Meeting

- 1. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures Reports**
  - a. Report at Beginning of Each Meeting
  - b. Limits on Debate/Changes in Docket
  - c. Review Minutes
  - d. Requests for Communicating with Assembly
  - e. Referral of Protests
- 2. Reports of Assembly Committees**
  - a. Distribution
  - b. Adequate Docket Time
  - c. Committee Moderators
  - d. Financial Implication
- 3. Minority Reports**
  - a. Must Stand as Full and Complete Substitute
  - b. Reasons Supporting Committee's Recommendation
- 4. Committee Reports on the Budget**
  - a. Per Capita Budget
  - b. Amended Per Capita Budget
- 5. Plenary Meeting Procedures**
  - a. Debate
  - b. Voting Methods
  - c. Mindful of Effort Required to Fulfill Recommendations
  - d. Constitutional Questions
  - e. Cellular Telephones
  - f. Emergency Messages
  - g. Confidentiality
- 6. General Assembly Nominating Committee**
  - a. Presentation of Nominations
  - b. May Decline to Submit Nomination
  - c. Nominating from the Floor
- 7. Docket Time for Special Greetings**
  - a. Head of Communion
  - b. Assignment of Docket Time
- 8. Announcements and Nonofficial Printed Materials**
  - a. Approval for Announcements
  - b. Nonofficial Printed Material
- 9. Distributing Study Documents**
  - a. Distribution
  - b. Responsible Entity Identified
- 10. Forming Social Policy**
- 11. Peaceful Demonstrations**
  - a. Where Allowed
  - b. Prohibited in Building

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### 1. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures Reports

#### Report at Beginning of Each Meeting

a. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall report at the beginning of each meeting, recommending any necessary changes in order of business and any referrals it may have considered since its last report.

#### Limits on Debate/Changes in Docket

b. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures may, at any time, recommend limits on debates or changes in the docket to facilitate the handling of business. The reports of the committee shall take precedence over any other business, including orders of the day.

<b>Review Minutes</b>	c. This committee shall review the minutes of the General Assembly daily, report to the General Assembly any suggested corrections, and recommend approval of the minutes. The minutes shall be posted on the church's website and two printed copies of the minutes shall be posted in different places during the following day for examination by commissioners. The minutes of the meetings of the General Assembly during the last two days of its session shall be submitted for review and approval within ten days after the adjournment of the General Assembly to a subcommittee of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.
<b>Requests for Communicating with Assembly</b>	d. Requests for the privilege of communicating with the General Assembly shall be referred to this committee, which shall confer with persons making such requests about the time and the manner in which their concerns may be brought to the attention of the General Assembly. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall recommend to the General Assembly a response regarding any possible presentation to the assembly. At the time any such recommendation is acted upon, any commissioner may request that an opposing view be heard, and the assembly shall consider and act upon the matter.
<b>Referral of Protests</b>	e. Protests expressing disagreement with an action or failure to act on the part of the General Assembly shall be referred to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, which shall decide whether or not the protest is decorous and respectful. Should the committee decide the protest is decorous and respectful, the protest shall be entered in the Minutes. The committee may prepare an answer to be printed with any protest so entered (see <i>Book of Order</i> , G-9.0304).
<b>2. Reports of Assembly Committees</b>	
<b>Distribution</b>	a. Copies of the reports of assembly committees (print or electronic) shall ordinarily be distributed to commissioners no later than the close of the meeting prior to the one at which they are to be considered. The Stated Clerk shall arrange for the reproduction and distribution of reports.
<b>Adequate Docket Time</b>	b. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, shall docket adequate time for the reports of committees, including ample time for debate and action. If a report requires more time than docketed, the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall consult with the committee for additional time to complete consideration of the report.
<b>Committee Moderators</b>	c. Committee moderators should move the approval of recommendations with minimum comment, and material in the commissioners' printed resources shall not be read.
<b>Financial Implication</b>	d. The financial effect of each recommendation on budgets previously approved or under consideration shall be clearly presented at the time that the recommendation is considered by the assembly.
<b>3. Minority Reports</b>	
<b>Must Stand as Full and Complete Substitute</b>	a. In order to be considered by the assembly, a minority report shall not only set aside the majority report but also be able to stand as a full and complete substitution for the majority report recommendations. A minority report shall be moved as a substitute only after the majority report has first been moved. When this happens, the assembly shall first consider (and may amend) the majority report. When consideration of the majority report is completed, the assembly may then consider (and may amend) the minority report. Further efforts to perfect each report shall be held to a minimum in order that the assembly can concentrate instead on the issue of whether to make the proposed substitution.
<b>Reasons Supporting Committee's Recommendation</b>	b. The moderator of the committee, or another member of the committee, shall present reasons supporting the committee's recommendation. They may be presented before any minority report is moved or presented during the narrative report of the committee, or presented during debate on the question of whether or not the substitution shall become the main motion. (See also Standing Rule E.7.h.)



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#### 4. Committee Reports on the Budget

##### Per Capita Budget

a. At the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business following the meetings of assembly committees, the assembly shall hear a report on the per capita budget from the committee that has reviewed that budget.

##### Amended Per Capita Budget

b. On the final day of the assembly, an amended per capita budget that incorporates the financial implications of actions taken by the assembly shall be presented to the assembly for approval.

#### 5. Plenary Meeting Procedures

##### Debate

a. In debate on any pending matter, no commissioner or delegate shall be allowed to speak more than three minutes until all other commissioners or delegates who desire to speak on the pending matter have been heard.

##### Voting Methods

b. The General Assembly shall ordinarily decide questions by electronic voting. The Moderator may also call for unanimous consent by voice vote or show of hands. Assembly committees may recommend the use of a consent agenda for portions of their reports. In all cases, the right of any commissioner to call for one of the other forms of voting or to remove any item from the consent agenda shall be preserved.

##### Mindful of Effort Required to Fulfill Recommendations

c. In view of the relative ease in which studies and programs may be approved, commissioners and other assembly committee members are cautioned to be mindful of the effort required of staff and elected members to carry out the General Assembly's instructions.

##### Constitutional Questions

d. When the General Assembly is in plenary session, questions that touch upon constitutional matters, including rulings on questions of order involving constitutional matters requested by the Moderator, shall be handled in accordance with *Book of Order*, G-13.0112e. These questions shall be referred in writing by the Moderator to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall consider each matter referred and make recommendations directly to the General Assembly through the Moderator.

##### Cellular Telephones

e. Use of cellular telephones is prohibited during meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of the assembly committees. During these meetings, pagers may be used only in the silent mode.

##### Emergency Messages

f. Emergency messages will be relayed to a commissioner or advisory delegate during plenary meetings by way of a written message delivered by one of the Stated Clerk's designated staff or assembly assistants.

##### Confidentiality

g. Any person permitted to remain during any executive session is expected to agree to be bound by the confidentiality required of commissioners.

#### 6. General Assembly Nominating Committee

##### Presentation of Nominations

a. Unless the General Assembly shall have made some other provision, the nominating committee shall present to each session of the General Assembly a nominee for election to each vacancy on the entities of the General Assembly that shall exist because of a scheduled end of term, resignation, death, incapacity to act, change of residence, or any other reason.

##### May Decline to Submit Nomination

b. The General Assembly Nominating Committee may decline to submit a nomination(s) to a particular vacancy(s) when requested to do so by the affected entity because of an expected merger of entity or a transfer of duties between entities in order to reduce the number of persons serving on a particular entity(s).

**Nominating from the Floor**

c. Nominating from the Floor

(1) Nominations by commissioners shall be in order unless the vacancy is required to be filled upon nomination from some other source.

(2) When any nomination for service on a General Assembly committee, council, or board comes from the floor of the assembly, the commissioner making the nomination will provide the General Assembly Nominating Committee, no later than 48 hours after the convening of the General Assembly, with pertinent information about the person whose name is being presented, as well as the name of the particular person nominated by the nominating committee whose nomination is being challenged. Such information shall be provided on the “Nomination by Commissioner Form” provided for use at the assembly and available from the Stated Clerk.

(3) In the event that there are nominations from the floor, the election shall proceed as follows:

(a) The General Assembly will deal with one challenged position at a time.

(b) The name of the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s nominee shall be placed in nomination by its moderator. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall call upon the commissioner who is placing a nomination from the floor to put that name in nomination.

(c) Once the names are placed in nomination, the order of speaking shall be first, the commissioner or a designee speaking on behalf of the floor nominee and second, the General Assembly Nominating Committee member or a designee speaking to its nominee. Both the commissioner (or designee) and the General Assembly Nominating Committee member (or designee) shall speak from the platform. Such speech shall not exceed three minutes in length. There shall be no other speeches seconding the nomination of any nominee.

(d) Without further discussion or debate, the General Assembly will move to vote.

**7. Docket Time for Special Greetings**

**Head of Communion**

a. When the Head of Communion of a member church of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches, or the National Council of Churches is in attendance at a session of the General Assembly as an ecumenical advisory delegate or as an ecumenical representative, and proper notice is provided, the assembly shall provide up to five minutes of docket time to each such Head of Communion to present a greeting to the assembly.

**Assignment of Docket Time**

b. The placing of this greeting on the docket will be assigned by the Stated Clerk.

**8. Announcements and Nonofficial Printed Materials**

**Approval for Announcements**

a. Only announcements connected directly with the business of the General Assembly shall be read from the platform and all notices shall be submitted either to the Moderator or the Stated Clerk for approval. Telegrams and special letters shall be reported to the General Assembly only at times to be designated by the Moderator.

**Nonofficial Printed Material**

b. Printed materials that are not official business before the General Assembly may be distributed at authorized booths in the General Assembly Exhibit Hall. Other distribution is permitted in the mailboxes provided for commissioners and advisory delegates, and also can be handed out twenty-five feet or more from entrances to the building in which the General Assembly meets.

## 9. Distributing Study Documents

### Distribution

a. Whenever the General Assembly itself shall require the distribution of a document for study (whether the proposal originates through the recommendation of an entity, the presentation of an overture or resolution, or arises during the conduct of the assembly's business) with a request for a response (whether the response is sought from individuals, congregations, governing bodies, organizations of any kind, or any combination of these), the study document shall be accompanied by resource materials, bibliography, and aids as set forth in the document "Forming Social Policy," Section 5, printed in the *Manual of the General Assembly*. Along with a response instrument and the resource materials, bibliography, and aids, the document shall be distributed on a schedule that provides for the study guide and all accompanying material to be in the possession of the proposed respondents for a minimum of twelve months before the due date of the response.

### Responsible Entity Identified

b. The entity to be responsible for receiving the responses and reporting to the General Assembly the summary of the responses shall be identified in the material. The report on the responses to the study may be presented no earlier than to the General Assembly that convenes in the second year after the session of the General Assembly that approves the study.

## 10. Forming Social Policy

The entities of the General Assembly, including its committees, commissions, and special committees, shall be governed by the document, "Forming Social Policy" printed in the *Manual of the General Assembly*, when that entity is considering making a social witness policy.

## 11. Peaceful Demonstrations

### Where Allowed

a. Peaceful demonstrations shall be allowed twenty-five or more feet outside of the entrances to the building in which General Assembly meets.

### Prohibited in Building

b. Spontaneous or planned demonstrations by individuals or groups are prohibited inside the building where the General Assembly meets. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall declare all demonstrations that occur in plenary session out of order and, if demonstrators fail to immediately disband and desist, may recess the General Assembly to a fixed time and place. This rule does not prohibit the spontaneous or planned celebration of an action of the General Assembly or of any event in the life of the church.





## General Assembly Meeting Worship

### Services of Worship

- a. Moderator of Preceding General Assembly Responsible for Planning
- b. Ecumenical Worship
- c. In Conformity with Directory for Worship

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### Services of Worship

#### **Moderator of Preceding General Assembly Responsible for Planning**

a. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall plan daily worship at the General Assembly, and a worship service including the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and shall provide, in advance, suitable leadership for these periods of worship. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at the first service of worship of the General Assembly session, and the Moderator shall preside on this occasion and preach a sermon or deliver an address. The Moderator shall seek advice to ensure inclusivity in the planning of appropriate daily worship periods. The Moderator shall assure adequate transmittal of information about the planning of worship periods to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

#### **Ecumenical Worship**

b. The Stated Clerk shall plan an ecumenical period of worship and provide, in advance, suitable leadership for this period of worship.

#### **In Conformity with Directory for Worship**

c. The various acts of worship planned for the session of the General Assembly shall be in conformity with the requirements of the Directory for Worship, and shall be developed and led according to the guidance of the document, "Presbyterians at Worship in Mass Assemblies." In the preparation and conduct of all worship services, care shall be taken that all language, sight, hearing, accessibility, and other barriers be eliminated so that there can be full participation of all attendees. [Example: That printed orders of service also be printed in braille and that signing be available.]





## Officers and Elections

### 1. Moderator of the General Assembly

- a. Title/Functions
- b. Election
- c. Vice Moderator
- d. Vacancy

### 2. Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

- a. Title/Functions
- b. Election
- c. Acting Stated Clerk
- d. Associate Stated Clerks

### 1. Moderator of the General Assembly

#### Title/Functions

- a. Title and Functions of the Moderator at the General Assembly

(1) The Moderator of the General Assembly is an ecclesiastical officer, along with the Stated Clerk, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). The ministry of the Moderator is grounded in the ministry of baptized persons and in the particular ordained ministry of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

(2) The title of the Moderator is “The Moderator of the [number] General Assembly [(year)] of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”

(3) The Moderator of the General Assembly is a commissioner of the General Assembly.

(4) When the Moderator presides at the assembly, it is to be a sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church. During the period between assemblies, the Moderator serves as an ambassador of the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, telling the story of the church’s life and upholding the people of God through prayer.

(5) The Moderator shall preside over the General Assembly that elects him or her, and over the meetings of the next General Assembly until a successor is elected. The Moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the governing body (*Book of Order*, G-9.0202).

(6) The Moderator and the Vice Moderator shall submit a written report of their work to the session of the General Assembly at which their successors are installed.

#### Election

- b. Election of the Moderator

(1) Each person nominated to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly must be a commissioner to the General Assembly. Action by presbyteries to endorse candidates for Moderator of the General Assembly shall not take place until after the adjournment of the immediately preceding assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall provide resourcing and orientation for Moderatorial candidates.

(2) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the assembly, the Moderatorial candidates will announce the name of a commissioner each has selected to offer to the assembly to confirm as Vice Moderator.

(3) The following campaign procedures shall be observed:

(a) Candidates should budget campaign spending of no more than \$1,500, excluding travel and meeting expenses related to their candidacy. Each candidate shall submit to the Stated Clerk an itemized statement of expenses, including travel and meeting expenses related

to his/her candidacy and in kind contributions. This statement shall be submitted to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly prior to the convening of the General Assembly. This information shall be distributed to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the election of the Moderator. The statement of expenses of all candidates shall be kept on file in the Office of the General Assembly following the meeting of the General Assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall not reimburse a candidate for campaign expenses, but shall assume expenses involved in printing and distributing material submitted for information packets as outlined in Standing Rule H.1.b.(3)(e).

(b) In order to encourage reliance on the leading of the Holy Spirit in the selection of the Moderator, no candidate shall send a mailing of any campaign materials, print or electronic, to commissioners and/or advisory delegates or permit such a mailing to be sent, nor shall candidates or their advocates contact commissioners and/or advisory delegates by telephone.

(c) Distribution of written campaign materials at General Assembly outside of the candidate's room shall be limited to printed materials placed in mailboxes.

(d) On the day of the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall provide a room for each candidate where commissioners and advisory delegates may meet and talk with the candidate.

(e) Not less than fifteen days before the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish for commissioners and advisory delegates an electronic information packet containing the following material regarding each candidate for Moderator who is known to the Stated Clerk and who wishes to be included:

(i) A photograph, a biographical sketch, a personal statement by the candidate that includes a statement regarding the candidate's sense of call to the office,

(ii) A written presentation by the presbytery having jurisdiction over the candidate, if that governing body has endorsed the candidate,

(iii) An announcement of the commissioner each candidate has selected to be presented to the assembly for confirmation as Vice Moderator if the candidate is elected,

(iv) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the Stated Clerk.

The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but all material including photographs submitted for each presentation shall be provided in electronic format as well as print. The material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no less than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution, and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Moderator, if elected.

Each proposed Vice-Moderator candidate who wishes to be included may send biographical information and a photograph in electronic format.

(4) The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be elected in the following manner:

(a) When the General Assembly is ready to elect its Moderator, only one speech shall be made placing in nomination the name of each nominee. The speech shall be made by a commissioner to the General Assembly. Such speech shall not exceed five minutes in length. There shall be no speeches seconding the nomination of any nominee. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot, the drawing conducted by the most recent Moderator attending the General Assembly.

(b) After nominations are closed, each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the concerns that nominee feels to be the most important for the church. The nominees shall speak in the same order as the presentation of nominating speeches.

(c) At the conclusion of all the presentations by the nominees, they shall respond to questions from the floor. The first question shall be addressed to the nominee who spoke first



in the original presentation, and the same question shall then be put to the other nominees in the same order in which they spoke earlier. The second question shall be directed to the second nominee in this order and then to each of the other nominees in sequence. Each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to answer each question. This process shall continue for a period not to exceed the number of nominees times fifteen minutes, or for one hour, whichever is shorter, unless terminated earlier by vote of the General Assembly.

(d) Where there is only one nominee for Moderator, the election may be by acclamation. Where there is more than one, the election may be by secret ballot in one of the following ways:

(i) Each commissioner shall vote by means of an electronic voting system. The Stated Clerk shall advise the Moderator of the totals. The Moderator shall announce the result of the vote as tabulated. If no nominee has received a majority of the whole vote, another vote shall be taken in the same manner. When one nominee shall have received a majority, the Moderator shall announce the result and declare the nominee to be elected.

(ii) If the assembly votes to use paper ballots, the Stated Clerk shall provide ballots and assign no fewer than ten commissioners to act as tellers, collecting and counting the ballots. The results shall be given to the Stated Clerk who shall report the totals to the Moderator who shall announce them to the assembly.

(5) The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Moderator as the last item of business at the session in which the Moderator is elected. The family of the newly elected Moderator and all present previous Moderators shall be invited to the platform. The service shall use the order of service for “Installation of Governing Body Officers and Staff” from the *Book of Occasional Services*. The processional banner of the Moderator shall precede the newly elected Moderator into the assembly. The Moderator’s cross and stole shall be presented by the most recent serving Moderator. A representative of the presbytery of the Moderator’s membership shall ask the questions of installation. The newly elected Moderator invites a person to lead the prayer of installation. The most recent serving Moderator gives the charge, a hymn is sung by the assembly, and the newly elected Moderator gives the benediction.

#### **Vice Moderator**

##### c. Vice Moderator

(1) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days before the convening of the assembly, a Moderatorial candidate shall announce the selection of a commissioner who will be proposed to serve as Vice Moderator. At the next business session of the assembly following the election of the Moderator, the Moderator shall propose to the assembly the name of the commissioner for Vice Moderator. After a brief speech by the person selected, the assembly shall immediately proceed to vote on his or her confirmation. Should there be no confirmation, the Moderator shall bring another commissioner’s name for confirmation to the next business session of the assembly. The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Vice Moderator.

(2) The Vice Moderator represents the assembly at the request of the Moderator. When the Vice Moderator serves in this capacity, all those duties incumbent on the Moderator shall be expected of him/her.

(3) The Moderator may request the Vice Moderator to preside and to assist in the performance of other functions of the Moderator during and following the General Assembly.

#### **Vacancy**

##### d. Vacancy in the Office of the Moderator or Vice Moderator

(1) Should the office of the Moderator of the General Assembly become vacant, the Vice Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator. In such circumstance, all constitutional obligations and functions as prescribed by the Standing Rules of the General Assembly and the *Book of Order* shall be incumbent upon the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly.

(2) Should the office of the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly also become vacant, the most recent living Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator as specified in the *Constitution* of the church.

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## 2. Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

### Title/Functions

#### a. Title and Functions of the Stated Clerk at the General Assembly

(1) The title of the Stated Clerk is “The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and may be used by the incumbent until a successor is elected and takes office.

(2) The Stated Clerk is accountable, through the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, to the General Assembly for the performance of the duties of the office, and shall present to each meeting of the General Assembly a report on the state of the church.

(3) The Stated Clerk is responsible for all matters related to the sessions of the General Assembly and all other matters relative to and arising from the General Assembly for which no other assignment has been made.

(4) The Stated Clerk shall also be responsible for guidance of the procedures for candidates seeking the office of Moderator, and for supervision of the election of each Moderator.

(5) In accordance with directives from previous General Assemblies and in consultations with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, and other General Assembly agencies, the Stated Clerk is authorized to decide on matters pertaining to facilities and special events that must be established before the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.

(6) The Stated Clerk shall receive all reports, communications, overtures, and any other materials appropriate for General Assembly consideration. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, for presentation to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, a referral of such items of business coming before the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.3.e.).

(7) The Stated Clerk shall prepare for consideration of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a proposed docket for the General Assembly’s consideration of its business (Standing Rule C.4.a.). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall present the proposed docket to the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures so that it may recommend a docket to the commissioners at the first business session. The docket presented to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall provide a time early in the General Assembly for a report by the Stated Clerk on the state of the church, and for a report by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

(8) The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly the number of assembly committees and a name for each committee after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities (Standing Rule C.1.). The Stated Clerk shall present the committee structure to the General Assembly for ratification at the first business session. Each commissioner and advisory delegate shall be assigned by random selection to one assembly committee at least forty-five days before the opening date of the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.2.).

(9) The Stated Clerk shall provide opportunity for orienting the commissioners, advisory delegates, and others taking part in the session of the General Assembly. The use of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, sources of parliamentary advice, and the availability of resource persons and materials to facilitate their work should be part of the orientation.

(10) The Stated Clerk shall be the parliamentarian for the meetings of the General Assembly, or arrange for the service of a professional parliamentarian.

(11) The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the governing bodies and agencies of the assembly, persons who presented business to the assembly, and others affected by the assembly’s actions, a report on actions of the General Assembly on matters pertaining to their concerns. The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the presbyteries all assembly actions on which the presbyteries are requested to take action.

(12) As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly's proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk.

## Election

### b. Election of the Stated Clerk

(1) The *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* requires the election of a Stated Clerk and the standing rules describe the procedures for the election. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be elected for a term of four years and is eligible for reelection to additional four-year terms. The Stated Clerk is accountable to the General Assembly for the performance of the assigned functions.

(2) The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be elected in the manner described in this standing rule. No member of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly or other persons involved in this procedure as a member of the search committee or as a person providing staff services to the committee may be considered for nomination as Stated Clerk. The incumbent Stated Clerk may not participate in any way in the election process described in this standing rule. In the year there is an election of a Stated Clerk, the Moderator shall appoint a temporary Stated Clerk during the period of the election at the General Assembly.

(3) The General Assembly that meets prior to the end of the term of a Stated Clerk shall elect a Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(a) The slate of nominees for the review/nomination committee shall consist of the following: three members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (nominated by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, one of whom shall serve as moderator of the committee), one member of the General Assembly Council (nominated by the General Assembly Council), and five at-large members nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee in the following categories: one governing body stated clerk and four persons (two elders and two clergy) from among commissioners who have attended an assembly in the past six years. The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall present to the assembly for election the slate of nominees for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. The slate presented shall reflect the denomination's commitment to inclusiveness.

(b) Nominations from the floor for the nomination committee shall be in order following the distribution of the printed list of proposed nominees by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and a declaration by the Moderator that the names are in nomination. Names placed in nomination from the floor shall be in opposition to a particular name of an at-large member placed in nomination by the General Assembly Nominating Committee, and must be in the same category (H.2.b.(3)(a)). More than one person may be placed in nomination from the floor in opposition to an at-large nominee.

(c) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be responsible for providing the nomination committee with an up-to-date position description.

(d) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will ensure that an adequate budget for the nomination process is provided in the Office of the General Assembly and shall designate staff services for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(e) The nomination committee shall begin its work no later than 300 days before the start of the assembly that will elect the Stated Clerk.

(f) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be responsible for conducting the end-of-term evaluation of the Stated Clerk.

(g) The nominating committee shall announce that persons seeking the position of Stated Clerk shall file a completed application form and a resume or personal information form (PIF) with the committee 180 days before the opening of the General Assembly.

If the incumbent wants to be considered, he or she will notify the committee in

writing and submit a current resume or PIF 180 days before the opening of the General Assembly. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall provide a copy of the end-of term evaluation to the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee.

(h) Additional written material may be requested by the committee. No one may be nominated to serve as Stated Clerk who has not provided an application to the committee.

(i) The committee shall review and evaluate all applications to determine the constitutional eligibility of the candidates. Any candidate who is determined to not be eligible will be notified in writing within forty-five days of receipt of their resume or PIF.

(j) The committee shall interview all eligible candidates using the same methodology and select one as the committee's recommendation. All members of the committee shall ordinarily participate in the interview. The committee shall declare its nominee no later than sixty days before the opening of the General Assembly.

(k) Any of the applicants for the position of Stated Clerk, including the incumbent Stated Clerk if not the nominee of the committee, who wish to be placed in nomination against the nominee of the committee shall declare their intention to the committee to do so no later than forty-five days before the opening of the General Assembly.

(l) At the convening of the General Assembly, the Office of the General Assembly shall distribute to commissioners and advisory delegates an information packet containing the following material regarding each candidate for Stated Clerk who wishes to be included:

(i) A photograph, a biographical sketch, a personal statement by the candidate, including a statement regarding the candidate's sense of call to the office,

(ii) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the committee based upon issues that will be before the church as presented in business to be considered by the General Assembly.

(iii) The material submitted shall be typewritten on paper 8-1/2 x 11 inches in size. The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but the copy submitted for each presentation shall be provided in one color on one side of one sheet. The material shall be submitted to the Office of the General Assembly no less than thirty days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Stated Clerk, if elected.

(m) The candidates may not distribute any other materials, print or electronic, including flyers, buttons, tokens or other objects that would denote a campaign for the office of Stated Clerk.

(n) Other organizations supporting the candidacy of a particular candidate may not distribute materials electronically, through the mail, or at the General Assembly with the knowledge, support, or permission of that candidate. Should a candidate discover that an organization is advocating or campaigning for him or her, it is expected that the candidate will request that organization to cease its activities. The same expectation will be true of organizations that are critical of a particular candidate for Stated Clerk.

(o) Each candidate will be provided a place to meet and talk with commissioners and advisory delegates two days before the election. Only information provided by the Office of the General Assembly may be distributed in those rooms. Other materials, apart from that packet, are not permitted. Each candidate for Stated Clerk will be allowed to post the times when he/she will be available for conversation in that room.

(p) Any questions concerning interpretation of the election process outlined in H.2.b. shall be determined by the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(4) The General Assembly, by majority vote, shall elect the Stated Clerk in the following manner:

(a) Within forty-eight hours of the convening of the assembly, the Stated Clerk Review/Nomination Committee shall place in nomination a single nominee.

(b) The Moderator shall then invite other nominations from those who have completed the nomination process. Only one speech, made by a commissioner or a member of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee not to exceed five minutes in length, shall be made to nominate each nominee. There shall be no speech seconding any nomination. Each person nominated from the floor shall reaffirm a willingness to serve as Stated Clerk, if elected.

(c) In the event there are no other nominations, the election shall proceed immediately as follows:

(i) The nominee for Stated Clerk shall be given an opportunity to address the assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the nominee's views regarding the functions and work of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

(ii) The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. Time allocated shall not exceed fifteen minutes. The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the nominee for Stated Clerk. The time allocated should not exceed fifteen minutes, after which the voting shall take place.

(d) In the event there are other nominations, the election shall proceed as follows:

(i) The election of the Stated Clerk shall take place as the first order of business on the next to last day of the assembly's session.

(ii) Each nominee shall be given an opportunity to address the assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the nominee's views regarding the functions and work of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. The nominees shall speak in the same order as the presentation of nominating speeches.

(iii) The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the nominees for Stated Clerk. The first question shall be addressed to the nominee who was nominated first and the same question shall then be put to the other nominees in the same order in which they were nominated. The second question shall be directed to the second nominee in this order and then to each of the other nominees in sequence. Each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to answer each question. This process shall continue for a period not to exceed the number of nominees times fifteen minutes, or for one hour, whichever is shorter, unless terminated earlier by vote of the General Assembly, after which the voting shall take place.

(5) Should there be a vacancy in the office of the Stated Clerk, the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall propose to the assembly, if the assembly is in session, members for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee, or shall propose to the Moderator for appointment, if the assembly is not in session, to a Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. This committee shall be composed of members as outlined in Standing Rule H.2.b. and begin the process of a search for a candidate for Stated Clerk. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall designate an acting Stated Clerk until such time as a Stated Clerk is elected.

(6) The Stated Clerk Nomination Committee shall be dismissed at the adjournment of the session of the General Assembly at which the committee presents a nominee for Stated Clerk.

(7) A new Stated Clerk shall normally assume office thirty days after the adjournment of the assembly. A longer period of transition between Stated Clerks may be negotiated by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, but shall not exceed ninety days.

#### **Acting Stated Clerk**

##### **c. Acting Stated Clerk**

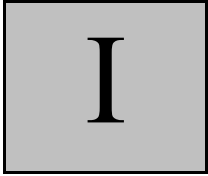
In case of the incapacity, resignation, or death of the Stated Clerk, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall designate an Acting Stated Clerk until such time as the

Stated Clerk is able to resume the duties or the General Assembly elects a new Stated Clerk. The person so designated may be one of the Associate Stated Clerks or another person eligible for election as Stated Clerk.

**Associate Stated Clerks**

d. Associate Stated Clerks

The General Assembly may elect one or more Associate Stated Clerks as the General Assembly shall determine. The Stated Clerk shall nominate persons to fill each such office after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. The term of office shall be four years, subject to reelection at the pleasure of the General Assembly.



## General Assembly Arrangements

### 1. Date and Place of Meeting

- a. Determining Date and Place
- b. Presbytery Invitations
- c. Criteria
- d. Rotating the Place of the Meeting

### 2. Meeting Arrangements

- a. Arrangements and Housing
- b. Assembly Assistants
- c. Simultaneous Interpretation
- d. Sponsorship of Events

### 3. Reimbursing Commissioner Expenses

- a. Reimbursement/Per Diem
- b. Reimbursement for Alternate Commissioner

### 4. Assembly Meeting Work Group

- a. Membership
- b. Responsibilities

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### 1. Date and Place of Meeting

#### Determining Date and Place

a. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall meet on the date and at the place fixed by the preceding General Assembly for a period, which shall be known as a session of the General Assembly, preferably between May 15 and July 31, subject to the possibility of change (see Standing Rule I.4.b.(10) and *Book of Order*, G-13.0104, for exceptions). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall recommend to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of meeting six years hence and any necessary changes in dates and places of meetings previously set. Should action regarding date or place of meeting become necessary at a time when the General Assembly is not in session, this committee is empowered to fix a new date or place of meeting.

#### Presbytery Invitations

b. The host body for any session of the General Assembly shall be a presbytery(s) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any presbytery that desires to invite the General Assembly to meet within its bounds shall forward an invitation to the Stated Clerk no later than May 1 of the year that is seven years prior to the earliest effective date of the invitation.

#### Criteria

c. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall determine the criteria that render a place an eligible site for a meeting of the General Assembly, including the requirement that all meeting arrangements shall be made to facilitate full participation by persons with disabilities. These criteria may be obtained from the Office of the General Assembly.

#### Rotating the Place of the Meeting

d. In order to distribute the benefits experienced from hosting a General Assembly meeting throughout the church, the place of meeting shall be rotated among the following four areas (unless prevented by financial or other practical considerations):

- Area A: Synod of Alaska/Northwest, Synod of the Pacific, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Synod of the Rocky Mountains, Synod of the Southwest;
- Area B: Synod of the Sun, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, Synod of Mid-America;
- Area C: Synod of Living Waters, Synod of Lincoln Trails, Synod of the Covenant;
- Area D: Synod of South Atlantic, Synod of Puerto Rico, Synod of the Northeast, Synod of the Trinity, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.

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## 2. Meeting Arrangements

### Arrangements and Housing

a. The Stated Clerk shall oversee all arrangements for the meeting and housing of the General Assembly, including: the assignment of time and place for all special events and public meetings connected with or scheduled at the time of the General Assembly; the assignment of time and place for exhibits at the General Assembly; and the assignment of commissioners, advisory delegates, and others to hotels and other accommodations.

### Assembly Assistants

b. The Stated Clerk shall appoint persons to serve as assembly assistants for the duration of the General Assembly. Persons appointed shall not be commissioners to the General Assembly or staff members of entities of the General Assembly. Assembly assistants shall be assigned to particular tasks to facilitate the work of the General Assembly. The appointments shall be made in accordance with *Book of Order*, G-4.0403.

### Simultaneous Interpretation

c. The Stated Clerk shall arrange for the simultaneous interpretation of proceedings into Spanish and Korean languages for any participant during plenary meetings of the General Assembly. This service shall also be provided during assembly committee meetings, services of worship, and other events during the assembly for commissioners, advisory delegates, ecumenical guests, and, when possible, for other participants.

### Sponsorship of Event

d. An event scheduled before, during, or immediately following a session of the General Assembly and extending an invitation to any or all participants of the assembly shall clearly identify the sponsor or sponsoring organization(s) in any invitations, announcements, or other publicity about the event.

## 3. Reimbursing Commissioner Expenses

### Reimbursement/ Per Diem

a. The approved reimbursement for the travel expenses, food, lodging, and other approved expenses of commissioners at the sessions of the General Assembly shall be paid by the treasurer or the treasurer's designee. The treasurer shall have the authority to deposit funds for such purposes in a bank or trust company where the General Assembly is to be in session. Commissioners shall be reimbursed by means of individual checks upon receipt of a voucher on a form provided by the treasurer. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly the amount of any per diem. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall set the per diem, and the Stated Clerk shall publish such per diem in the materials (print or electronic) provided to the commissioners. The treasurer shall determine the manner in which such checks shall be distributed and shall announce the place or places where such checks may be cashed.

### Reimbursement for Alternate Commissioner

b. The Office of the General Assembly shall reimburse an alternate commissioner for cost of meals (as specified in the per diem expenses for the particular session of the assembly to which the person is commissioned) during the period in which the alternate is actually seated as a commissioner. The total of the payments to the two persons shall not be larger than payment to a single commissioner attending the full assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall reimburse either the original commissioner or the alternate who replaced the original commissioner for the costs of transportation and other approved expenses, but not both. It shall be the responsibility of the two individuals, with the assistance of the presbytery that elected them, to determine an appropriate division of the costs, whether reimbursement was in cash or a prepaid ticket was provided. Both persons shall be listed in the *Journal* as commissioners, with an indication of the period during which they served.

## 4. Assembly Meeting Work Group

### Membership

a. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall establish a work group on assembly arrangements to be composed of designated members from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council. The moderator of the



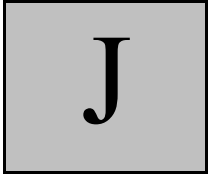
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Committee on Local Arrangements, and the moderator and vice moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (when selected) shall be nonvoting members of the committee at all meetings in which matters will be considered that affect their particular work. This work group shall be assigned responsibilities (1) through (10) in this Standing Rule I.4.b.

**Responsibilities****b. Responsibilities**

- (1) Review the evaluation of each General Assembly session secured by the Stated Clerk.
- (2) Outline the programs for future General Assemblies sufficiently in advance to ensure an orderly progression of themes and emphases and to ensure the appointment of significant speakers and other program participants.
- (3) Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk's proposed docket for the next session of the General Assembly.
- (4) Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk's proposed referral of each item of business to an appropriate assembly committee.
- (5) Assist the Moderator regarding the appointment of a commissioner to be the moderator of each assembly committee and a commissioner to serve as vice moderator of each assembly committee.
- (6) Consult with the Moderator regarding the planning of all worship at the General Assembly.
- (7) Coordinate the programmatic aspects of each General Assembly session, ensuring that adequate time is provided for the business that must be transacted.
- (8) Review requests from entities of the General Assembly, governing bodies, other entities related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any way, or coalitions in which this denomination or any of its entities participate to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings, or other events of any kind during those hours when the General Assembly or its committees are in session.
- (9) Prepare a report, including recommendations on the docket and the referral of assembly business, to be printed and distributed with other materials provided to commissioners.
- (10) Review and present to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of meeting six years hence and any changes in dates and places of meetings previously set.





## Special Meetings of the General Assembly

### 1. Method of Calling

- a. Petition's Subject Matter
- b. Resolution Form
- c. Not Called for Discussion Only
- d. Resolved 1 or 2 Days
- e. Full Text on Each Page of Petition
- f. Consult with Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- g. 120-day Requirement

### 2. Signatures

- a. Verification of PC(USA) Membership
- b. Verification of Signature
- c. Removal Request
- d. Failure to Reply
- e. Verification Process Report

### 3. Date and Location

- a. Report of Decision to Call Meeting
- b. COGA Sets Date and Place
- c. Expense Plan
- d. Letter of Notification

### 1. Method of Calling

The *Book of Order* permits the calling of special meetings of the General Assembly (G-13.0104). The method of calling a special meeting is the required number of commissioners submitting a petition with the full text of the resolution to the Moderator of the General Assembly.

#### Petition's Subject Matter

a. A special meeting may be called providing the petition's subject matter falls within the General Assembly's responsibilities. (G-13.0103).

#### Resolution Form

b. The urgent matter shall be brought in the form of a resolution or resolutions, stating the specific action proposed to be taken by the commissioners at the special meeting and shall include the reasons for proposing the decision to be made.

#### Not Called for Discussion Only

c. A special meeting may not be called for the purpose of discussion only.

#### Resolved in 1 or 2 Days

d. The matters should be able to be resolved in a session of one or two days.

#### Full Text on Each Page of Petition

e. The full text of the resolution shall appear on each page of the signed petitions.

#### Consult with Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures

f. The Moderator may consult with the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures to determine any questions concerning whether the resolution meets the criteria for a called meeting or concerning the specific actions in the proposed resolution. This may take place by conference call.

#### 120-day Requirement

g. Resolutions requiring or proposing constitutional interpretation are subject to the 120-day requirement in G-13.0112c. The 120-day requirement begins upon receipt of the petition by the Moderator. The Moderator may consult with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) to determine any questions concerning whether the resolution requires a constitutional interpretation.

## 2. Signatures

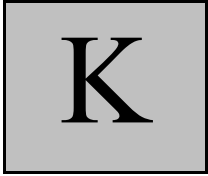
The *Book of Order* establishes the minimum number of signatures to require a called meeting. The Moderator, upon receipt of the petition, shall ask the Stated Clerk to complete the following within thirty days:

- Verification of PC(USA) Membership Verification of Signature**
- a. Send each presbytery stated clerk or clerk of session a letter verifying the current Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) membership of the individual signatory to the petition.
- b. Send each signatory to the petition a letter of verification asking the commissioner to verify the signature on the petition and if the commissioner concurs with the purpose of the request as stated in the resolution.
- Removal Request**
- c. During the verification process, a commissioner may request removal of his or her name from the petition by notifying the Stated Clerk.
- Failure to Reply**
- d. After all reasonable efforts to establish contact have been made, the name of a commissioner failing to reply to the letter of verification shall be removed from the petition.
- Verification Process Report**
- e. The Stated Clerk shall report to the Moderator the results of the verification process.

## 3. Date and Location

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly has the responsibility to fix the date and place of a meeting of the General Assembly when the General Assembly is not in session.

- Report of Decision to Call Meeting**
- a. Upon receiving certification from the Stated Clerk that the petition has met the requirements of the *Book of Order* and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, the Moderator shall report to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) the decision to call the meeting.
- COGA Sets Date and Place Expense Plan**
- b. The COGA shall set the date and place of a called meeting.
- c. The COGA shall submit to the called meeting a plan to pay for its expenses. This plan shall be considered to be part of the business of the special meeting.
- Letter of Notification**
- d. The letter of notification of the called meeting will be mailed to the commissioners no later than sixty days before the start of the meeting.



## Commissions, Special Committees, and Special Administrative Review

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Commissions and Special Committees</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Purpose</li> <li>b. Considerations for Creating</li> <li>c. Appointed by Moderator</li> <li>d. Length of Existence and Reports</li> <li>e. Review</li> <li>f. Representation at General Assembly and Funding</li> <li>g. Coordination</li> <li>h. Staff Services</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Special Administrative Review of Synods</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Three Ways to Review</li> <li>b. Written Request for Review</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
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### 1. Commissions and Special Committees

**Purpose**

a. Unless otherwise specified in the assembly’s action, any body or group established by the General Assembly to carry out decisions of the assembly, or instructed to report to the assembly, or make recommendations to the assembly, or both, shall be known as a commission or special committee (see *Book of Order*, G-9.0500). The purposes of a special committee must be ones that cannot be undertaken by the work of an existing corporation or entity under its assigned responsibilities. Due to the financial and staffing implications, before authorizing the establishment of a special committee, the assembly shall hear a report from the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, which shall have consulted with the most closely related entity and a member designated from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, as to whether the work to be assigned to the special committee could more effectively and economically be assigned to that entity.

**Considerations for Creating**

b. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall be notified by any assembly committee whenever there is discussion about the creation of a special committee. In discussing the possible creation of a special committee, the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall hear from related corporation or entity representatives as well as representatives from the assembly committee considering the proposal. Financial implications of special committees should accompany any recommendation for action by the assembly. The written comment of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures must be incorporated as background in the report of the assembly committee containing a recommendation to create a special committee.

**Appointed by Moderator**

c. Any commission or special committee authorized by the General Assembly, unless otherwise designated, shall be appointed by the Moderator. The Moderator is also authorized to fill by appointment any vacancies that may occur in any of such commissions or committees. No minister, elder, or other person shall be appointed to serve on more than one such commission or committee except by consent of the General Assembly.

**Length of Existence and Reports**

d. Special committees shall complete their work within two years unless the General Assembly that authorized its establishment specifies a different period. Special committees shall submit a written report to the General Assembly that shall include a recommendation to extend its existence (if beyond the period authorized), or, at the conclusion of its work, a recommendation for dismissal. Special committees shall also publish interim reports, no less

than annually, by electronic or print means. Such interim reports shall indicate the progress made by the special committee on its assigned tasks and offer a timeline and process for completing its work. When a special committee requests an extension of its existence, the request shall be referred to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. After consultation with the most closely related assembly entity, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will recommend to the assembly whether the project shall be reassigned to the entity, remain with the special committee, or be terminated. Any extension to its existence shall require a two-thirds vote of the commissioners.

**Review**

e. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall review the work of each special committee and include in its report to each session of the General Assembly a summary of the work being carried out by each special committee, including any recommendation to transfer the work assigned to a special committee elsewhere, or to dismiss the committee. A special committee shall not consider matters currently referred to another special committee or entity.

**Representation at General Assembly and Funding**

f. The expenses of one member of a special committee or commission to attend the General Assembly session to make any oral presentation of the report of the committee or commission that may be docketed, and to respond to questions concerning that report shall be paid by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission. This member shall be designated as the corresponding member. The exceptions to this rule are as follows:

(1) At the General Assembly meeting in which the final report of the committee or commission is presented, the moderator, who shall serve as the corresponding member of the committee or commission, and one other designated member of the committee or commission shall attend to present the report and serve as resource to the committee considering the report. Unless otherwise approved in advance by the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly in consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (due to special circumstances), only the expenses of these two authorized representatives shall be reimbursed by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission.

(2) In the event of a minority report, a designated member of the committee's or commission's minority shall also be invited to attend. The expenses of this member shall be reimbursed by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission.

(3) Other members of special committees or commissions, not otherwise referred to in this standing rule, shall be reimbursed for attendance at a General Assembly session only if they are individually involved in hearings or other official purposes.

**Coordination**

g. Any such commission or committee shall consult with and advise the General Assembly Council on the progress of its work in order to assist the council in its responsibility for coordinating the work of the entities of the General Assembly and the work of presbyteries and synods.

**Staff Services**

h. The Stated Clerk shall provide staff services and other assistance to such commissions and committees in order to facilitate and coordinate their work. The work of commissions and special committees shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly.

**2. Special Administrative Review of Synods****Three Ways to Review**

a. The General Assembly has authority to undertake special administrative review of synods (*Book of Order*, G-13.0103k). There are three ways the General Assembly could be requested to consider such review:

(1) by an overture from a presbytery or synod (G-11.0103t(3); G-12.0102o(2); Standing Rule A.3.;

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(2) by request from one of the General Assembly entities (Standing Rule A.2.); or

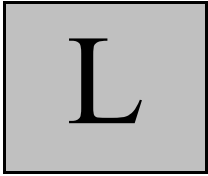
(3) By a commissioners' resolution (Standing Rule A.8.). If such overture, request, or resolution is acted on favorably by the General Assembly, the General Assembly could undertake Special Administrative Review (G-9.0408–.0410) through commission or special committee as provided for in Standing Rule K.5. and G-9.0501–.0503.

**Written Request  
for Review**

b. Special administrative review of an alleged synod irregularity or delinquency may occur when a written request for such review is received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly from another synod or a presbytery within the synod of the alleged irregularity or delinquency. If the request relates to an alleged delinquency, the request can only be filed with the Stated Clerk after the failure or refusal of the synod to cure the alleged delinquency at its next meeting, having been requested to do so in writing prior to the meeting. When the request for special administrative review is received, the Stated Clerk shall convene a meeting of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the moderator of the General Assembly Council, and the moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. If the request is in order and all the moderators agree that for the good of the church the special administrative review needs to be undertaken before the next meeting of the General Assembly (when the request could be considered by the whole General Assembly), the Moderator of the General Assembly shall appoint a special committee (Standing Rule K.5.) to conduct a special administrative review in accordance with G-9.0408–.0410 and report its findings and recommendations to the next General Assembly.







## Amendment or Suspension of the Standing Rules

1. **Recommending Amendments to the Standing Rules**
  2. **Amending the Standing Rules**
  3. **Suspending the Standing Rules**
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### **Recommending Amendments to the Standing Rules**

1. In consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall recommend to the next session of the General Assembly any changes in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly deemed necessary. The Stated Clerk shall consult with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly before proposing to the General Assembly any amendment to the standing rules.

### **Amending the Standing Rules**

2. The Standing Rules of the General Assembly may be amended by a majority vote of the commissioners present and voting.

### **Suspending the Standing Rules**

3. A motion to suspend the standing rules is not debatable and shall require a two-thirds vote of the total enrollment of the commissioners.



## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

### **Mission Personnel Retiring (With more than twenty years of service)**

**Brown, Rev. Dr. Joanne** served as campus pastor and teacher for three years (1987–1990) with the National University of Lesotho and as an educator/Professor of Theology for eighteen years and three months (1991–2008) with the Church of Christ of Madagascar. Joanne is a member of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, Synod of the Trinity.

**Butt, Rev. John and Ms. Martha** first served in Thailand from 1963–66 as Short-term Fraternal Workers assigned by the Church of Christ in Thailand to teach at The Prince Royal's College. From 1984–2007, John and Martha served as Co-Workers in Mission at Payap University and with the 1st District of the Church of Christ in Thailand. Martha was Vice President for International Affairs and John the Director of Payap University's Institute of Religion, Culture and Peace. He also taught at the McGilvary College of Divinity. John is a member of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Martha is a member of the House of Hope Presbyterian Church, St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Rev. Donna Laubach-Moros, D.Min., & Rev. Edgar Moros-Ruano, Ph.D.,** served as Mission Co-Workers in Theological Education in three countries for twenty years and six months (1986–2007) with the Presbyterian Church of Venezuela, the Theological Seminary in Colombia (STP), and the Seminario Evangelico Unido de Teologia (SEUT) in Spain. Donna is a member of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee. Edgar is a member of the Iglesia Presbiteriana de Venezuela.

**Yoder, Rev. William "Bill"** served as an educator for forty-two years (1963–2007) with the Prince Royal College, Payap University, McGilvary Seminary and the Church of Christ in Thailand. Bill is a member of the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley, Synod of the Covenant. Bill continues to serve as Regional Liaison for Southeast Asia as a long-term volunteer, under the auspice of World Mission.

### **Mission Co-Worker Appointments New Appointments 2007–2008**

**Bae, Kook Jin "KJ"** will serve in team ministry with his spouse, Sook Hee Bae, in the Republic of Korea with the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) for two years. He is a member of the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

**Dolezal-Ng, Carol** is serving as the Development Associate for Interpretation and Support with the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon for three years. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Oakland, California, Presbytery of San Francisco.

**England, Denise** will serve as Health Management Consultant for Geriatric and Nursing in Egypt for three years, under the auspice of Synod of the Nile. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Audubon, Iowa, Presbytery of Des Moines.

**Faucett, Brett & Shelly** are serving as Regional Consultants for Health & HIV/AIDS in Thailand for three years, under the auspices of Church of Christ in Thailand. They are members of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach, California, Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

**Heller, Rev. Paul & Darlene** will serve as Director for Ministry of Hope Crisis Nursery in Malawi for three years, under the auspices of the Registered Trustees of Ministry of Hope Malawi. Paul is a member of Presbytery of Northern New York, Synod of the Northeast. Darlene is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Plattsburgh, New York, Presbytery of Northern New York.

**Holslag, Rev. Jane** will serve as Theology and English Instructor in Lithuania for three years, under the auspice of LCC International University (formerly Lithuania Christian College). She is a member of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

**Hudson, Rev. Dr. David & Rev. Susan** are serving as Regional Liaison of South Asia for three years, under the auspice of Asia and Pacific Area Office and Presbyterian World Mission Ministry. They are members of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, Synod of Mid-Atlantic.

**Reneau, Dr. Ingrid** is serving as Education Officer with Africa Committee/Rehabilitation of Southern Sudan (ACROSS) in Sudan for three years, under the auspice of ACROSS. She is a member of Shiloh Christian Fellowship in Oakland, California.

**Searles, Douglas and Dr. Elizabeth** will serve as Mission Co-Workers for Church Growth and Outreach in Poland for three years, under the auspice of the Evangelical- Reformed Church in Poland. They are members of Schleswig United Church of Christ in Schleswig, Iowa.

## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**Trimble, Douglas and Margaret** will serve as Director of Assessment/Professor of Psychology in Pakistan for three years, under the auspice of Forman Christian College. They are members of Central Presbyterian Church in Downingtown, Pennsylvania.

**Whearty, Bruce and Lora** will serve as educators at the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in Ethiopia for three years, under the auspice of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. Bruce is a member of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Billings, Montana, Presbytery of Yellowstone. Lora is a member of Manhattan First Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, Montana, Presbytery of Yellowstone.

**Young, Rev. Dr. Rebecca** is serving as Instructor of Systematic Theology in Indonesia for three years, under the auspice of Jakarta Theological Seminary and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. She is a member of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, Synod of Mid-Atlantic.

### **Mission Volunteers International Long Term New Appointments 2007–2008**

**Goad, Jacob** is serving as the Delegations & Partnership Coordinator in Peru for two years, under the auspice of the Evangelical Presbyterian Reformed Church in Peru. He is a member of Alamance Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, North Carolina, Presbytery of Salem.

**Hamner, Kristin** is serving as Partnership Facilitator for Self-Development of People in the Dominican Republic for two years, under the auspice of Self-Development of People in Dominican Republic. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Grand Island, Nebraska, Presbytery of Central Nebraska.

**McReynolds, Christopher “Chris”** is serving as U.S. Coordinator of Proyecto Amistad in Mexico for two years, under the auspice of Presbyterian Border Ministries and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico. He is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Del Rio, Texas, Presbytery of Mission.

**Richter, William “Bill”** is serving as U.S. Coordinator for Puentes de Cristo in Mexico for two years, under the auspice of Presbyterian Border Ministries and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico. He is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in DeKalb, Illinois, Presbytery of Blackhawk.

**Robinson, Amy** will serve as U.S. Coordinator for Pasos de Fe in Mexico for two years, under the auspice of Presbyterian Border Ministries and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico. She is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Olympia, Washington, Presbytery of Olympia.

**Smith, Vicki** is serving as a Volunteer Teacher in Jamaica for two years, under the auspice of United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. She is a member of Webster Presbyterian Church in Webster, Texas, Presbytery of New Covenant.

**Toland, Elizabeth “Liz”** is serving as U.S. Coordinator with Compañeros en Misión in Mexico for two years, under the auspice of Presbyterian Border Ministry and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Iola, Kansas, Presbytery of John Calvin.

### **National Young Adult Volunteer Program 2007–2008**

**Acton, Leslie** is serving in a community ministry setting in Nashville, Tennessee. She is a member of Sharon Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, Presbytery of Charlotte.

**Adcock, Mary** is serving in a community ministry setting in San Antonio, Texas. She is a member of Second Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.

**Allen, Christine** is serving in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of Central Congregational Church, Newbury Port, Massachusetts.

**Baker, Andrea** is serving in a community ministry setting for Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Miami, Florida. She is a member of Chicago Community Mennonite Church, Chicago, Illinois.

**Braden, Hailey** is serving in a community ministry setting for Seattle’s Urban Intentional Communities, Seattle, Washington. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Texas, Presbytery of Mission.

**Burns, Christina** is serving in a community ministry setting for Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Miami, Florida. She is a member of Hillside United Methodist Church, Woodstock, Georgia.

## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**Carl, Jenna** is serving in a community ministry setting in San Antonio, Texas. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, Presbytery of Grace.

**Ceplecci, Andrea** is serving in a community ministry setting for Village Youth Ministry in Ketchikan, Alaska. She is a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Warren, Ohio.

**DeSanto, Stephen** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. He is a member of Beulah Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Kentucky, Presbytery of Mid- Kentucky.

**Dunbar, Jennifer** is serving in a community ministry setting for Hollywood Urban Project in Hollywood, California. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Red Oak, Iowa, Presbytery of Missouri River Valley.

**Gillard, Steven** is serving in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. He is a member of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Herndon, Virginia, Presbytery of National Capital.

**Greenhow, Andrew** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. He is a member of Wayne Presbyterian Church, Wayne, Pennsylvania, Presbytery of Philadelphia.

**Guillet, Leanna** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. She is a member of Shippensburg Community Church, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

**Houpt, Christine Kelli** is serving in a community ministry setting for Seattle's Urban Intentional Communities, Seattle, Washington. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee, Florida, Presbytery of Florida.

**Jackson, Allison** is serving in a community ministry setting in Nashville, Tennessee. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Calhoun, Georgia, Presbytery of Cherokee.

**Janzen, Alicia** is serving in a community ministry setting for Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Miami, Florida. She is a member of First Mennonite Church,

**Jennette, Jessica** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, Illinois, Presbytery of Blackhawk.

**Johnston, Kirk** is serving in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. He is a member of New Hope Presbyterian Church, Salem, Virginia, Presbytery of the Peaks.

**Kerr, Sean** is serving in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. He is a member of Chatham Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Illinois, Presbytery of Great Rivers.

**Lee, Jeffrey** is serving in a community ministry setting for Seattle's Urban Intentional Communities, Seattle, Washington. He is a member of Highlands United Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, Florida.

**Lee, Laura** is serving in a community ministry setting for Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Miami, Florida. She is a member Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church, Franklin, Tennessee, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.

**Lee-Villanueva, Allison** is serving in a community ministry setting for Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Miami, Florida.

**Leer, Sarah** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas, Presbytery of Arkansas.

**Mann, Lilli** is serving in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of University United Methodist Church, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

**Miller, Rebecca** is serving in a community ministry setting for Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Miami, Florida. She is a member of Faith Christian Fellowship, Corvallis, Oregon.

**Oakley, Shelton Elizabeth** is serving in a community ministry setting for Hollywood Urban Project in Hollywood, California. She is a member of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Huntsville, Alabama, Presbytery of North Alabama.

**Pacheco, Rachel** is serving in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of Langhorne Presbyterian Church, Langhorne, Pennsylvania, Presbytery of Philadelphia.

## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**Parker, Maggie** is serving in a community ministry setting for Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Miami, Florida. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Walla Walla, Washington, Presbytery of Central Washington.

**Pashby, Stephanie** is serving in a community ministry setting for Hollywood Urban Project in Hollywood, California. She is a member of Bethany Presbyterian Church, Seattle, Washington, Presbytery of Seattle.

**Powell, Cassandra** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Frankfort, Kentucky, Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.

**Pruitt, Kaitlyn** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. She attends the University Presbyterian Church, Seattle, Washington.

**Reynolds, Leisha** is serving in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church, Blue Springs, Missouri, Presbytery of Heartland.

**Rosales, Leticia** is serving in a community ministry setting in San Antonio, Texas. She is a member of Shepherd of the Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin, Texas, Presbytery of Mission.

**Russell, Tony** is serving in a community ministry setting in Atlanta, Georgia. He is a member of Grace Hope Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Kentucky, Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.

**Schneider, Caitlin** is serving in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. She is a member of Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland, Presbytery of Baltimore.

**Seeley, Adam** is serving in a community ministry setting in Atlanta, Georgia. He is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa, Presbytery of North Central Iowa.

**Woldan, Kristina** is serving in a community ministry setting for Hollywood Urban Project in Hollywood, California. She is a member of Immanuel Church, Chelmsford, Massachusetts.

### National Young Adult Volunteer Program 2008–2009

**Booth, Whitney** will serve in a community ministry setting for Seattle's Urban Intentional Communities, Seattle, Washington. She is a member of Commerce Presbyterian Church, Commerce, Georgia, Presbytery of Northeast Georgia.

**Bruner, Carrie** will serve in a community ministry setting in Nashville, Tennessee. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church of Honolulu, Kaneohe, Hawaii, Presbytery of the Pacific.

**Buckely, Blair** will serve in a community ministry setting in Nashville, Tennessee. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Presbytery of Pueblo.

**Damelio, Anthony** will serve in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. He is a member of Avon Lake Presbyterian Church, Avon Lake, Ohio, Presbytery of the Western Reserve.

**Fields, Rose** will serve in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Stillwater, Oklahoma, Presbytery of Cimarron.

**Higgins, Melinda** will serve in a community ministry setting in San Antonio, Texas. She is a member of Second Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.

**Imes, Staci** will serve in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of Wauwatosa Presbyterian Church, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, Presbytery of Milwaukee.

**McCullough, Allison** will serve in a community ministry setting for Hollywood Urban Project in Hollywood, California. She is a member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Walterboro, South Carolina.

**Parsons, Sarah** will serve in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of McDonough Presbyterian Church, McDonough, Georgia, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

**Rigel, Jessica** will serve in a community ministry setting for Tucson Borderlands in Tucson, Arizona. She is a member of Pennington Presbyterian Church, Pennington, New Jersey, Presbytery of New Brunswick.

## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**Stapp, Diana** will serve in a community ministry setting in the Gulf Coast. She is a member of Central United Protestant Church, Richland, Washington.

### **International Young Adult Volunteer Program 2007–2008**

**Bauhof, Megan** is serving as Community Development Intern in Ghana with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana for one year. Megan is a member of Northbrook Presbyterian Church, Beverly Hills, Michigan, Presbytery of Detroit.

**Bryant, Katherine** is serving as Community Development Intern in South India with the Central Kerala Diocese/Church of South India for one year. Katherine is a member of Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Georgia, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

**Burnett, Audrey** is serving as Community Development Intern in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala. Audrey is a member of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Sherman, Texas, Presbytery of Grace.

**Craven, Sarah** is serving as Community Development Intern in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Sarah is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Rockaway, New Jersey, Presbytery of Newton.

**Hamilton, Ted** is serving as Community Development Intern in the Philippines with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines for one year. Ted is a member of Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, Bethesda, Maryland, Presbytery of National Capital.

**Lunceford, Sarah** is serving as Community Development Intern in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Sarah is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Presbytery of South Louisiana.

**McCoy, Micah** is serving as Community Development Intern in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. Micah is a member Trinity Presbyterian Church, McKinney, Texas, Presbytery of Grace.

**Moorhead, Blair** is serving as Community Development Intern in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. Blair is a member of Community Presbyterian Church, West Fargo, North Dakota, Presbytery of Northern Plains.

**Miller, Kristine** is serving as Community Development Intern in Ghana with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana for one year. Kristine is a member of Pioneer Presbyterian Church, Burns, Oregon, Presbytery of the Pacific.

**Nichols, Anna** is serving as Community Development Intern in the Philippines with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines for one year. Anna is a member First Presbyterian Church, Tullahoma, Tennessee, Presbytery of Tennessee.

**Sale, Samantha** is serving as Community Development Intern in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Samantha is a member of Clairmont Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Georgia, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

**Samoy, Jessica** is serving as Community Development Intern in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Jessica is a member of Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Tucson, Arizona, Presbytery of de Cristo.

**Stroble, Kristin** is serving as Community Development Intern in the Philippines with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines for one year. Kristin is a member of United Presbyterian Church, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, Presbytery of Eastminster.

**Sutton, Mary “Ali”** is serving as Community Development Intern in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Mary is a member of Calvary Fellowship Church, Downingtown, Pennsylvania.

**Therriault, Bethany** is serving as Community Development Intern in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Bethany is a member of Eastminster Presbyterian Church, York, Pennsylvania, Presbytery of Donegal.

**Wheeler, Melissa** is serving as Community Development Intern in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Melissa is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Canyon, Texas, Presbytery of Palo Duro.

**Williams, Hodari** is serving as Community Development Intern in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. Hodari is a member of First Afrikan Presbyterian Church, Lithonia, Georgia, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**Wilson, Maureen** is serving as Community Development Intern in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Maureen is a member of Second Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley.

**Wirth, Alexander** is serving as Community Development Intern in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Alexander is a member of Grace First Presbyterian Church, Long Beach, California, Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

### **International Young Adult Volunteer Program 2008–2009**

**Atkinson, Jane** will serve in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Jane is a member of Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Valle Crucis, North Carolina.

**Brown, Rachel** will serve in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. Rachel is a member of Mills River Presbyterian Church, Mills River, North Carolina, Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

**Buff, Megan** will serve in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Megan is a member of Northwood Presbyterian Church, Spokane, Washington, Presbytery of the Inland Northwest.

**Cluff, Elizabeth** will serve in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Elizabeth is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas, Presbytery of New Covenant.

**Coates, Henry W.** will serve in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. Henry is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Hightstown, New Jersey, Presbytery of Monmouth.

**Cornell, Alex** will serve in Peru with Joining Hands Against Poverty-Peru for one year. Alex is a member of University Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Texas, Presbytery of Mission.

**Creager, Alex** will serve in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Alex is a member of Kent Presbyterian Church, Kent, Ohio, Presbytery of Eastminster.

**Crossan, Kevin** and Jessica will serve in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Kevin is a member of New London Presbyterian Church, New London, Pennsylvania, Presbytery of Donegal, and Jessica is member of West Grove Presbyterian Church, West Grove, Pennsylvania, Presbytery of Donegal.

**Fuller, Leslie** will serve in Kenya with the Presbyterian of East Africa for one year. Leslie is a member of South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, Presbytery of Charlotte.

**Givens, Ariel** will serve in South India with the Central Kerala Diocese/Church of South India for one year. Ariel is a member of Second Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.

**Hasselbarth, Lynn** will serve in Peru with Joining Hands Against Poverty-Peru for one year. Lynn is a member of Hamilton Presbyterian Church, Guilderland, New York, Presbytery of Albany.

**Hill, Anna** will serve in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Anna is a member of New Church Berkeley, Berkeley, California.

**Kerr, Sean** will serve in Peru with Joining Hands Against Poverty-Peru for one year. Sean is a member of Chatham Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Illinois, Presbytery of Great Rivers.

**Kim, Hanna** will serve in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Kim is a member of Church of all Nations, Columbia Heights, Minnesota, Presbytery of Twin Cities Area.

**Mason, Celeste** will serve in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Celeste is a member of Harmonsburg Presbyterian Church, Harmonsburg, Pennsylvania, Presbytery of Lake Erie.

**McKnelly, Leslie** will serve in Peru with Joining Hands Against Poverty-Peru for one year. Leslie is a member of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, North Carolina, Presbytery of New Hope.

**Naskret, Allie** will serve in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Allie is a member of Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township, Chatham, New Jersey, Presbytery of Newton.



## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**Niesen, Sudie** will serve in South India with the Central Kerala Diocese/Church of South India for one year. Sudie is a member of Glendale Presbyterian Church, Glendale, Missouri, Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy.

**Pier-Fitzgerald, Joel** will serve in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Joel is a member of Traverse City Central United Methodist Church, Traverse City, Michigan.

**Robert Quiring** will serve in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. Robert is a member of First Presbyterian Church of Broken Arrow, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma.

**Rains, Katherine** will serve in Peru with Joining Hands Against Poverty-Peru for one year. Katherine is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Grand Forks, North Dakota, Presbytery of Northern Plains.

**Santamaria, Lindsey** will serve in South India with the Central Kerala Diocese/Church of South India for one year. Lindsey is a member of The Village Community Presbyterian Church, Rancho Santa Fe, California, Presbytery of San Diego.

**Smith-Mather, Shelvis and Nancy** will serve in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. Shelvis and Nancy are members of New Life Presbyterian Church, College Park, Georgia, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

**Stanger, John** will serve in South India with the Central Kerala Diocese/Church of South India for one year. John is a member of Bethel Presbyterian Church, W. Columbia, Texas, Presbytery of New Covenant.

**Vandewiele, Callie** will serve in Guatemala with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala for one year. Callie is a member of Eagle Creek Presbyterian Church, Eagle Creek, Oregon, Presbytery of the Cascades.

**Wellman, William** will serve in Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for one year. William is a member of Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, Tampa, Florida, Presbytery of Tampa Bay.

**Williams, Hannah** will serve in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Hannah is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg, Virginia, Presbytery of the Peaks.

**Wilson, Emily** will serve in Northern Ireland with the Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland for one year. Emily is a member of Broad Street Presbyterian Church, Columbus, Ohio, Presbytery of Scioto Valley.

### **Mission Volunteers Young Adult Interns 2007–2008**

**Buck, Alexandra** is serving in the Presbyterian United Nations Office of the General Assembly Council, New York, New York. She is a member of West Granville Presbyterian Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Presbytery of Milwaukee.

**Cannon, Bridgette** is serving in the Racial Ethnic Young Women Together and National Network of Presbyterian College Women office of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of C.N. Jenkins Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, Presbytery of Charlotte.

**Fischer, Adam** is serving in the Hunger Program office of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. He is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Presbytery of Inland Northwest.

**Gonzales, Tiffany** is serving in the Office of Women's Advocacy of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church, The Woodlands, Texas, Presbytery of New Covenant.

**McQuere, Anna** is serving in the Office of Multicultural Ministries of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Ypsilanti, Michigan, Presbytery of Detroit.

**Morris, Rachel** is serving in the Mission Service Recruitment Office of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of Second Presbyterian Church, Roanoke, Virginia, Presbytery of the Peaks.

**Pak, Irene** is serving in the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women office of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Ogden, Utah, Presbytery of Utah.

### **Mission Volunteers Young Adult Interns 2006–2007**

**Anderson, Katie Jo** served in the Office of Young Women's Ministry of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Sterling, Colorado, Presbytery of Peaks & Plains.

## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**Coy, Christine** served in the Mission Service Recruitment Office of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church, Owensboro, Kentucky, Presbytery of Western Kentucky.

**Crooms, Jonathan** served in the Presbyterian United Nations Office of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky and New York, New York. He is a member of Maximo Presbyterian Church, St. Petersburg, Florida, Presbytery of Tampa Bay.

**Gregory, Shaya** served in the Office of Women's Advocacy of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of Sojourner Truth Presbyterian Church, Richmond, California, Presbytery of San Francisco.

**Gonzales, Tiffany** served in the Racial Justice & Advocacy of the General Assembly Council, Louisville, Kentucky. She is a member of The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church, The Woodlands, Texas, Presbytery of the New Covenant.

### **Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs**

*We remember in prayer those who serve in our armed forces and those who minister to them.*

#### **Presbyterian (U.S.A.) Ministers Who Became Active Duty Military Chaplains Since the 217th General Assembly (2006)**

**LTJG Autumn Butler-Saeger**, U.S. Navy, Camp Pendleton California Middle Tennessee Presbytery

**Capt Craig Nakagawa**, U.S. Air Force, Nellis AFB, Nevada, Santa Fe Presbytery

**CAPT Gregory W. Green**, U.S. Army, Fort Lewis Washington, Charlotte Presbytery

**CH (CAPT) Terry Cobban**, U.S. Army, Fort Lewis, Washington, Olympia Presbytery

**LT Peter Dietz, CHC**, U.S. Navy, Camp LeJeune, North Carolina, Carlisle Presbytery

**LT Mark R. Ames, CHC**, U.S. Navy, Japan, Lake Michigan Presbytery

**LT Steven Voris, CHC**, U.S. Navy, Gulfport, Mississippi, Santa Fe Presbytery

**LCDR Ted Leenerts, CHC**, U.S. Navy, Camp Pendleton California, Los Ranchos Presbytery

**Ch, Capt John Boulware**, U.S. Air Force, Offutt AFB, Nebraska, Baltimore Presbytery

**Ch, Col Les Hyder**, U.S. Air National Guard, San Joaquin Presbytery

**Ch, LtCol Steven Schaick**, U.S. Air Force, Hurlburt AFB, Florida, Florida Presbytery

**Ch, Kevin Wainwright**, U.S. Army, Fort Hood, Texas, Charlotte Presbytery

#### **Presbyterian (U.S.A.) Ministers Who Became Full Time Veterans Administration Chaplains Since the 217th General Assembly (2006)**

**CH Michael Gillespie**, Veterans Administration Hospital, Roseburg, Oregon, Cascades Presbytery

**CH Barry Phillips**, Veterans Administration Hospital, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Presbytery of the James

**CH Glen A. Busby**, Veterans Administration Hospital, Gainesville Florida, St. Augustine Presbytery

**CH Louise Shaw**, Veterans Administration Hospital, San Antonio Texas, Mission Presbytery

**CH John Besancon**, Veterans Administration Hospital, Omaha Nebraska, Missouri River Valley Presbytery

COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**We Are Grateful for the Service of Presbyterian Military and Veterans Administration Chaplains  
Who Retired Since the 217th General Assembly (2006)**

CH Clover T. Bailey, Veterans Administration, Detroit Presbytery  
CH (COL) Larry Adams-Thompson, U.S. Army, Seattle Presbytery  
LCDR Peter Gregory, CHC, U.S. Navy, New Brunswick Presbytery  
CH Girdharry Kissoon, Veterans Administration, New York City Presbytery  
CH (MAJ) Onerray Neal, U.S. Army, East Tennessee Presbytery  
CH (MAJ) Lee Vermont, U.S. Army, Presby of Southern New England  
CH (MG) David W. Hicks, U.S. Army, Lehigh Presbytery  
CAPT Maurice Roberts, CHC, U.S.N (Ret), Veterans Administration, Arkansas Presbytery  
CH (COL) James Alan Buckner, U.S. Army, National Capital Presbytery  
CDR Robert Crall, CHC, U.S. Navy, Chicago Presbytery  
CH Ernest Gutha, Veterans Administration, Missouri River Valley Presbytery  
CH (LTC) Eric Keller, U.S. Army, Missouri Union Presbytery  
CH (LTC) Paul Kerr, U.S. Army, Olympia Presbytery  
CAPT Robert Evans, CHC, U.S. Navy, South Dakota Presbytery  
LCDR Michael Hogg, CHC, U.S. Navy, Los Ranchos Presbytery  
CAPT Lyman Smith, CHC, U.S. Navy, National Capital Presbytery  
CAPT William Weimer, CHC, U.S. Navy, Eastern Virginia Presbytery  
Ch, Col Karen Stocks, U.S. Air Force, Mission Presbytery  
Ch, Maj Richard Rosenfeld, U.S. Air Force, Grace Presbytery  
CH Hezekiah Corpetts, Veterans Administration, St Andrew Presbytery  
CH (LTC) Carol VanSchenkof, U.S. Army, Heartland Presbytery  
CH (COL) Donna Weddle, U.S. Army, National Capital Presbytery

**PCCMP Members and Staff**

Mrs. Pat Kellenbarger, Chair, Elder, Solano Beach Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of San Diego\*  
CH (COL) Rich Cooper, U.S.A. (Ret), Member, Executive Presbyter of Presbytery of Western Kentucky\*  
Ch, Col Edward Brogan, U.S.A.F. (Ret), PC(USA), Director, PCCMP\*  
CAPT Thomas Chadwick, CHC, U.S.N. (Ret), PC(USA), Associate Director, PCCMP\*

\* Will be present at General Assembly Worship Service



MODERATORS AND CLERKS

1838-1869

A—SUCCESSION OF MODERATORS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1789-1837

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1789	*John Witherspoon, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1789	*John Rodgers, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1790	*Robert Smith, D.D.	New Castle	Philadelphia, Pa.
1791	*John Woodhull, D.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1792	*John King, D.D.	Carlisle	Carlisle, Pa.
1793	*James Latta, D.D.	New Castle	Philadelphia, Pa.
1794	*Alexander McWhorter, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1795	*John McKnight, D.D.	New York	Carlisle, Pa.
1796	*Robert Davidson, D.D.	Carlisle	Philadelphia, Pa.
1797	*William Mackay Tennent, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1798	*John Blair Smith, D.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1799	*S. Stanhope Smith, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Winchester, Va.
1800	*Joseph Clark, D.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1801	*Nathaniel Irwin	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1802	*Azel Roe, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1803	*James Hall, D.D.	Concord	Philadelphia, Pa.
1804	*James Francis Armstrong	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1805	*James Richards, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1806	*Samuel Miller, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1807	*Archibald Alexander, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1808	*Philip Milledoler, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1809	*Drury Lacy	Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1810	*John Brodhead Romeyn, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1811	*Eliphalet Nott, D.D., LL.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1812	*Andrew Flinn, D.D.	Harmony	Philadelphia, Pa.
1813	*Samuel Blatchford, D.D.	Columbia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1814	*James Inglis, D.D.	Baltimore	Philadelphia, Pa.
1815	*William Neill, D.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1816	*James Blythe, D.D.	W. Lexington	Philadelphia, Pa.
1817	*Jonas Coe, D.D.	Columbia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1818	*Jacob Jones Janeway, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1819	*John Holt Rice, D.D.	Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1820	*John McDowell, D.D.	Jersey	Philadelphia, Pa.
1821	*William Hill, D.D.	Winchester	Philadelphia, Pa.
1822	*Obadiah Jennings, D.D.	Steubenville	Philadelphia, Pa.
1823	*John Chester, D.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1824	*Ashbel Green, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1825	*Stephen N. Rowan, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1826	*Thomas McAuley, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1827	*Francis Herron, D.D.	Ohio	Philadelphia, Pa.
1828	*Ezra Stiles Ely, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1829	*Benjamin Holt Rice, D.D.	Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1830	*Ezra Fisk, D.D.	Hudson	Philadelphia, Pa.
1831	*Nathan S.S. Beman, D.D., LL.D.	Troy	Philadelphia, Pa.
1832	*James Hoge, D.D.	Columbus	Philadelphia, Pa.
1833	*William Anderson McDowell, D.D.	Charleston	Philadelphia, Pa.
1834	*Philip Lindsley, D.D.	W. Tennessee	Philadelphia, Pa.
1835	*William Wirt Phillips, D.D.	New York	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1836	*John Witherspoon, D.D., LL.D.	Harmony	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1837	*David Elliott, D.D., LL.D.	Ohio	Philadelphia, Pa.

1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH)

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1838	*Wm. Swan Plumer, D.D., LL.D.	East Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1839	*Joshua Lacy Wilson, D.D.	Cincinnati	Philadelphia, Pa.
1840	*William Morrison Engles, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1841	*Robt. J. Breckenridge, DD, LLD	Baltimore	Philadelphia, Pa.
1842	*John Todd Edgar, D.D.	Nashville	Philadelphia, Pa.
1843	*Gardiner Spring, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1844	*George Junkin, D.D., LL.D.	Oxford	Louisville, Ky.
1845	*John Michael Krebs, D.D.	New York	Cincinnati, Ohio
1846	*Charles Hodge, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1847	*Jas. H. Thornwell, D.D., LL.D.	Charleston	Richmond, Va.
1848	*Alexander T. McGill, DD, L&D	Ohio	Baltimore, Md.
1849	*Nicholas Murray, D.D.	Elizabethtown	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1850	*Aaron W. Leland, D.D.	Charleston	Cincinnati, Ohio
1851	*Edward P. Humphrey, D.D., LL.D.	Louisville	St. Louis, Mo.
1852	*John Chase Lord, D.D.	Buffalo City	Charleston, S.C.
1853	*John Clark Young, D.D.	Transylvania	Philadelphia, Pa.
1854	*Henry Augustus Boardman, D.D.	Philadelphia	Buffalo, N.Y.
1855	*Nathan Lewis Rice, D.D.	St. Louis	Nashville, Tenn.
1856	*Francis McFarland, D.D.	Lexington	New York, N.Y.
1857	*Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, D.D.	Burlington	Lexington, Ky.
1858	*Wm. Anderson Scott, D.D., LL.D.	California	New Orleans, La.
1859	*William L. Breckenridge, D.D.	Louisville	Indianapolis, Ind.
1860	*John Williams Yeomans, D.D.	Northumberland	Rochester, N.Y.
1861	*Jno. Chester Backus, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Philadelphia, Pa.
1862	*Charles C. Beatty, D.D., LL.D.	Steubenville	Columbus, Ohio
1863	*John Hunter Morrison, D.D.	Lodiana	Peoria, Ill.
1864	*James Wood, D.D.	Madison	Newark, N.J.
1865	*John Cameron Lowrie, D.D.	New York	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1866	*Robert Livingstone Stanton, D.D.	Chillicothe	St. Louis, Mo.
1867	*Phineas Densmore Gurley, D.D.	Potomac	Cincinnati, Ohio
1868	*George W. Musgrave, D.D., LL.D.	Phila. Central	Albany, N.Y.
1869	*M.W. Jacobus, D.D., LL.D.	Ohio	New York, N.Y.
1869	*M.W. Jacobus, D.D., LL.D.	Ohio (Nov. 12)	Pittsburgh, Pa.

2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH)

1838	*Samuel Fisher, D.D.	Newark	Philadelphia, Pa.
1839	*Baster Dickinson, D.D.	Cincinnati	Philadelphia, Pa.
1840	*William Wisner, D.D.	Cincinnati	Philadelphia, Pa.
1843	*Ansel Doan Eddy, D.D.	Newark	Philadelphia, Pa.
1846	*Samuel Hanson Cox, D.D., LL.D.	Brooklyn	Philadelphia, Pa.
1849	*Philip Courtlandt Hay, D.D.	Tioga	Philadelphia, Pa.
1850	*David H. Riddle, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Detroit, Mich.
1851	*Albert Barnes	Philadelphia, 4th	Utica, N.Y.
1852	*William Adams, D.D., LL.D.	New York, 4th	Washington, D.C.
1853	*Diarca Howe Allen, D.D.	Cincinnati	Buffalo, N.Y.
1854	*Thomas H. Skinner, D.D., LL.D.	New York, 3rd	Philadelphia, Pa.
1855	*William Carpenter Wisner, D.D.	Niagara	St. Louis, Mo.
1856	*Laurens P. Hickok, D.D., LL.D.	Troy	New York, N.Y.
1857	*Samuel W. Fisher, D.D., LL.D.	Cincinnati	Cleveland, Ohio
1858	*Matthew L. P. Thompson, D.D.	Buffalo	Chicago, Ill.
1859	*Robert Wilson Patterson, D.D.	Chicago	Wilmington, Del.
1860	*Thornton Anthony Mills, D.D.	Indianapolis	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1861	*Jonathan Bailey Condit, D.D.	Cayuga	Syracuse, N.Y.
1862	*George Duffield, D.D.	Detroit	Cincinnati, Ohio
1863	*Henry B. Smith, D.D., LL.D.	N. York, 4th	Philadelphia, Pa.
1864	*Thomas Brainerd, D.D.	Philadelphia, 4th	Dayton, Ohio
1865	*James Boylan Shaw, D.D.	Rochester	Brooklyn, N.Y.

\* Deceased  
# Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1866	*Samuel Miles Hopkins, D.D.	Cayuga	St. Louis, Mo.
1867	*Henry Addison Nelson, D.D.	St. Louis	Rochester, N.Y.
1868	*Jonathan French Stearns, D.D.	Newark	Harrisburg, Pa.
1869	*Philemon Halsted Fowler, D.D.	Utica	New York, N.Y.
1869	*Philemon Halsted Fowler, D.D.	Utica (Nov. 12)	Pittsburgh, Pa.

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1926	*William O. Thompson, D.D., LL.D.	Columbus	Baltimore, Md.
1927	‡*Robert E. Speer, D.D., LL.D.	Jersey City	San Francisco, Calif.
1928	*Hugh Kelso Walker, D.D., LL.D.	Los Angeles	Tulsa, Okla.
1929	*Cleland Boyd McAfee, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	St. Paul, Minn.
1930	*Hugh Thomson Kerr, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Cincinnati, Ohio
1931	*Lewis Seymour Mudge, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1932	*Charles William Kerr, D.D.	Tulsa	Denver, Co.
1933	*John McDowell, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Columbus, Ohio
1934	*William Chalmers Covert, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Cleveland, Ohio
1935	*Joseph Anderson Vance, D.D., LL.D.	Detroit	Cincinnati, Ohio
1936	*Henry Buck Master, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.	Fort Wayne	Syracuse, N.Y.
1937	*William Hiram Foulkes, D.D., LL.D.	Newark	Columbus, Ohio
1938	*Charles Whitefield Welch, D.D.	Louisville	Philadelphia, Pa.
1939	‡*Sam Higginbottom, LL.D., Philan.D.	Cleveland	Cleveland, Ohio
1940	*William Lindsay Young, D.D., LL.D.	Kansas City	Rochester, N.Y.
1941	*Herbert Booth Smith, D.D., LL.D.	Los Angeles	St. Louis, Mo.
1942	*Stuart Nye Hutchison, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Milwaukee, Wis.
1943	*Henry Sloane Coffin, D.D., Litt.D., LL.D.	New York	Detroit, Mich.
1944	*Roy Ewing Vale, D.D., LL.D.	Indianapolis	Chicago, Ill.
1945	*William Blakeman Lampe, D.D.	St. Louis	Minneapolis, Minn.
1946	*Frederick W. Evans, D.D.	Troy	Atlantic City, N.J.
1947	‡*Wilbur LaRoe Jr., LL.D.	Washington City	Grand Rapids, Mich.
1948	*Jese Hays Baird, D.D., LL.D.	San Francisco	Seattle, Wash.
1949	*Clifford E. Barbour, Ph.D., D.D., LL.D.		Union Buffalo, N.Y.
1950	*Hugh Ivans Evans, D.D., S.T.D.	Dayton	Cincinnati, Ohio
1951	*H. Ray Anderson, S.T.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Cincinnati, Ohio
1952	*Hermann Nelson Morse, D.D., LL.D.	Brooklyn-Nassau	New York, N.Y.
1953	*John Alexander Mackay, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D., L.H.D.	New Brunswick	Minneapolis, Minn.
1954	*Ralph Waldo Lloyd, DD, LL.D, Litt.D.		Union Detroit, Mich.
1955	*Paul S. Wright, D.D., L.H.D.	Portland	Los Angeles, Calif.
1956	‡*David W. Proffitt, LL.D.	Union	Philadelphia, Pa.
1957	*Harold R. Martin, D.D., LL.D.	Bloomington	Omaha, Neb.
1958	*Harold R. Martin, D.D., LL.D.	Bloomington	Pittsburgh, Pa.

REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS

1870-1958

1870	*J. Trumbull Backus, DD., LL.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1871	*Zephaniah Moore Humphrey, D.D.	Philadelphia	Chicago, Ill.
1872	*Samuel J. Nicolls, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Detroit, Mich.
1873	*Howard Crosby, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Baltimore, Md.
1874	*Samuel J. Wilson, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	St. Louis, Mo.
1875	*Edward D. Morris, D.D., LL.D.	Cincinnati	Cleveland, Ohio
1876	*Henry Jackson Van Dyke, D.D.	Brooklyn	Brooklyn, N.Y.
1877	*James Eells, D.D., LL.D.	San Francisco	Chicago, Ill.
1878	*Francis L. Patton, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1879	*Henry Harris Jessup, D.D.	Lackawanna	Saratoga, N.Y.
1880	*William M. Paxton, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Madison, Wis.
1881	*Henry Darling, D.D., LL.D.	Albany	Buffalo, N.Y.
1882	*Herrick Johnson, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Springfield, Ill.
1883	*Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.	New York	Saratoga, N.Y.
1884	*George P. Hays, D.D., LL.D.	Denver	Saratoga, N.Y.
1885	*Elijah R. Craven, D.D., LL.D.	Newark	Cincinnati, Ohio
1886	*David C. Marquis, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Minneapolis, Minn.
1887	*Joseph T. Smith, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Omaha, Neb.
1888	*Charles L. Thompson, D.D., LL.D.	Kansas City	Philadelphia, Pa.
1889	*William Chas. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.		Chicago New York,
1890	*William Eves Moore, D.D., LL.D.	Columbus	Saratoga, N.Y.
1891	*W. Henry Green, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Detroit, Mich.
1892	*William C. Young, D.D., LL.D.	Transylvania	Portland, Ore.
1893	*Willis Greer Craig, D.D., LL.D.	Iowa	Washington, D.C.
1894	*S.A. Mutchmore, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Saratoga, N.Y.
1895	*Robert Russell Booth, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1896	*John Lindsay Withrow, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Saratoga, N.Y.
1897	*Sheldon Jackson, D.D., LL.D.	Alaska	Winona Lake, Ind.
1898	*Wallace Radcliffe, D.D., LL.D.	Washington City	Winona Lake, Ind.
1899	*Robert F. Sample, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Minneapolis, Minn.
1900	*Charles A. Dickey, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	St. Louis, Mo.
1901	*Henry Collin Minton, D.D., LL.D.	San Francisco	Philadelphia, Pa.
1902	*Henry van Dyke, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	New York, N.Y.
1903	*Robert F. Coyle, D.D., LL.D.	Denver	Los Angeles, Calif.
1904	*J. Addison Henry, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Buffalo, N.Y.
1905	*James D. Moffat, D.D., LL.D.	Washington	Winona Lake, Ind.
1906	*Hunter Corbett, D.D., LL.D.	Shantung	Des Moines, Iowa
1907	*William H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Columbus, Ohio
1908	*Baxter P. Fullerton, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Kans. City, Mo.
1909	*James M. Barkley, D.D., LL.D.	Detroit	Denver, Colo.
1910	*Charles Little, D.D., LL.D.	Muncie	Atl. City, N.J.
1911	*John F. Carson, D.D., LL.D.	Brooklyn	Atl. City, N.J.
1912	*Mark A. Matthews, D.D., LL.D.	Seattle	Louisville, Ky.
1913	*John Timothy Stone, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Atlanta, Ga.
1914	*Maitland Alexander, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Chicago, Ill.
1915	*J. Ross Stevenson, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Rochester, N.Y.
1916	*John Abner Marquis, D.D., LL.D.	Cedar Rapids	Atl. City, N.J.
1917	*J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Dallas, Tex.
1918	*J. Frank Smith, D.D.	Dallas	Columbus, Ohio
1919	‡*John Willis Baer, LL.D., Litt.D.	Los Angeles	St. Louis, Mo.
1920	*Samuel S. Palmer, D.D.	Columbus	Philadelphia, Pa.
1921	*Henry C. Swearingen, DD, LL.D.	St. Paul	Winona Lake, Ind.
1922	*Calvin C. Hays, D.D., LL.D.	Blairsville	Des Moines, Iowa
1923	*Charles F. Wishart, D.D., LL.D.	Wooster	Indianapolis, Ind.
1924	*Clarence Edward Macartney, DD.	Philadelphia	Grand Rapids, Mich.
1925	*Charles R. Erdman, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Columbus, Ohio

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1829-1906

1829	*Thomas Calhoun	Lebanon	Princeton, Ky.
1830	*James B. Porter	Elk	Princeton, Ky.
1831	*Alexander Chapman	Logan	Princeton, Ky.
1832	*Samuel King	Barnett	Nashville, Tenn.
1833	*Thomas Calhoun	Lebanon	Nashville, Tenn.
1834	*F.R. Cossitt, D.D.	Princeton	Nashville, Tenn.
1835	*Samuel King	Lexington	Princeton, Ky.
1836	*Reuben Burrow	Forked Deer	Nashville, Tenn.
1837	*Robert Donnell	Tennessee	Princeton, Ky.
1838	*Hiram A. Hunter	Indiana	Lebanon, Tenn.
1840	*Reuben Burrow, D.D.	Union	Elkton, Ky.
1841	*William Ralston	Richland	Owensboro, Ky.
1842	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Union	Owensboro, Ky.
1843	*A.M. Bryan, D.D.	Pennsylvania	Owensboro, Ky.
1845	*Richard Beard, D.D.	Princeton	Lebanon, Tenn.
1846	*M.H. Bone, D.D.	Tennessee	Owensboro, Ky.
1847	*Hiram A. Hunter, D.D.	Ohio	Lebanon, Ohio
1848	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Morgan	Memphis, Tenn.
1849	*John L. Smith	Nashville	Princeton, Ky.
1850	*Reuben Burrow, D.D.	Madison	Clarksville, Tenn.

\* Deceased

**MODERATORS AND CLERKS**

‡ Ruling Elder

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1851	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Kentucky	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1852	*David Lowry	Chapman	Nashville, Tenn.
1853	*H.S. Porter, D.D.	Memphis	Princeton, Ky.
1854	*Isaac Shook	Elk	Memphis, Tenn.
1855	*M.H. Bone, D.D.	Nashville	Lebanon, Tenn.
1856	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Princeton	Louisville, Ky.
1857	*Carson P. Reed	Richland	Lexington, Mo.
1858	*Felix Johnson, D.D.	McGready	Huntsville, Ala.
1859	*T.B. Wilson	Marshall	Evansville, Ind.
1860	*S.G. Burney, D.D.	Oxford	Nashville, Tenn.
1861	*A.E. Cooper	Hopewell	St. Louis, Mo.
1862	*P.G. Rea	New Lebanon	Owensboro, Ky.
1863	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Morgan	Alton, Ill.
1864	*Jesse Anderson	Ohio	Lebanon, Ohio
1865	*Hiram Douglass	Georgia	Evansville, Ind.
1866	*Richard Beard, D.D.	Lebanon	Owensboro, Ky.
1867	*J.B. Mitchell, D.D.	McGee	Memphis, Tenn.
1868	*G.W. Mitchell	Richland	Lincoln, Ill.
1869	*S.T. Anderson, D.D.	Miami	Murfreesboro, Tenn.
1870	*J.C. Provine, D.D.	Nashville	Warrensburg, Mo.
1871	*J.B. Logan, D.D.	Vandalia	Nashville, Tenn.
1872	*C.H. Bell, D.D.	Oxford	Evansville, Ind.
1873	*J.W. Poindexter, D.D.	Ohio	Huntsville, Ala.
1874	*T.C. Blake, D.D.	Nashville	Springfield, Mo.
1875	*W.S. Campbell, D.D.	Rushville	Jefferson, Tex.
1876	*J.M. Gill, D.D.	Davis	Bowling Green, Ky.
1877	*A.B. Miller, D.D.	Pennsylvania	Lincoln, Ill.
1878	*D.E. Bushnell, D.D.	California	Lebanon, Tenn.
1879	*J.S. Grider, D.D.	Logan	Memphis, Tenn.
1880	*A. Templeton, D.D.	Kirkpatrick	Evansville, Ind.
1881	*W.J. Darby, D.D., LL.D.	Indiana	Austin, Tex.
1882	*S.H. Buchanan, D.D.	Searcy	Huntsville, Ala.
1883	*A.J. McGlumphy, D.D.	Mackinaw	Nashville, Tenn.
1884	‡*John Frizzell	Lebanon	McKeesport, Pa.
1885	*G.T. Stainback, D.D.	McMinville	Bentonville, Ark.
1886	*E.B. Crisman, D.D.	Kirkpatrick	Sedalia, Mo.
1887	‡*Nathan Green	Lebanon	Covington, Ohio
1888	*W.H. Black, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Waco, Tex.
1889	*J.M. Hubbert, D.D.	Lebanon	Kansas City, Mo.
1890	*E.G. McLean, D.D.	Walla Walla	Union City, Tenn.
1891	‡*E.E. Beard	Lebanon	Owensboro, Ky.
1892	*W.S. Danley, D.D.	Mackinaw	Memphis, Tenn.
1893	*W.T. Ferguson, D.D.	Sangamon	Little Rock, Ark.
1894	*F.R. Earle, D.D.	Arkansas	Eugene, Ore.
1895	*M.B. DeWitt, D.D.	Springfield	Meridian, Miss.
1896	*A.W. Hawkins	Decatur	Birmingham, Ala.
1897	*H.S. Williams, D.D.	Memphis	Chicago, Ill.
1898	‡*H.H. Norman	McMinville	Marshall, Mo.
1899	*J.M. Halsell, D.D.	San Jacinto	Denver, Colo.
1900	*H.C. Bird, D.D.	Union	Chattanooga, Tenn.
1901	*E.E. Morris, D.D.	New Lebanon	West Point, Miss.
1902	*S.M. Templeton, D.D.	Red River	Springfield, Mo.
1903	*R.M. Tinnon, D.D.	Rocky Mtn.	Nashville, Tenn.
1904	‡*W.E. Settle	Logan	Dallas, Tex.
1905	*J.B. Hail, D.D.	Pennsylvania	Fresno, Calif.
1906	*Ira Landrith, D.D., LL.D.	Lebanon	Decatur, Ill.

**CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1869–1920**

1869	*William Hughes	Racine, Wis.	Columbus, Ohio
1870	*William Roberts	Scranton, Pa.	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1871	*William Roberts	Scranton, Pa.	New York, N.Y.
1873	*Howell Powell	Cincinnati, Ohio	Racine, Wis.
1875	*William Roberts	Scranton, Pa.	Hyde Park, Pa.

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1877	*Rees Evans	Cambria, Wis.	Chicago, Ill.
1880	*Thomas Roberts	Newark, Ohio	Utica, N.Y.
1883	*G.H. Humphrey	Humphreys, NY	Oak Hill, Ohio
1886	*T.J. Phillips	Plymouth, Pa.	Milwaukee, Wis.
1889	*T.C. Davis	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
1892	*Joseph Roberts	Minneapolis, Minn.	Utica, N.Y.
1895	*J.R. Daniel	Engedi, Wis.	Minneapolis, Minn.
1899	*John R. Jones	Columbus, Wis.	Columbus, Ohio
1901	*Hugh Davis	Scranton, Pa.	Cambria, Wis.
1904	*W.R. Evans	Peniel, Ohio	Venedocia, Ohio
1907	*Daniel Thomas	Wild Rose, Wis.	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
1910	‡*T. Solomon Griffith	Utica, N.Y.	Cotter, Iowa
1913	*John C. Jones	Chicago, Ill.	Utica, N.Y.
1916	*W.E. Evans	Mankato, Minn.	Lake Crystal, Minn.
1919	*John Hammond	Scranton, Pa.	Racine, Wis.
1920	*John Hammond	Scranton, Pa.	Columbus, Ohio

**UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA**

**1858–1958**

1858	*John T. Pressly, D.D.	Allegheny	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1859	*Peter Bullions, D.D.	Albany	Xenia, Ohio
1860	*Joseph Clokey, D.D.	Xenia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1861	*R.D. Harper, D.D.	Xenia	Monmouth, Ill.
1862	*J.T. Cooper, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1863	*A. Young, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Xenia, Ohio
1864	*D.A. Wallace, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Philadelphia, Pa.
1865	*John B. Clark, D.D.	Allegheny	Washington, Iowa
1866	*David R. Kerr, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Allegheny, Pa.
1867	*John B. Dales, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Xenia, Ohio
1868	*James Harper, D.D., LL.D.	First N.Y.	Argyle, N.Y.
1869	*R.A. Browne, D.D., LL.D.	Mercer	Monmouth, Ill.
1870	*T.S. Kendall, D.D.	Oregon	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1871	*R.A. McAyeal, D.D.	Des Moines	Xenia, Ohio
1872	*John S. Easton, D.D.	Westmoreland	Washington, Iowa
1873	*John Y. Scouler, D.D.	First Ohio	Philadelphia, Pa.
1874	*John G. Brown, D.D.	Monongahela	Monmouth, Ill.
1875	*W.W. Barr, D.D.	Philadelphia	Wooster, Ohio
1876	*James Brown, D.D.	Keokuk	Philadelphia, Pa.
1877	*Robert B. Ewing, D.D.	Monongahela	Sparta, Ill.
1878	*S.G. Irvine, D.D.	Oregon	Cambridge, Ohio
1879	*William Bruce, D.D.	Xenia	New Wilmington, Pa.
1880	*E.T. Jeffers, D.D., LL.D.	Mercer	Xenia, Ohio
1881	*David W. Carson, D.D.	Frankfort	Allegheny, Pa.
1882	*David Paul, D.D.	Muskingum	Monmouth, Ill.
1883	*W.H. McMilan, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1884	*William H. French, D.D.	First Ohio	St. Louis, Mo.
1885	*William Johnston, D.D.	College Springs	Topeka, Kans.
1886	*John T. Brownlee, D.D.	Chartiers	Hamilton, Ohio
1887	*Matthew M. Gibson, D.D.	San Francisco	Philadelphia, Pa.
1888	*Wm. T. Meloy, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Cedar Rapids, Iowa
1889	*E.S. McKittrick, D.D.	Allegheny	Springfield, Ohio
1890	*Andrew Watson, D.D., LL.D.	Egypt	Buffalo, N.Y.
1891	*Thos. J. Kennedy, D.D.	College Springs	Princeton, Ind.
1892	*David MacDill, D.D., LL.D.	Xenia	Allegheny, Pa.
1893	*James Bruce, D.D.	Delaware	Monmouth, Ill.
1894	*John A. Wilson, D.D., LL.D.	Mansfield	Albany, Oreg.
1895	*J.B. McMichael, D.D.	Monmouth	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1896	*James White, D.D.	Kansas City	Xenia, Ohio
1897	*Thomas H. Hanna, D.D.	Monmouth	Rock Island, Ill.
1898	*R.G. Ferguson, D.D., LL.D.	Mercer	Omaha, Nebr.

\* Deceased  
‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE	A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1899	*Wm. J. Robinson, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Philadelphia, Pa.	1960	*Herman Lee Turner, D.D., LL.D.	Chattanooga	Cleveland, Ohio
1900	*James P. Sankey, D.D.	Caledonia	Chicago, Ill.	1961	‡*Paul D. McKelvey	Los Angeles	Buffalo, N.Y.
1901	*J.A. Thompson, L.H.D., D.D., LL.D.	College Springs	Des Moines, Iowa	1962	*Marshal L. Scott, Ed.D., D.D., LL.D.		Chicago Denver, Colo.
1902	*James C. Wilson, D.D., LL.D.	Lake	Allegheny, Pa.	1963	Silas G. Kessler, D.D., LL.D.	Platte	Des Moines, Iowa
1903	*James P. Cowan, D.D.	Indiana	Tarkio, Mo.	1964	*Edler G. Hawkins, D.D.	New York City	Oklahoma City, Okla.
1904	*James W. Witherspoon, D.D.	Allegheny	Greenville, Pa.	1965	‡William P. Thompson, J.D., J.C.D., LL.D.		Wichita Columbus, Ohio
1905	*Wm. C. Williamson, D.D., LL.D.	Keokuk	Washington, Iowa	1966	*Ganse Little, D.D., LL.D., S.T.D.	Los Angeles	Boston, Mass.
1906	*J.K. McClurkin, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Richmond, Ind.	1967	*Eugene Smathers, D.D.	St. Andrew	Portland, Ore.
1907	*William T. Campbell, D.D.	Monmouth	Denver, Colo.	1968	*John Coventry Smith, D.D.	Pittsburgh	Minneapolis, Minn.
1908	*James G. Carson, D.D., LL.D.	Xenia	Pittsburgh, Pa.	1969	*George E. Sweazey, Ph.D.	St. Louis	San Antonio, Tex.
1909	*D.A. McClenahan, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Knoxville, Tenn.	1970	*William R. Laws Jr., D.D.	Indianapolis	Chicago, Ill.
1910	*James D. Rankin, D.D., LL.D.	Colorado	Philadelphia, Pa.	1971	‡*Lois H. Stair, L.H.D.	Milwaukee	Rochester, N.Y.
1911	*John C. Scouller, D.D.	Philadelphia	Washington, Pa.	1972	‡C. Willard Heckel, LL.D.	Newark	Denver, Colo.
1912	*Hugh H. Bell, D.D.	San Francisco	Seattle, Wash.	1973	Clinton M. Marsh, D.D.	Omaha	Omaha, Nebr.
1913	*R.M. Russell, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Atlanta, Ga.	1974	Robert C. Lamar, D.D.	Albany	Louisville, Ky.
1914	*Joseph Kyle, D.D., LL.D.	Xenia	New Castle, Pa.	1975	*William F. Keesecker, D.D., LL.D.	Southern Kansas	Cincinnati, Ohio
1915	*T.H. McMichael, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Loveland, Colo.	1976	‡Thelma C.D. Adair, Ed.D.	New York City	Baltimore, Md.
1916	*W.B. Smiley, D.D.	Chartiers	Cleveland, Ohio	1977	*John T. Conner	Cascades	Philadelphia, Pa.
1917	*W.E. McCulloch, D.D.	Monongahela	Boston, Mass.	1978	William P. Lytle, D.D.	Alamo	San Diego, Calif.
1918	*W.M. Anderson, D.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.	1979	Howard L. Rice Jr.	San Francisco	Kansas City, Mo.
1919	*James T. McCrory, D.D.	Monongahela	Monmouth, Ill.	1980	Charles A. Hammond, D.D.	Wabash Valley	Detroit, Mich.
1920	*F.M. Spencer, D.D., LL.D.	Ark. Valley	Sterling, Kans.	1981	*Robert M. Davidson	New York City	Houston, Tex.
1921	*A.F. Kirkpatrick, D.D.	Puget Sound	Philadelphia, Pa.	1982	James H. Costen, D.D.	Georgia	Hartford, Conn.
1922	*J. Kelly Giffen, D.D.	The Sudan	Cambridge, Ohio	1983	James H. Costen, D.D.	Georgia	Atlanta, Ga.
1923	*W.R. Sawhill, D.D.	Puget Sound	Buffalo, N.Y.				
1924	*Charles H. Robinson, D.D.	Wheeling	Richmond, Ind.				
1925	*W.I. Wishart, D.D.	Allegheny	Topeka, Kans.				
1926	*R.A. Hutchison, D.D., LL.D.	Conemaugh	Sharon, Pa.				
1927	*M.G. Kyle, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Washington, D.C.				
1928	*Wm. A. Spalding, D.D.	Oregon	St. Louis, Mo.				
1929	*John McNaugher, DD, LLD, Litt.D.	Allegheny	Pittsburgh, Pa.				
1930	*T.C. Atchison, D.D.	Boston	Des Moines, Iowa				
1931	*J. Knox Montgomery, DD, LL.D.	Muskingum	Youngstown, Ohio	1861	*Benj. M. Palmer	New Orleans	Augusta
1932	*Chas. S. Cleland, D.D.	Philadelphia	Beaver, Pa.	1862	*J.L. Kirkpatrick	Concord	Montgomery
1933	*W.B. Anderson, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.	1863	*James A. Lyon	Tombeckbee	Columbia
1934	*J. Alvin Orr, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Oxford, Ohio	1864	*John S. Wilson	Flint River	Charlotte
1935	*E.C. McCown, D.D.	Monongahela	Akron, Ohio	1865	*George Howe	Charleston	Macon
1936	*Robert W. Thompson, DD, LL.D.	Wisconsin	Pittsburg, Kans.	1866	*Andrew Hart Kerr	Memphis	Memphis
1937	*A.R. Robinson, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Oak Park, Ill.	1867	*Thos. Verner Moore	East Hanover	Nashville
1938	*Ralph Atkinson, D.D.	Los Angeles	Cleveland, Ohio	1868	*John N. Waddel	Chickasaw	Baltimore
1939	‡*Hon. H. Walton Mitchell, LL.D.	Monongahela	Philadelphia, Pa.	1869	*Stuart Robinson	Louisville	Mobile
1940	*Homer B. Henderson, D.D.	Butler	Buffalo, N.Y.	1870	*Robert L. Dabney	West Hanover	Louisville
1941	*R.L. Lanning, D.D., LL.D.	Beaver Valley	Indianapolis, Ind.	1871	*William S. Plumer	Harmony	Huntsville, Ala.
1942	*Thomas C. Pollock, D.D.	Philadelphia	Colombus, Ohio	1872	*Thomas R. Welch	Arkansas	Richmond
1943	*W. Bruce Wilson, D.D.	Monongahela	New Wilmington, Pa.	1873	*Henry Martyn Smith	New Orleans	Little Rock
1944	*James H. Grier, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	New Concord, Ohio	1874	*John L. Girardeau	Charleston	Columbus, Miss.
1945	*James M. Ferguson, D.D.	Allegheny	Monmouth, Ill.	1875	*Moses D. Hoge	East Hanover	St. Louis
1946	*Lytle Rodgers Free, D.D.	Philadelphia	Tarkio, Mo.	1876	*Benjamin M. Smith	West Hanover	Savannah
1947	‡*Samuel A. Fulton, LL.D.	Wisconsin	Sterling, Kans.	1877	*C.A. Stillman	Tuscaloosa	New Orleans
1948	*Albert H. Baldinger, D.D.	Butler	New Wilmington, Pa.	1878	*T.E. Peck	Roanoke	Knoxville
1949	‡*Tim J. Campbell, LL.D.	Des Moines	Buck Hill Falls, Pa.	1879	*Joseph R. Wilson	Wilmington	Louisville
1950	*J. Lowrie Anderson, D.D.	Upper Nile	New Concord, Ohio	1880	*T.A. Hoyt	Nashville	Charleston, S.C.
1951	‡*W. Kyle George, LL.D.	Cleveland	Des Moines, Iowa	1881	*Robert P. Farris	St. Louis	Staunton
1952	*James Leon Kelso, D.D., ThD., LL.D.	Monongahela	Albany, Oregon	1882	*R.K. Smoot	Central Texas	Atlanta
1953	*Samuel C. Weir, D.D.	Detroit	Carlisle, Pa.	1883	*T. Pryor	East Hanover	Lexington, Ky.
1954	*Albert E. Kelly, D.D., LL.D.	Los Angeles	Akron, Ohio	1884	*T.D. Witherspoon	Louisville	Vicksburg
1955	*George A. Long, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.	Monongahela	Monmouth, Ill.	1885	*H.R. Raymond	Tuscaloosa	Houston
1956	*Robert W. Gibson, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Knoxville, Tenn.	1886	*J.H. Bryson	N. Alabama	Augusta
1957	*Robert N. Montgomery, D.D., LL.D.	Muskingum	New Concord, Ohio	1887	*G.B. Strickler	Atlanta	St. Louis
1958	*Robert N. Montgomery, D.D., LL.D.	Muskingum	Pittsburgh, Pa.	1888	*J.J. Bullock	Maryland	Baltimore
				1889	*H.G. Hill	Fayetteville	Chattanooga
				1890	*James Park	Knoxville	Asheville
				1891	*Hampden C. DuBose	Pee Dee	Birmingham
				1892	*Samuel A. King	Central Texas	Hot Springs
				1893	‡*J.W. Lapsley	N. Alabama	Macon

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

1861-1983

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

1958	*Theophilus M. Taylor, Ph.D., D.D.	Vermont	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1959	*Arthur L. Miller, D.D., LL.D.	Denver	Indianapolis, Ind.

\* Deceased

‡ Ruling Elder



MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1894	*James R. Graham	Winchester	Nashville
1895	*C.R. Hemphill	Louisville	Dallas
1896	*R.Q. Mallard	New Orleans	Memphis
1897	*Geo. T. Goetchius	Cherokee	Charlotte
1898	*E.M. Green	Transylvania	New Orleans
1899	*John F. Cannon	St. Louis	Richmond
1900	‡*Jos. W. Martin	Arkansas	Atlanta
1901	*Neander M. Woods	Memphis	Little Rock
1902	*William T. Hall	Bethel	Jackson, Miss.
1903	*Abner C. Hopkins	Winchester	Lexington, Va.
1904	*S.M. Neel	Upper Missouri	Mobile
1905	*J.T. Plunkett	Augusta	Fort Worth
1906	‡*Allen G. Hall	Nashville	Greenville, S.C.
1907	*J.R. Howerton	Asheville	Birmingham
1908	*W.M. Moore	West Hanover	Greensboro
1909	*William E. Boggs	Suwannee	Savannah
1910	*J.W. Bachman	Knoxville	Lewisburg, W. Va.
1911	*Russell Cecil	East Hanover	Louisville
1912	*Thos. S. Clyce	Dallas	Bristol
1913	*J.S. Lyons	Louisville	Atlanta
1914	‡*W.J. Martin	Concord	Kansas City
1915	*W. McF. Alexander	New Orleans	Newport News
1916	*C.W. Grafton	Mississippi	Orlando
1917	*Jno. M. Wills, Ph.D.	Wilmington	Birmingham
1918	*Jas. I. Vance	Nashville	Durant
1919	*A.M. Fraser	Lexington	New Orleans
1920	*W.L. Lingle	Concord	Charlotte
1921	*A.B. Curry	Memphis	St. Louis
1922	*R.C. Reed	Atlanta	Charleston, W. Va.
1923	*Alexander Spunt	Charleston	Montreat
1924	*Thornton Whaling	N. Alabama	San Antonio
1925	*Georgia Summey	New Orleans	Lexington, Ky.
1926	*J.W. Skinner	West. Texas	Pensacola
1927	*R.F. Campbell	Asheville	El Dorado
1928	*Harris E. Kirk	Potomac	Atlanta
1929	*W.R. Dobyns	Birmingham	Montreat
1930	*Thos. W. Currie	Central Texas	Charlottesville
1931	‡*R.A. Dunn	Mecklenburg	Montreat
1932	*William Crowe	St. Louis	Montreat
1933	*Ernest Thompson	Kanawha	Montreat
1934	‡*Samuel Hale Sibley	Cherokee	Montreat
1935	*Henry H. Sweets	Louisville	Montreat
1936	*P. Frank Price	Montgomery	Augusta
1937	*D. Clay Lilly	Winston-Salem	Montreat
1938	‡*Willis M. Everett	Atlanta	Meridian
1939	*Edward Mack, Ph.D.	East Hanover	Montreat
1940	*Frank C. Brown	Dallas	Chattanooga
1941	*Chas. E. Diehl	Nashville	Montreat
1942	‡*Chas. G. Rose	Fayetteville	Knoxville
1943	*Donald W. Richardson	Asheville	Montreat
1944	*Charles L. King	Brazos	Montreat
1945	*Thomas K. Young	Memphis	Montreat
1946	*J.B. Green	Meridian	Montreat
1947	*John R. Cunningham	Winston-Salem	Montreat
1948	*C. Darby Fulton	Enoree	Atlanta
1949	‡*W.E. Price	Mecklenburg	Montreat
1950	*Ben R. Lacy Jr.	Granville	Massanetta
1951	‡*James Ross McCain, Ph.D.	Atlanta	Orlando
1952	*W.A. Alexander Jr.	Red River	Charleston, W. Va.
1953	*Frank W. Price, Ph.D.	Lexington	Montreat
1954	*Wade H. Boggs	Red River	Montreat
1955	*J. McDowell Richards	Atlanta	Richmond
1956	*W. Taliaferro Thompson	Orange	Montreat
1957	*W.M. Elliott Jr., Ph.D.	Dallas	Birmingham
1958	‡*Philip F. Howerton	Mecklenburg	Charlotte
1959	*Ernest Trice Thompson	Hanover	Atlanta

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1960	Marion A. Boggs	Washburn	Jacksonville
1961	*Wallace M. Alston, Th.D.	Atlanta	Dallas
1962	‡*Edward D. Grant	Louisiana	Winston-Salem
1963	*William H. McCorkle	Holston	Huntington
1964	*Felix B. Gear, Ph.D.	Westminster	Montreat
1965	‡*Samuel J. Patterson	John Knox	Montreat
1966	*F.H. Caldwell, Ph.D.	Louisville	Montreat
1967	*Marshall C. Dendy	St. Johns	Bristol
1968	*P.D. Miller	Atlanta	Montreat
1969	*R. Matthew Lynn	TheSouthwest	Mobile, Ala.
1970	*William A. Benfield Jr.	Kanawha	Memphis, Tenn.
1971	*Ben Lacy Rose	Wilmington	Massanetta Springs, Va.
1972	‡*L. Nelson Bell	Asheville	Montreat, N.C.
1973	*Charles E.S. Kraemer	Mecklenburg	Fort Worth, Tex.
1974	*Lawrence W. Bottoms	Atlanta	Louisville, Ky.
1975	*Paul M. Edris	St. Johns	Charlotte, N.C.
1976	‡*Jule C. Spach	Concord	Tuscaloosa, Ala.
1977	*Harvard A. Anderson	St. Johns	Nashville, Tenn.
1978	‡*Sara Bernice Moseley	Covenant	Shreveport, La.
1979	Albert C. Winn	Hanover	Kansas City, Mo.
1980	*David L. Stitt	Brazos	MyrtleBeach, SC
1981	‡*Dorothy G. Barnard	Southeast Missouri	Houston, Tex.
1982	John F. Anderson Jr., D.D.	Grace Union	Columbus, Ga.
1983	John F. Anderson Jr., D.D.	Grace Union	Atlanta, Ga.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

1983—

1983	*J. Randolph Taylor, DD, LL.D., Ph.d.	Mecklenburg	Atlanta, Ga.
1984	‡*Harriet Nelson, L.H.D.	Redwoods	Phoenix, Ariz.
1985	‡*William H. Wilson	Mission	Indianapolis, Ind.
1986	Benjamin M. Weir	San Francisco	Minneapolis, Minn.
1987	‡*Isabel Wood Rogers	Hanover	Biloxi, Miss.
1988	C. Kenneth Hall	Beaver-Butler	St. Louis, Mo.
1989	Joan SalmonCampbell	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1990	‡*Price H. Gwynn III	Charlotte	Salt Lake City, Utah
1991	Herbert D. Valentine	Baltimore	Baltimore, Md.
1992	John M. Fife	de Cristo	Milwaukee, Wis.
1993	David Lee Dobler	Yukon	Orlando, Fla.
1994	Robert Wayne Bohl	Grace	Wichita, Kans.
1995	‡*Marj Carpenter	Tres Rios	Cincinnati, Ohio
1996	John M. Buchanan	Chicago	Albuquerque, N.Mex.
1997	‡*Patricia G. Brown	Cincinnati	Syracuse, N.Y.
1998	Douglas W. Oldenburg	Greater Atla	Charlotte, N.C.
1999	‡*Freda Gardner	New Brunswick	Fort Worth, Tex.
2000	Syngman Rhee	Atl. Kor. Amer.	Long Beach, Calif.
2001	Jack Rogers	San Gabriel	Louisville, Ky.
2002	Fahed Abu-Akel	Greater Atlanta	Columbus, Ohio
2003	Susan R. Andrews	National Calpital	Denver, Colo.
2004	‡*Rick Ufford-Chase	De Christo	Richmond, Va.
2006	Joan S. Gray	Greater Atlanta	Birmingham, Ala.

B—SUCCESSION OF STATED CLERKS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1789—1837

A.D.	NAME
1789	*George Duffield, D.D.
1790	*Ashbel Green, D.D., LL.D.
1803	*Philip Milledoler, D.D.

\* Deceased  
‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME
1806	*Nathaniel Irwin
1807	*Jacob Jones Janeway, D.D.
1817	*William Neill, D.D.
1825	*Ezra Stiles Ely, D.D.
1836	*John McDowell, D.D.

1839–1869

1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH)

1838	*John McDowell, D.D.
1840	*Wm. Morrison Engels, D.D.
1846	*Willis Lord, D.D., LL.D.
1850	*John Leyburn, D.D.
1862	*Alex T. McGill, D.D., LL.D.

2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH)

1838	*Erskine Mason, D.D.
1846	*Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.

(REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS)

1870–1958

1870	*Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.
1884	*Wm. H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.
1921	*Lewis S. Mudge, D.D., LL.D.
1938	*William Barrow Pugh, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.
1951	*Eugene Carson Blake, D.D. HH.D., LL.D., Litt.,D., D.Cn.L.

CLERKS

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1829–1906

1829	*F.R. Cossitt
1834	*James Smith
1841	*C.G. McPherson
1850	*Milton Bird
1872	‡*John Frizzell
1883	*T.C. Blake, D.D.
1896	*J.M. Hubbert, D.D.

CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHURCH

IN THE UNITED STATES

1869–1920

1869	*M.A. Ellis
1870	*J.P. Morgan
1871	‡*T.L. Hughes
1873	*M.A. Ellis
1875	*M.A. Ellis
1877	*T.C. Davis
1880	*James Jarrett
1883	*H.P. Howell
1886	*W. Machno Jones

A.D.	NAME
1889	*John R. Jones
1892	*Edward Roberts
1895	*John Hammond
1898	*David Edwards
1901	*Joshua T. Evans
1904	*J.R. Johns
1907	*W.E. Evans
1910	*John E. Jones
1913	*W.O. Williams
1916	*R.E. Williams
1919	*J.O. Parry
1920	*J.O. Parry

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

1858–1958

1858	*Samuel Wilson, D.D.
1859	*James Prestley, D.D.
1863	*Jos. T. Cooper, D.D., LL.D.
1875	*Wm. J. Reid, D.D., LL.D.
1903	*David F. McGill, D.D., LL.D.
1931	*O.H. Milligan, D.D., LL.D.
1954	*Samuel W. Shane, D.D.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1958–1983

1958	*Eugene Carson Blake, DD., HH.D., LL.D., Litt.D., D.Cn.L.
1966	‡William P. Thompson, J.D., J.C.D., LL.D.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

1861–1983

1861	*John N. Waddel
1865	*Joseph R. Wilson
1898	*William A. Alexander
1910	*Thos. H. Law
1922	*J.D. Leslie
1935	*E.C. Scott (Acting 1935B36)
1959	*James A. Millard Jr., Th.D.
1973	*James E. Andrews

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

1983–

1983	‡*William P. Thompson (Interim Co-Styled Clerk)
	*James E. Andrews (Interim Co-Styled Clerk)
1984	*James E. Andrews
1988	*James E. Andrews
1992	*James E. Andrews
1996	Clifton Kirkpatrick
2000	Clifton Kirkpatrick
2004	Clifton Kirkpatrick
2008	Gradye Parsons

\* Deceased

‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

C—SUCCESSION OF  
ASSOCIATE STATED CLERKS

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1958–1983

A.D.	Name
1958	‡*Henry Barraclough, LL.D. (Emeritus, 1961)
1958	*Samuel W. Shane, D.D. (Emeritus, 1974)
1972	‡Otto K. Finkbeiner
1972	Robert F. Stevenson, D.D.
1973	*Robert Pierre Johnson, D.D.
1975	Robert T. Newbold Jr.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1861–1983

1974	‡*Donald A. Speck
1978	Flynn V. Long Jr.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
1983–

1983	‡Otto K. Finkbeiner
1983	Flynn V. Long Jr.
1983	Robert T. Newbold Jr.
1983	Robert F. Stevenson
1987	Margrethe B.J. Brown
1988	William B. Miller
1989	‡Catherine McCorquodale Phillippe
1993	*C. Fred Jenkins
1993	J. Scott Schaefer
1993	Eugene G. Turner
1997	‡Frederick J. Heuser
1997	Janet M. De Vries
2001	‡Loyda Puig Aja
2001	Kerry Clements
2001	Gradye Parsons
2001	Mark Tammen
2001	Gary Torrens
2001	Robina Winbush
2008	Jill Hudson
2008	Marcia Myers

D—SUCCESSION OF  
ASSISTANT STATED CLERKS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1907–1921, 1953–1958

1907	‡*James M. Hubbert, D.D.
1953	‡*Henry Barraclough, LL.D.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA  
1868–1913, 1952–1958

1868	—
1913	*A.G. Wallace, D.D., LL.D.
1914	Office discontinued

A.D.	Name
1952	*Samuel W. Shane, D.D.
1954	*John M. Bald, Ph.D.
1956	*J.Y. Jackson, D.D.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1967–1972, 1981–1983

1967	‡Otto K. Finkbeiner
1967	Robert F. Stevenson, D.D.
1981	‡Mildred L. Wager

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1861–1983

1930	*E.C. Scott
1949	P.J. Garrison Jr.
1979	Joyce C. Tucker
1975	Flynn V. Long Jr.
1980	Ms. Lucille Scott Hicks
1980	Ms. Catherine M. Shipley
1982	Eugene D. Witherspoon Jr.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
1983–

1983	Ms. Lucille S. Hicks
1983	‡Ms. Catherine McCorquodale Phillippe
1983	‡Ms. Mildred L. Wager
1983	Eugene D. Witherspoon Jr.
1987	Mrs. Juanita H. Granady
1990	Paul M. Thompson
1995	Ms. Maggie Houston
1995	Ms. Deborah Davies
1995	Kerry Clements
2001	Zane Buxton
2001	Dennis Cobb
2001	Jerry Houchens
2001	Carlos Malavé
2001	‡Joan Richardson
2001	‡Margery Sly
2001	‡Valerie Small
2002	Laurie Griffith
2002	‡Doska Ross Radebaugh
2003	Lesley A. Davies
2006	Chris Nicholas
2006	Julia Thorne
2006	Sharon Youngs
2007	Kerry Rice
2008	Evelyn Hwang
2008	Jewel McRae
2008	Joyce Lieberman
2008	Martha Miller

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

E—SUCCESSION OF  
PERMANENT CLERKS I

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1789–1837**

1802	*Nathaniel Irwin
1807	*John Ewing Latta
1825	*John McDowell, D.D.
1837	*John Michael Krebs, D.D.

**1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH)  
1838–1869**

A.D.	Name
1838	*John Michael Krebs, D.D.
1845	*Robert Davidson, D.D.
1850	*Alex T. McGill, D.D., LL.D.
1862	*Wm. Edward Schenck, D.D.

**2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH)**

1838	*Eliphalet W. Gilbert, D.D.
1854	*Henry Darling, D.D., LL.D.
1864	*J. Glentworth Butler, D.D.

**REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS  
1870–1921**

1870	*Cyrus Dickson, D.D.
1882	*Wm. H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.
1884	*Wm. Eves Moore, D.D., LL.D.
1900	*Wm. Brown Noble, D.D., LL.D.
1916	*Edward Leroy Warren, D.D. I

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1861–1983**

1861	*Joseph R. Wilson
1866	*William Brown
1885	*Robert P. Farris
1905	*Thomas H. Law
1910	*J.D. Leslie

F—SUCCESSION OF  
RECORDING CLERKS

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

1951	‡*Henry Barraclough, L.L.D. (Elected for this one General Assembly)
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\* Deceased  
‡ Ruling Elder

**Members of Entities Elected by the General Assembly  
218th General Assembly (2008)**

**Advisory Committee on the Constitution**

***Class of 2010***

Ms. Alyson Janke, N7603 County Road M, Westfield, WI 53964 (The John Knox, LAK, W, F, E)  
Rev. Stewart Pollock, 236 Wayne St., Apt. 318, Lower Burrell, PA 15068 (Pittsburgh, TRI, W, M, C)  
Mr. James A. Wilson, PO Box 2008, Columbus, OH 43216 (Scioto Valley, COV, W, M, E)

***Class of 2012***

Rev. Paul K. Hooker, Presbtyery of St. Augustine, Jacksonville, FL 32217 (St Augustine, SA, W, M, C)  
Rev. Catherine T. R. MacDonald, 9 Independence Drive, Burlington, MA 01803 (Boston, NE, W, F, C)  
Rev. Daniel Saperstein, , Greeley, CO 80634 (Plains and Peaks, ROC, W, M, C)

***Class of 2014***

Ms. Susan Evans, 1807 N. 57th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19131 (Philadelphia, TRI, B, F, E)  
Rev. Keith Geckeler, 825 E. Orangewood Ave., Anaheim, CA 92802 (Los Ranchos, SCH, W, M, C)  
Rev. Heahwan Rim, 8257 Harrison St., Rm 201, Niles, IL 60714 (Midwest Hanmi, LIN, A, M, C)

**Audit Committee**

***Class of 2010***

Mr. Gordon Nielsen, 1500 South Frisco Avenue, Tulsa, OK 74119 (Eastern Oklahoma, SUN, W, M, E)  
Mr. Jesse C. Swanigan, 1519 Lyndale Avenue, University City, MO 63130 (Giddings Lovejoy, MAM, B, M, E)

**The Board of Pensions**

***Class of 2010***

Rev. Jefferson K Aiken, 1324 Highland Drive, Orefield, PA 18069 (Lehigh, TRI, W, M, C)  
Rev. Brian Ellison, 8005 N Congress Ave, Kansas City, MO 64152 (Heartland, MAM, W, M, C)  
Mr. Donald R. Fleischer, 303 Copples Lane, Wallingford, PA 19086 (Philadelphia, TRI, W, M, L)  
Mr. George Gotsik, 7364 East Main Street, Lima, NY 14485 (Genesee Valley, NE, W, M, E)  
Mr. Thomas Parks Jennings, 6316 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA 22101 (National Capital, MAT, W, M, E)  
Rev. Samuel D. Kim, 28 Tanager Court, Wayne, NJ 07470 (Eastern Korean, NE, A, M, C)  
Mr. Joseph J. Leube, 3432 Warden Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19129 (Philadelphia, TRI, W, M, E)  
Mr. Claude Lilly, P.O. Box 311, Clemson, SC 29633 (Foothills, SA, W, M, L)  
Mr. B. Jack Miller, 34 Crooked Mile Road, Darien, CT 06820 (Southern New England, NE, W, M, L)  
Mr. Michael Neal, 454 Twin Creek Road, St. Louis, MO 63141 (Giddings Lovejoy, MAM, W, M, L)  
Ms. Carol S. Parham, 594 Pinedale Drive, Annapolis, MD 21401 (Baltimore, MAT, B, F, L)  
Ms. Ann C. Petersen, 180 E. Pearson Street #5103, Chicago, IL 60611 (Chicago, LIN, W, F, E)  
Mr. Stephen Proctor, 7 South Alydar Blvd, Dillsburg, PA 17019 (Carlisle, TRI, W, M, E)  
Mr. James A. Unruh, 5426 E. Morrison Lane, Paradise Valley, AZ 85253 (Grand Canyon, SW, W, M, L)  
Mr. Paul Volker, 403 Boone St., Boone, IA 50036 (North Central Iowa, LAK, W, M, E)  
Mr. Lawrence Wright, 3861 Olympia, Houston, TX 77019 (New Covenant, SUN, W, M, E)

***Class of 2012***

Rev. Kathleen Crighton, 1715 Valmont Street, New Orleans, LA 70115 (South Louisiana, SUN, W, F, C)  
Ms. Anne Drennan, 14 Lori Road, Monmouth Beach, NJ 07750 (Monmouth, NE, W, F, E)  
Mr. Alan D. Ford, 54 Country Acres Drive, Hampton, NJ 08827 (Elizabeth, NE, W, M, E)  
Mr. Bob Gorsky, 194 Grace Ave, Elmhurst, IL 60126 (Chicago, LIN, W, M, E)  
Ms. Judith A. Harris, The Paragon Centre Suite 300, Allentown, PA 18104 (Lehigh, TRI, W, F, O)  
Mr. Richard Hodde, PO Box 220428, Charlotte, NC 28222 (Charlotte, MAT, W, M, E)  
Rev. John Hougen, 231 Terrace Dr., Independence, IA 50644 (East Iowa, LAK, W, M, C)  
Ms. Linda Jacobsen, 215-B Fulton Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147 (Philadelphia, TRI, W, F, E)  
Mr. Frank James, 1576 Woodridge Place, Vestavia Hills, AL 35216 (Sheppards and Lapsley, LW, B, M, E)  
Rev. Blythe Kieffer, 125 N. Hanley Road, St. Louis, MO 63105 (Giddings Lovejoy, MAM, W, F, C)  
Ms. Bettina Kilburn, 1132 Providence Place, Decatur, GA 30033 (Greater Atlanta, SA, W, F, C)  
Mr. Joseph M. Kinard, 7659 Mission Gorge Rd #86, San Diego, CA 92120 (San Diego, SCH, B, M, L)

## MEMBERS OF ENTITIES ELECTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mr. Christopher Mason, 320 E. 72nd Street #8B, New York, NY 10021 (New York City, NE, W, M, E)  
Mr. Thomas Paisley, Jr., 3015 Village Drive, Center Valley, PA 18034 (Lehigh, TRI, W, M, E)  
Ms. Susan Reimann, 8 Doran Court, Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852 (New Brunswick, NE, W, F, L)  
Mrs. Nancy Rhodes, 1007 Monterey Valley Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27516 (New Hope, MAT, W, F, O)  
Rev. Laird J. Stuart, Calvary Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, CA 94115 (San Francisco, PAC, W, M, C)

### General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations

#### *Class of 2010*

Ms. Carol Adcock, 3813 Branch Road, Fort Worth, TX 76109 (Grace, SUN, W, F, E)  
Mr. Scott Anderson, 3102 Oakridge Ave, Madison, WI 53704 (The John Knox, LAK, W, M, E)  
Rev. David P. Baak, 1140 West Chippewa Dr SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
Rev. James Fother, United Church of Montbello, Denver, CO 80239 (B, M, C)  
Rev. Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo, 3950 Clemmons Road, Clemmons, NC 27012 (Salem, MAT, H, M, C)  
Rev. Krystin Granberg, 606 W 116th Street Apt 63, New York, NY 10027 (New York City, NE, W, F, C)  
Rev. Jerrod Belton Lowry, 4108 Taylor Oaks Drive, Raleigh, NC 27616 (New Hope, MAT, B, M, C)  
Ms. Damayanthi Niles, 475 East Lockwood Ave, St Louis, MO 63119 (Giddings Lovejoy, MAM, A, F, L)  
Ms. Kathleen Owens, 8 Bahr Circle, Madison, WI 53719 (The John Knox, LAK, W, F, E)  
Rev. Oommen K. Thomas, 19758 Braemar Way, Strongsville, OH 44149 (The Western Reserve, COV, A, M, C)

#### *Class of 2012*

Dr. Vincent Das, 8501 Rosenheim Estates, Edwardsville, IL 62025 (Giddings Lovejoy, MAM, A, M, E)  
Mrs. Sarah Segal McCaslin, 425 Prospect Place #5KL, Brooklyn, NY 11238 (New York City, NE, W, F, O)  
Rev. Aimee Moiso, 770 Benton St Apt 4, Santa Clara, CA 95050 (San Jose, PAC, W, F, C)  
Mr. Joseph Pallikkathayil, 4003 NW Claymont Drive, Kansas City, MO 64116 (Heartland, MAM, O, M, C)  
Rev. Rodney Petersen, Boston Theological Institute, Newton, MA 02459 (Boston, NE, W, M, C)  
Rev. George B. Telford, 1132 Courtyard Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22903 (The James, MAT, W, M, C)

### Presbyterian Council for Chaplains & Military Personnel

#### *Class of 2010*

Dr. A. William Benner, 409 Fairfield, Temple, TX 76502 (Grace, SUN, W, M, C)  
Rev. Theron A. Conrey, 2311 Warford Street, PERRY, IA 50220 (Des Moines, LAK, W, M, C)  
Rev. Albert A. Hockaday, 16422 Burr Hill Street, San Antonio, TX 78247 (Mission, SUN, B, M, C)  
Ms. Patricia Kellenbarger, 354 Benevente Drive, Oceanside, CA 92057 (San Diego, SCH, W, F, E)

#### *Class of 2012*

Rev. Richard A. Cooper, 10 Harton Place, Hopkinsville, KY 42240 (Western Kentucky, LW, W, M, C)  
Mr. Dwayne G. Lee, 2207 Arrington Street, Durham, NC 27707 (New Hope, MAT, W, M, E)  
Rev. Karen Stocks, 21910 Deer Canyon Dr, Garden Ridge, TX 78266 (Mission, SUN, W, F, C)  
Rev. Donna C. Weddle, 3060 Hazelton St., Falls Church, VA 22044 (National Capital, MAT, W, F, C)

### General Assembly Committee on Representation

#### *Class of 2010*

Ms. Megan D. Acedo, 2731 E Feemster, Visalia, CA 93292 (San Joaquin, PAC, O, F, L)  
Mr. Glenn L. Bezuyen, 8601 East Irish Hunter Trail, Scottsdale, AZ 85258 (Grand Canyon, SW, W, M, E)  
Ms. Alda Bighorn, 3918 Victory Circle, Billings, MT 59102 (Yellowstone, ROC, N, F, E)  
Ms. Deborah Fair, 5530 Covington Ct, Dearborn, MI 48126 (Detroit, COV, B, F, E)  
Mr. William Gardner, 619 NW Fair Lane, Lee's Summit, MO 64063 (Heartland, MAM, W, M, E)  
Rev. M. Coleman Gilchrist, 3001 S Martin Luther King Dr #1417, Chicago, IL 60616 (Chicago, LIN, B, M, C)  
Ms. Yung Suk Park, 349 Madison Avenue, Convent Station, NJ 07961 (Eastern Korean, NE, A, F, E)  
Ms. Cindy Lou Ray, 3900 76th Street, Urbandale, IA 50322 (Des Moines, LAK, W, F, L)

#### *Class of 2012*

Dr. Stanley Bhasker, 529 Church Street, Huntingdon, PA 16652 (Huntingdon, TRI, A, M, C)  
Mr. Randel Bohanon, HC 15 Box 4015, Smithville, OK 74957 (Eastern Oklahoma, SUN, N, M, E)  
Mr. J. Stafford Fredericks, 8227 Westlawn Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (The Pacific, SCH, W, M, E)  
Rev. John A. T. Gulden, 1368 Ouerbacker Court, Louisville, KY 40208 (Mid-Kentucky, LW, W, M, C)

## MEMBERS OF ENTITIES ELECTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Ms. Alma-jean Marion, 5304 South Avon Street, Seattle, WA 98178 (Seattle, ANW, B, F, E)  
Rev. Alice Ridgill, 106 Pepperhill Lane, Greenwood, SC 29649 (Trinity, SA, B, F, C)  
Mr. Eliud Serrano Arroyo, P.O. Box 833, Vega-Alta, PR 00692 (Noroeste, BPR, H, M, E)

### **Committee on Theological Education**

#### ***Class of 2010***

Rev. Joseph Byung-II Doh, 10925 E Decatur Circle, Mesa, AZ 85207 (Grand Canyon, SW, A, M, C)  
Rev. Kenneth E. Kovacs, Catonsville Presbyterian Church, Catonsville, MD 21207 (Baltimore, MAT, W, M, C)  
Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Laughlin Chapel, Wheeling, WV 26003 (Upper Ohio Valley, TRI, W, F, C)  
Rev. Chandler Stokes, 2215 Roosevelt Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94703 (San Francisco, PAC, W, M, C)  
Rev. K. Nicholas Yoda, 1361 Gladys Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44102 (Cincinnati, COV, A, M, C)

#### ***Class of 2012***

Ms. Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri, 101 Costa Rica St. Apt 801, San Juan, PR 00917 (San Juan, BPR, H, F, E)  
Mrs. Terry Holland, 5125 N. Poplar Avenue, Fresno, CA 93704 (San Joaquin, PAC, M, F, E)  
Rev. K C Ptomey, 3900 West End Ave, Nashville, TN 37205 (Middle Tennessee, LW, W, M, C)  
Mr. Max Sherman, 3505 Greenway, Austin, TX 78705 (Mission, SUN, W, M, E)  
Rev. Landon Whitsitt, 116 W. Franklin, Liberty, MO 64068 (Heartland, MAM, W, M, C)  
Ms. Kathryn Wolf, PO Box 520, Decatur, GA 30030 (Greater Atlanta, SA, W, F, O)

### **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**

#### ***Class of 2010***

Mr. Marshall Bassett, Delaware Investment, Philadelphia, PA 19103 (Philadelphia, TRI, W, M, O)  
Mr. Timothy P. Clark, Tri-Star Trust Bank, Saginaw, MI 48602 (Lake Huron, COV, W, M, L)  
Ms. Sharon Fesler, 4 Greenview Court, Dekalb, IL 60115 (Blackhawk, LIN, W, F, E)  
Mr. Sam McNairy, 3304 Old Saybrook Ct., Raleigh, NC 27612 (New Hope, MAT, W, M, E)  
Mr. Roscoe Overton, 1701 East 21st Street, Austin, TX 78722 (Mission, SUN, B, M, E)  
Ms. Marcia Porter, 2361 Pendragon Road, Kingsport, TN 37660 (Holston, LW, W, F, E)  
Ms. Barbara G. Sarjeant, 740 Hillsboro Road, Orangeburg, SC 29117 (Charleston-Atlantic, SA, B, F, L)  
Dr. Jane L. Searjeant Watt, 8 Lord Place, Old Saybrook, CT 06475 (Albany, NE, W, F, C)  
Rev. James Welch, 9257 Sea Oaks Court, Seminole, FL 33776 (Tampa Bay, SA, W, M, C)

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Rev. Cynthia Holder Rich, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, MI 49423 (Lake Michigan, COV, W, F, C)  
Rev. Stephen C. Hsieh, 6990 Grandwood Way, San Jose, CA 95120 (San Jose, PAC, A, M, C)

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#### ***Class of 2010***

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Rev. Judith Wellington, 2700 Vista Grande Dr NW Unit 41, Albuquerque, NM 87120 (Santa Fe, SW, N, F, C)  
Rev. Sandra L. Peirce, 1070 Terracina Drive, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762 (Sacramento, PAC, W, F, C)  
Ms. Earlean Robbins, 1400 Geary Blvd Apt 5A, San Francisco, CA 94109 (San Francisco, PAC, B,F,E)  
Rev. Jose R. Irizarry, 5460 S University Avenue, Chicago, IL 60615- 5018 (San Juan, BPR, H, M, C)  
Mr. Alvin H. Puryear, 306 River Edge, Williamsburg, VA 23185- 8936 (Eastern Virginia, MAT, B, M, E)  
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#### ***Class of 2010***

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Mrs. Rennie Rhodes, 426 Blue Jay Lane, Apollo, PA 15613 (Redstone, TRI, W, F, O)  
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Rev. Kevin L. Nollette, 5310 33rd Ave W, Everett, WA 98203 (North Puget Sound, ANW, W, M, C)  
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***Class of 2010***

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***Class of 2012***

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Rev. Ashley Seaman, 1182 N Clermont #103, Denver, CO 80220 (Denver, ROC, W, F, C)

**Central Committee World Council of Churches**

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***Class of 2010***

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Ms. Darcy Metcalfe, 2101 1/2 E. Broadway, Logansport, IN 46947 (Wabash Valley, LIN, W, F, E)  
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Ms. N'Yisrela Watts-Afriyie, 3516 West. 78th Street, Inglewood, CA 90305 (The Pacific, SCH, B, F, E)

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

**NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**

*(as published in the 2006 and 2007 Minutes of the General Assembly, Part II Statistics)*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Abel, Kenneth B.	West Virginia	73	2/14/2006
Adair, Emmett C.	New Covenant	75	3/16/2006
Adams, George T.	Philadelphia	69	10/6/2007
Adamson, Harry T.	New Covenant	94	5/21/2006
Ahn, Taeho	Palisades	59	3/21/2007
Akaishi, Tadashi	The James	82	2/28/2007
Albany, Christine	Stockton	61	1/10/2007
Alexander, Robert D.	Central Florida	80	6/8/2007
Allen, R. Mark	Lackawanna	75	8/13/2007
Allen, Ronald S.	The Inland Northwest	73	11/2/2006
Allen, William Kirk	Western North Carolina	87	9/3/2007
Anderson, F. Sidney	Greater Atlanta	86	2/15/2006
Anderson, John L.	The Cascades	97	12/8/2006
Anderson, William Henry	The James	84	8/15/2006
Andresen, Andres W.	Tres Rios	90	6/30/2006
Andrews, James E.	Greater Atlanta	77	3/7/2006
Andrist, Richard Lane	Great Rivers	71	10/15/2007
Antoun, Wadih	New Hope	86	10/27/2007
Arbuthnot, Charles W.	Northern New England	90	8/14/2004
Arends, Robert G.	North Central Iowa	79	11/21/2006
Armendariz, Ruben M.	New Covenant	99	10/11/2006
Armstrong, Earl	Lake Michigan	76	12/28/2006
Ashworth, Fredric W.	Central Florida	75	7/7/2007
Audet, Denis R. F.	Minnesota Valleys	71	11/15/2007
Austin, Norman E.	The Cascades	74	7/4/2006
Austin-McCombs, Barbara E.	The Peaks	74	1/31/2007
Bahmer, Mary M.	Plains and Peaks	91	9/3/2007
Baker, David W.	Philadelphia	83	7/4/1999
Banholzer, Susan E.	Homestead	60	2/21/2007
Bannister, Robert Brown	Riverside	82	9/16/2007
Barlow, Lynwood L.	Eastern Oklahoma	85	5/7/2006
Barnette, James W.	The Peaks	94	6/20/2007
Bates, John Edward	Western North Carolina	96	4/1/2007
Baum, Robert D.	Ohio Valley	74	8/12/2006
Beeners, W. J.	New Brunswick	83	6/26/2007
Benfer, David L.	Huntingdon	54	9/23/2006
Bennett, Walter A.	Grace	89	2/9/2007
Benz, C. Charles	Northeast Georgia	79	12/8/2006
Berg, Kenneth P.	Riverside	85	6/12/2007
Berry, Daniel M.	Mission	57	11/21/2007
Bickel, Carl O.	National Capital	69	2/11/2006
Bilheimer, Robert S.	Minnesota Valleys	89	12/17/2006
Birk, Leo	Missouri Union	60	5/14/2006
Blandau, James Richard	Transylvania	84	5/30/2007
Blom, Donald D.	Scioto Valley	79	5/29/2006

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Bluhm, David R.	Shenandoah	95	11/20/2007
Blumer, Robert J.	Foothills	81	2/11/2007
Bodden, Barrie F.	Eastminster	74	11/7/2006
Boeve, Allen J.	Central Nebraska	75	3/12/2006
Bohn, Jerry W.	Blackhawk	84	11/24/2007
Bohn, Paul	West Virginia	92	11/30/2006
Boller, John Hall	San Diego	89	7/15/2007
Bomboy, Charles L.	Newton	76	2/18/2007
Borst, William G.	Southern Kansas	91	10/12/2007
Bosman, Andrew J.	Des Moines	91	9/17/2006
Bower, M. James	Whitewater Valley	72	6/4/2006
Bowers, Hugh D.	Abingdon	83	10/26/2006
Bowers, Jack M.	Pittsburgh	76	5/25/2006
Bowman, Robert C.	Milwaukee	95	4/11/2006
Boyle, William P.	Greater Atlanta	87	12/14/2007
Braby, Robert D.	The Western Reserve	88	2/22/2006
Brackbill, C. Harold	Donegal	89	12/13/2007
Bradford, J. Gordon	East Tennessee	73	10/7/2006
Brandon, Don R.	East Tennessee	94	7/30/2006
Braun, Richard W.	Eastminster	84	1/7/2007
Brewer, J. William	Southern Kansas	85	9/30/2007
Brewer, Nicholas J.	Yukon	76	1/22/2006
Bricker, Robert W.	Tampa Bay	83	5/27/2006
Brindisi, Arthur Allen	Charlotte	60	9/26/2006
Broad, David J.	The Western Reserve	77	12/20/2006
Brockway, Duncan	The John Knox	74	1/22/2007
Brooks, G. Benjamin	Grand Canyon	81	9/26/2007
Brown, Charles W.	Pines	78	12/3/2007
Brown, Cynthia	Southern New England	56	12/3/2006
Brown, James Wessell	Coastal Carolina	88	4/9/2006
Brown, Kenneth M.	Shenandoah	74	9/26/2006
Brown, Lewis S.	Western North Carolina	77	6/21/2006
Browne, Francis W.	Muskingum Valley	85	10/22/2006
Brownlee, John C.	Upper Ohio Valley	90	7/25/2006
Buck, Carlos S.	New Covenant	77	6/13/2006
Buffaloe, A. Russell	Peace River	98	5/13/2006
Bullard, James W.	Heartland	85	11/29/2006
Bundgus, Lee Roger	New Covenant	66	7/6/2006
Burger, William J.	Northern New England	94	12/18/2006
Burggraaff, Nicholas J.	Tropical Florida	96	6/7/2007
Buterbaugh, Richard S.	Genesee Valley	88	8/7/2007
Buttrick, G. Robert	Mission	84	9/22/2007
Campbell, Alexander M.	Central Washington	97	3/20/2007
Capp, Donald G.	Wabash Valley	80	10/28/2006
Card, Giles S.	Des Moines	73	3/17/2007
Carley, Richard B.	Genesee Valley	78	7/16/2006
Carlsen, Carl R.	The John Knox	86	11/5/2007
Carter, Charles Lee	Northern Kansas	73	3/22/2006



NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Carter, James B.	New Harmony	70	1/14/2006
Casey, Alfred C.	Philadelphia	85	10/24/2007
Casiano, Ben	The Pacific	68	2/26/2006
Casper, Edwin J.	The Cascades	84	4/30/2007
Chambers, Floyd A.	Eastern Virginia	78	5/11/2007
Chandler, Ralph Clark	Lake Michigan	73	3/17/2007
Chang, Kwang Won	Hanmi	58	7/31/2006
Chaplin, Priscilla A.	The Pacific	85	5/14/2006
Chase, Harry E.	Grace	87	1/9/2006
Childress, Bryan C.	Abingdon	85	12/19/2006
Childs, Brevard Springs	Southern New England	83	6/23/2007
Christie, Alexander	Greater Atlanta	94	4/23/2005
Clark, Luverne K.	Minnesota Valleys	88	1/26/2006
Clark, Robert Hamilton	Miami	83	1/12/2007
Coble, Aulden D.	Heartland	91	1/13/2006
Coe, Arden W.	Utica	93	8/4/2006
Cole, George W.	San Gabriel	87	10/2/2007
Coles, Charles M.	Foothills	94	10/23/2007
Collea, James	Susquehanna Valley	87	9/28/2007
Collins, Clarence F.	Donegal	75	3/7/2006
Collins, Donald R.	Foothills	76	3/25/2007
Compton, Dale K.	West Virginia	79	9/10/2007
Cook, Jerry R.	West Virginia	69	4/23/2006
Cooper, Dale G.	Sacramento	89	5/25/2007
Cooper, J. Jerome	Philadelphia	77	12/27/2007
Copeland, H. Richard	South Louisiana	86	12/22/2007
Correu, Donald	Heartland	73	8/18/2006
Cox, Wilbur Kenneth	Western Colorado	73	4/2/2006
Crank, Donald M.	Ohio Valley	79	1/2/2007
Crary, Stephen T.	Southern New England	93	3/23/2006
Craven, Richard E.	West Jersey	84	2/2/2007
Crawford, Bruce	Sacramento	76	1/28/2007
Crick, Ellwood H.	National Capital	87	10/23/2006
Crowder, Howard V.	Central Nebraska	75	9/4/2002
Crozier, R. Byron	Whitewater Valley	84	5/29/2006
Cull, David J.	Mid-Kentucky	78	5/26/2007
Cummings, James W.	Muskingum Valley	82	2/21/2006
Currie, Ryland M.	New York City	93	1/29/2006
Darnell, Warren E.	New York City	100	11/20/2005
Daun, Grenville A.	Olympia	80	1/23/2006
Davenport, Harold Edwin	Seattle	84	12/29/2006
Dawe, Victor G.	The James	85	7/22/2006
De Jong, Lloyd G.	Winnebago	88	4/17/2006
Deemer, Alfred M.	Pittsburgh	85	9/4/2006
DeVries, Calvin	East Iowa	85	6/26/2006
Dickson, Bonneau H.	Greater Atlanta	99	7/13/2007
Dieken, Glen R.	North Central Iowa	92	8/31/2007
Dixon, Sally J.	Northern New England	76	10/8/2006

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Dodson, J. Waldo	Coastal Carolina	83	5/18/2007
Dodson, John F.	Southeastern Illinois	76	10/7/2007
Donaldson, Ralph M.	Washington	84	2/17/2007
Douglass, Robert P.	Mission	88	7/24/2007
Douie, Harvey C.	Donegal	77	9/26/2006
Downs, Raymond Cloyd	Elizabeth	87	12/13/2006
Drysdale, Murray	The Western Reserve	92	5/22/2007
Dugan, Brent J.	Pittsburgh	60	11/3/2006
Dukelow, Howard Boyd	Des Moines	87	12/4/2006
Dukelow, Owen W.	Washington	84	5/27/2007
Dunovant, James S.	New Harmony	68	4/5/2006
Durham, Eldon	The Pacific	93	6/30/2006
Durkee, Phillip	Minnesota Valleys	66	11/28/2007
Durway, Malcolm Bolin	Peace River	81	2/25/2007
Edgar, James H.	Hudson River	70	9/2/2007
Edwards, John Vedder	Lake Erie	83	3/17/2006
Edwards, W. Clinton	Palo Duro	90	10/20/2007
Egbert, Charles T.	Transylvania	84	9/2/2007
Egly, James K.	The Cascades	79	4/5/2006
Eichelberger, Hugh Lee	Western North Carolina	72	11/9/2007
Eichelberger, William L.	West Jersey	84	10/16/2006
Emerson, Gerald G.	The Cascades	95	11/9/2006
Emerson, Jack	John Calvin	53	5/6/2006
Emery, Richard B.	The John Knox	86	10/18/2007
Emmons, Milton R.	de Cristo	92	12/6/2006
Eshler, Richard Ray	Upper Ohio Valley	81	9/2/2007
Eskra, Edward F.	Cayuga-Syracuse	85	3/10/2007
Eslinger, Troy R.	Transylvania	86	2/22/2006
Ettershank, John P.	Eastern Virginia	76	12/23/2006
Evans, Charles W.	Eastminster	76	7/20/2006
Felgner, Walter W.	Peace River	83	12/11/2006
Fenton, Horace L.	Lehigh	95	4/28/2007
Ferguson, Richard M.	Lehigh	74	2/11/2006
Fiallo, Osvaldo H.	Santa Barbara	79	3/3/2006
Fiete, Richard W.	West Virginia	68	2/19/2007
Fife, John Frederick	Tampa Bay	59	5/5/2007
Fischer, Frank A.	Washington	81	5/28/2007
Fisher, Herman E.	Tampa Bay	72	8/25/2006
Fitz, Charles M.	Elizabeth	81	2/10/2007
Fitzsimmons, David H.	Des Moines	70	11/20/2006
Flagg, Robert C.	Riverside	63	11/19/2007
Fletcher, Donna F.	San Jose	74	10/4/2006
Floeck, Norman Stephen	New Covenant	47	8/30/2006
Floyd, Marion C.	Northern Waters	91	4/17/2006
Fogg, Ernest L.	Mission	87	6/6/2007
Foster, Robert K.	Miami	92	3/30/2006
Francis, Donald K.	Mission	71	7/19/2000
Frazer, Richard S.	Arkansas	79	5/29/2007

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Fredrick, Charles	Heartland	84	8/27/2007
Frick, Hans H.	San Jose	82	1/8/2006
Frissell, Charles R.	Central Florida	72	10/26/2007
Fry, Thomas A.	Mid-South	83	7/6/2002
Fuller, Glen R.	Wyoming	69	3/30/2006
Fulwood, Samuel L.	Charlotte	82	12/10/2007
Galbreath, John H.	Western North Carolina	85	1/23/2006
Gammon, C. Edward	Peace River	82	2/14/2007
Gammon, Joseph M.	East Tennessee	89	8/27/2007
Ganfield, Denley H.	East Iowa	93	12/30/2007
Garcia, Eli	New York City	76	9/7/2001
Gardiner, H. Milton	The Cascades	83	2/22/2007
Garrett, James B.	Coastal Carolina	93	8/2/2006
Gaston, Lloyd	North Puget Sound	80	9/24/2006
George, Bryant	National Capital	79	5/8/2007
Gibbs, Norman B.	Mid-South	91	12/2/2002
Gibson, Richard G.	Great Rivers	77	2/18/2007
Gibson, William E.	Susquehanna Valley	84	10/17/2006
Gilbert, D. Douglas	Western New York	62	7/18/2006
Gildehaus, William A.	The Inland Northwest	71	10/22/2007
Gillaspie, Lois	Geneva	75	2/12/2007
Gilmore, O. Leland	East Tennessee	99	5/8/2007
Gordon, A. Culver	Palisades	95	8/1/2006
Gordon, John Arthur	Grace	90	10/20/2006
Gouwens, Robert V.	Lake Michigan	78	8/28/2007
Graham, Edgar H.	Mission	74	8/25/2006
Gray, Carl C.	Huntingdon	92	11/25/2006
Greenlund, Ernest N.	The Cascades	87	4/8/2006
Grether, Herbert	Plains and Peaks	87	3/22/2007
Grondorf, Carl A.	Western Colorado	85	10/17/2007
Gross, Edward B.	National Capital	75	5/24/2007
Grupp, Robert L.	Prospect Hill	77	8/19/2006
Gullick, J. Andrew	Mission	78	2/10/2007
Hagen, Paul P.	St. Augustine	88	4/27/2006
Hale, Edward A.	Carlisle	45	1/18/2007
Hall, Douglas C.	Indian Nations	83	7/13/2007
Hall, Robert G.	Foothills	81	3/19/2007
Hamerson, John Lars	Santa Fe	88	3/7/2006
Hampton, Gray W.	West Virginia	79	9/10/2007
Hancock, David C.	Twin Cities Area	92	8/1/2007
Hanna, James A. M.	Scioto Valley	82	4/17/2007
Hardie, Andrew L. G.	Wabash Valley	78	3/25/2006
Harp, Roger Clay	Central Nebraska	58	2/18/2007
Harper, Harvey W.	Sacramento	86	3/16/2006
Harrington, Thomas L.	Central Florida	82	2/19/2007
Harter, Linda Blagg	Carlisle	64	1/21/2006
Harvey, Pamela G.	Hudson River	52	12/29/2006
Havens, Frank E.	Albany	79	4/29/2006

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Hawkins, Elizabeth Anne	Great Rivers	49	12/27/2006
Hawkins, R. A.	Charlotte	82	9/10/2007
Hay, David M.	Greater Atlanta	70	8/25/2006
Heidbrink, John C.	The Cascades	79	5/1/2006
Heim, Robert P.	Baltimore	74	11/26/2005
Henderson, J. Robert	Pittsburgh	94	11/13/2007
Henderson, Thomas E.	Shenandoah	84	12/9/2006
Hendren, Julian Thomas	Grace	91	5/25/2006
Hess, Kurtis C.	The James	66	4/25/2007
Hessel, Eugene A.	San Gabriel	97	4/26/2007
Hett, K. Jack	Glacier	83	4/16/2006
Hewett, James S.	Missouri River Valley	75	2/22/2006
Hill, Thomas E.	Mid-South	97	7/8/2006
Hillegonds, William C.	Lake Michigan	85	12/23/2007
Hillis, Roger W.	Riverside	87	6/25/2007
Hilton, Horace H.	Coastal Carolina	84	5/11/2006
Hine, James R.	de Cristo	95	1/16/2006
Hirose, George M.	San Francisco	85	8/23/2006
Hoffman, Ralph E.	Tampa Bay	81	4/1/2006
Hogue, James L.	East Tennessee	83	4/5/2007
Holfelde, Harry	Baltimore	70	10/21/2006
Hollingsworth, Charles J.	Tres Rios	72	7/15/2007
Holmes, Thomas J.	St. Augustine	65	1/31/2007
Holmstrup, Kenneth C.	Santa Fe	82	7/30/2006
Honor, Arthur Joshua	Philadelphia	75	7/11/2007
Hooper, Robert R.	Cayuga-Syracuse	72	11/8/2006
Horsfield, Homer R.	New Brunswick	88	9/12/2006
Hostetter, Donald A.	Hudson River	77	4/8/2007
Houk, Cornelius B.	Milwaukee	74	9/2/2007
Howard, Donald S.	Northern Waters	86	12/22/2007
Hubler, David M.	Grace	90	1/7/2006
Hughes, Roland Frank	San Diego	76	5/2/2004
Hunsicker, Malcolm C.	Philadelphia	91	8/6/2007
Hurlburt, Willard B.	North Alabama	83	1/8/2005
Hurst, Charles E.	Geneva	78	4/16/2006
Hutchens, Owen D.	The James	73	1/9/2006
Hutchins, Louis F.	Mid-South	91	8/15/2006
Hutchinson, James R.	South Dakota	86	11/29/2006
Hutton, James R.	Northern New York	80	10/18/2006
Ingram, G. William	West Virginia	81	3/13/2007
Irvine, John M.	The Redwoods	78	1/24/2006
Irwin, Kenneth G.	Olympia	89	8/7/2006
Jackson, Carol Ann	Salem	57	6/27/2005
Jacobs, William H.	Redstone	84	10/2/2007
Jacobson, James A.	Cimarron	57	8/18/2007
Jamieson, David S.	Minnesota Valleys	82	2/25/2007
Jamieson, Howard M.	Los Ranchos	90	4/21/2007
Jamison, Gary	Lake Huron	67	4/30/2007

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Jansen, Robert L.	Western North Carolina	77	12/29/2006
Jeandheur, Albert L.	Long Island	77	10/13/2006
Jensen, Kristine Jane	Utica	59	8/15/2007
Ji, Kwan Soon	East Tennessee	86	6/26/1999
Johnson, Charles E.	New Hope	87	12/31/2007
Johnson, Dean D.	Northern Waters	78	6/15/2007
Johnson, Jay S.	Tampa Bay	83	6/5/2007
Johnson, Paul E.	Eastminster	71	7/29/2007
Johnson, Ralph R.	New Castle	82	12/10/2006
Johnson, Roderick	Lake Michigan	71	5/8/2006
Johnston, Chester B.	Charlotte	80	2/10/2006
Johnston, F. Bruce	The Western Reserve	87	10/12/2006
Johnston, Roe H.	Plains and Peaks	85	5/7/2007
Jones, Cecil Harding	Philadelphia	96	12/13/2007
Justesen, Harold K.	Susquehanna Valley	83	11/7/2006
Kang, Jin Sun	Hanmi	82	1/29/2006
Kauffman, John C.	Minnesota Valleys	96	3/23/2006
Keeler, Kenneth M.	San Jose	95	1/6/2007
Keely, Mark J.	Detroit	50	3/5/2006
Keenan, Wilson D.	Grace	88	12/8/2006
Kell, Richard L.	Pines	84	7/31/2006
Kelley, Douglas H.	Carlisle	57	2/20/2006
Kemp, C. Donald	Tampa Bay	78	10/8/2007
Kendall, W. Marcus	Whitewater Valley	91	10/13/2007
Kennedy, Thomas D.	The James	71	11/8/2006
Kennedy, William Bean	Western North Carolina	79	10/12/2006
Kettlitz, William H.	Arkansas	92	5/26/2006
Keys, Felix W.	Grace	80	7/26/2006
Kim, Soon Bo	Hanmi	80	7/27/2006
Kim, Zai-Doo	Sacramento	74	9/18/2006
Kimmer, Richard E.	Whitewater Valley	52	12/10/2007
Kimrey, Timothy H.	New Hope	63	2/22/2006
King, H. Franklin	Central Nebraska	85	3/7/2007
Kinney, Roberta Upson	Wyoming	60	7/7/2006
Kirk, William Bruce	New Castle	52	5/5/2007
Knobloch, William C.	Santa Fe	86	3/2/2007
Koeppe, Richard H.	New Covenant	73	3/23/2006
Koksma, Frank R.	San Gabriel	90	9/10/2007
Koo, John Whan	The Western Reserve	73	7/12/2006
Koopmans, Theodore	Seattle	94	12/1/2006
Kurtz, Abram G.	Carlisle	95	1/25/2006
Lampe, John A.	Tropical Florida	95	9/17/2006
Langford, Robert	Trinity	72	8/10/2007
Langtry, Walter D.	South Louisiana	97	9/29/2006
Lansdale, H. Parker	Peace River	83	7/26/2006
Larkin, James V.	San Jose	74	3/13/2007
Latta, John L.	Greater Atlanta	74	9/24/2006
Lawrence, Kent D.	San Jose	76	12/24/2007

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Lazenby, Hervey L.	Mission	90	8/6/2007
Leach, Barton B.	Carlisle	74	9/26/2007
Lee, John Yeh-Han	San Gabriel	72	8/29/2006
Leffingwell, Eugene W.	Milwaukee	68	12/8/2007
Leverett, U. S. Grant	New Harmony	77	6/10/2006
Lindsay, Le Roy R.	Central Florida	67	9/3/2006
Lippincott, Robert	Grand Canyon	82	7/5/2007
Little, Raymond E.	Newton	91	9/27/2006
Lo, Samuel E.	Newton	75	10/3/2007
Long, Dan Gold	Ohio Valley	99	7/29/2002
Looft, Roger Allen	Muskingum Valley	65	5/10/2007
Lorey, Sally L.	Savannah	65	7/18/2007
Love, Ebenezer P.	Western North Carolina	83	11/11/2007
Lowe, Henry Tillman	The Cascades	94	4/6/2006
Lowrance, Jeffrey L.	Charlotte	56	5/28/2007
Lupke, Richard D.	Grand Canyon	77	1/11/2006
Luthman, Carl A.	Newton	90	12/22/2007
Luyben, John M.	Elizabeth	56	12/15/2007
MacDowell, Norman M.	New Hope	85	8/3/2006
Magill, John	Peace	River	93 9/25/2006
Mahler, Henry R.	The Peaks	95	10/24/2006
Mahon, James A.	Mission	80	9/3/2006
Manross, Lawrence	Grand Canyon	89	7/4/2006
Marchak, Frances Robledo	Riverside	79	5/9/2007
Markman, E. Charles	Northern New England	86	6/27/2006
Marquis, William H.	Western North Carolina	87	7/26/2007
Marshall, James B.	Pittsburgh	75	12/13/2006
Marx, Wayne R.	Geneva	62	2/27/2006
Mason, Donie S.	San Francisco	55	2/17/2007
Massecar, Marion	Geneva	90	12/2/2007
Mayo, Robert Hall	San Diego	85	3/29/2007
McCarter, Neely D.	The Redwoods	76	5/10/2006
McClain, Herbert L.	Philadelphia	86	9/24/2006
McConnell, James G.	Heartland	85	3/20/2006
McCracken, K. Warriston	St. Augustine	94	11/20/2007
McCrary, James P.	Arkansas	85	12/28/2006
McDonald, Wallace I.	Wabash Valley	97	2/1/2007
McGahey, Frank E.	John Calvin	55	7/24/2006
McGill, William O.	Baltimore	88	1/5/2006
McIver, Malcolm C.	New Covenant	64	12/20/2007
McKee, Archie G.	Coastal Carolina	84	4/24/2007
McKeegan-Guinn, Jerry R.	Milwaukee	69	9/30/2007
McKinnon, Snowden I.	Grace	92	4/20/2006
McNeil, Frederic W.	Mackinac	85	2/1/2007
Meriwether, Roger	Santa Barbara	82	6/11/2006
Merwin, Laura Dick	Albany	61	2/9/2007
Metzger, Bruce M.	New Brunswick	93	2/13/2007
Meyer, Robert W.	Albany	73	6/30/2006

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Meyers, Amos D.	Carlisle	88	1/26/2006
Milanovich, Milo	Milwaukee	95	12/17/2005
Miller, Gayle A.	Des Moines	80	11/5/2006
Miller, M. Rudolph	Carlisle	99	1/19/2006
Miller, Murphy D.	The Peaks	81	3/5/2006
Milligan, Bruce E.	Shenango	88	6/7/2007
Millison, Leonard E.	Tropical Florida	59	3/9/2007
Miranda, Lydia	New York City	68	1/14/2006
Mitchell, James A.	Arkansas	88	1/19/2007
Mobley, Henry P.	Mid-Kentucky	89	10/27/2006
Mong, Frederick E.	Scioto Valley	69	1/31/2006
Monroe, Thomas C.	New York City	72	11/24/2005
Moore, Ben F.	Savannah	88	12/14/2005
Moore, Robert J.	de Cristo	53	4/26/2006
Moore, Stuart	Middle Tennessee	76	2/26/2006
Moore, Wallace D.	Chicago	77	6/8/2006
Morgan, Russ B.	John Calvin	56	11/18/2007
Morgan, Russell R.	Holston	76	1/25/2007
Morrison, A. Jackson	Coastal Carolina	88	8/19/2007
Morriss, Woodward D.	Shenandoah	77	1/13/2007
Morrow, Keith A.	Muskingum Valley	83	2/24/2006
Morse, P. Kenneth	Greater Atlanta	82	1/21/2007
Mosser, Elinor S.	Shenandoah	51	10/26/2006
Muisiner, Roger V.	The Inland Northwest	89	1/13/2006
Munro, B. G.	Flint River	79	5/20/2006
Murdock, John D.	Providence	86	6/14/2006
Murphey, William John	Carlisle	81	10/4/2006
Myers, Arthur P.	Tropical Florida	72	1/11/2007
Neely, Theodore G.	Lake Michigan	74	7/19/2006
Nesbit, Kirk N.	Greater Atlanta	84	2/15/2007
Newquist, David C.	San Joaquin	88	1/15/2007
Nichols, John Dustin	New York City	64	10/30/2006
Niles, William O.	Prospect Hill	87	4/29/2006
Nisbet, James A.	Foothills	82	3/2/2006
Noah, Sheri Lynn	Central Washington	53	3/3/2007
Noble-Richardson, Janet	Detroit	44	7/14/2006
Noll, Thomas	Mission	66	2/16/2006
Nolte, Wilbur H.	de Cristo	82	9/13/2006
Northrup, Richard R.	Cayuga-Syracuse	91	6/8/2007
Nott, Raymond	Wyoming	83	2/3/2006
Nunan, T. Russell	St. Andrew	99	12/7/2006
Oldman, John	Shenandoah	52	2/16/2006
Ollis, James B.	Northern Waters	83	3/9/2006
Olsen, Martin B.	Great Rivers	76	10/14/2007
Olson, Elvin J.	Central Nebraska	87	5/1/2007
O'Meara, Robert	Utica	71	4/10/2006
Orloff, Ivan A.	Grace	74	1/29/2007
Orr, Harold H.	Washington	81	11/15/2007

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Orr, Keith H.	North Central Iowa	89	2/27/2007
Osborne, Robert E.	Lake Huron	81	9/27/2007
Otersen, Adolf	The Peaks	80	11/11/2006
Ott, G. Sherman	Redstone	76	11/10/2006
Owens, Glen D.	Wabash Valley	87	2/27/2007
Parham, Thomas David	Eastern Virginia	87	4/16/2007
Parrish, Charles E.	Western North Carolina	85	11/6/2006
Patrick, H. Louis	Charlotte	84	5/27/2006
Patrick, Leroy	Pittsburgh	90	1/12/2006
Patterson, Wendell K.	Giddings-Lovejoy	92	5/21/2007
Pedrotti, Ray V.	San Gabriel	90	6/12/2006
Perkins, Rodger Wallace	San Gabriel	93	5/10/2007
Persohn, Leroy	Plains and Peaks	85	1/31/2007
Petersen, Kermit W.	Great Rivers	92	9/12/2006
Pickard, H. Edwin	New Hope	83	11/22/2006
Pinckney, Henry L.	Charleston-Atlantic	71	11/4/2006
Ploger, George A.	Salem	89	9/3/2006
Poland, Robert A.	Ohio Valley	88	9/24/2006
Ponting, Claude V.	Central Washington	67	1/22/2006
Pooley, Robert C.	Cherokee	92	5/6/2007
Porter, Warren V.	Santa Barbara	81	8/11/2007
Powers, Minor E.	Middle Tennessee	92	12/19/2006
Powl, James E.	Donegal	79	8/15/2006
Prentice, Thomas K.	Mid-South	79	1/16/2006
Pressly, John W.	The Cascades	97	1/14/2007
Price, R. Earl	Grace	88	1/30/2006
Puls, William F.	Northern Plains	83	2/11/2006
Purdy, John C.	Palisades	81	7/31/2007
Ra, Woong Taek	The Pacific	55	11/10/2006
Raines, Leon E.	San Diego	91	1/5/2007
Ramer, Marvin L.	Western Kentucky	80	10/5/2006
Ramsay, William M.	Mid-South	84	5/21/2007
Ranck, J. Robert	Mackinac	82	4/23/2006
Randall, Louise Selzer	South Louisiana	64	1/30/2006
Rankin, Henry N.	The Redwoods	88	9/15/2007
Rasar, Roland S.	North Puget Sound	80	3/12/2007
Raymond, Lewis	The Western Reserve	89	11/24/2006
Raymond, Robert E.	The John Knox	80	12/11/2006
Reagin, Ewell Julian	Miami	79	11/18/2006
Reasoner, Albert J.	The Inland Northwest	73	5/31/2006
Reed, Marguerite B.	de Cristo	86	3/9/2007
Reif, Anthony J.	Grand Canyon	85	3/15/2006
Revis, James Dewey J.D.	Greater Atlanta	72	3/27/2007
Rex, John E.	San Gabriel	87	6/30/2007
Ribble, Richard B.	Greater Atlanta	78	12/18/2007
Richardson, Clarence C.	Prospect Hill	95	3/30/2006
Rideout, Arthur W.	St Augustine	89	12/19/2006
Rider, David	Lake Erie	60	11/16/2007



NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Rissi, Mathias	The James	85	3/1/2006
Robbins, Sheridan J.	New York City	75	5/4/2003
Roberts, William D.	Elizabeth	85	10/9/2006
Robinson, Richard E.	Mission	89	6/8/2007
Roblee, Melvin	Des Moines	71	5/28/2007
Rogers, John A.	The Peaks	68	3/7/2006
Roper, Donald G.	Palisades	84	11/22/2007
Rose, Ben Lacy	Coastal Carolina	91	11/13/2006
Rosebaugh, Howard E.	West Virginia	83	6/26/2007
Russell, Letty M.	Southern New England	77	7/12/2007
Rust, Clifford W.	Great Rivers	75	2/25/2006
Rust, Leonard A.	Hudson River	73	1/9/2006
Ruth, Elaine	East Iowa	85	10/24/2006
Saint, James G.	Wabash Valley	92	3/23/2006
Sanders, Robert L.	The Cascades	76	7/22/2006
Santin, Carlos	New York City	63	10/4/2001
Schalk, Edward Louis	West Jersey	94	8/22/2007
Schaum, Charles	Peace River	68	5/18/2004
Schultz, John F.	The James	63	4/27/2007
Schutz, Roy F.	The Western Reserve	76	3/12/2007
Scoggins, Richard L.	Northeast Georgia	88	12/13/2006
Scott, Robert F.	New Castle	86	10/20/2006
Secrest, Leroy V.	Western North Carolina	82	10/19/2006
Sharp, L. Gene	East Tennessee	78	9/24/2007
Shaw, Winslow D.	Baltimore	88	10/21/2006
Shea, William E.	St. Augustine	87	12/22/2007
Shick, Kenneth V.	Central Florida	94	5/22/2006
Shott, James R.	Savannah	82	3/10/2007
Shuster, Carroll L.	San Gabriel	90	5/11/2007
Siberry, Robert H. J.	San Francisco	77	2/16/2006
Sloan, Harold Paul	San Francisco	61	12/14/2006
Sloop, Stephen J.	Coastal Carolina	64	2/14/2006
Small, H. Dale	The Western Reserve	91	8/16/2006
Smith, Caroline Wylie	Flint River	55	12/31/2006
Smith, Donald B.	Sheppards and Lapsley	81	10/8/2007
Smith, James Comfort	San Jose	89	1/24/2006
Smith, James Henderson	Southern Kansas	87	6/18/2006
Smith, Kenneth P.	Shenango	89	3/1/2006
Smith, Marshall Lee	Hudson River	88	11/10/2006
Smith, Paul B.	Providence	83	5/3/2007
Smith, Richard A.	Scioto Valley	78	5/24/2007
Smith, Richard L.	Donegal	89	11/23/2006
Smith, Ridley G.	East Tennessee	80	12/13/2007
Smith, Ronald C.	Sacramento	88	9/6/2007
Smith, Wilbert B.	New Castle	94	1/5/2006
Smith, Willett	New Castle	81	5/17/2007
Smither, Andrew B.	Giddings-Lovejoy	101	2/23/2006
Smoot, John Murray	Baltimore	89	8/27/2006

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Sneed, Kenneth	Grand Canyon	83	6/17/2007
Sommers, Charles A.	Detroit	84	3/23/2006
Soule, William T.	Southern Kansas	78	7/21/2007
Speese, James S.	John Calvin	89	4/24/2000
Spiers, Kerry E.	Mid-Kentucky	71	1/12/2007
Stafford, Chase	San Joaquin	82	2/27/2006
Stallworth, Tom	Trinity	74	5/14/2007
Stanley, Richard B.	San Fernando	90	9/1/2006
Steeves, F. K.	Tampa Bay	94	5/1/2006
Steinbrenner, Conrad C.	Carlisle	81	12/21/2007
Stelter, Richard	Twin Cities Area	58	12/24/2007
Stewart, Francis G.	Western New York	96	4/3/2007
Still, Douglas M.	The Cascades	83	7/1/2007
Stribling, Baldwin J.	Palo Duro	83	11/24/2006
Strickland, Eugene L.	Eastern Oklahoma	82	4/18/2006
Strock, John Henry	West Virginia	95	7/23/2006
Summerlin, P. Raymond	The James	62	1/8/2006
Sunderman, Hubert L.	Detroit	83	3/3/2003
Sundloff, Fredrick D.	Central Florida	78	4/19/2006
Suttie, Melvin D.	Arkansas	94	11/9/2006
Swanson, Robert D.	Lake Huron	91	9/15/2006
Tacy, Bruce D.	National Capital	52	8/9/2006
Talbot, Elizabeth B.	Eastern Virginia	70	9/10/2006
Talford, John E.	Greater Atlanta	70	12/20/2006
Talley, Charles C.	Central Florida	80	11/13/2006
Talmage, John E.	Western North Carolina	94	2/24/2007
Tapp, Charles Robert	Charleston-Atlantic	85	5/20/2007
Tarry, Joe E.	Transylvania	68	7/8/2006
Taylor, John C.	Monmouth	85	10/7/2006
Taylor, Kemper Yonker	Pittsburgh	94	6/24/2006
Temple, Robert E.	East Tennessee	73	9/29/2007
Terhune, Gloryanna	San Fernando	84	10/10/2006
Thaden, Clarence H.	The Pacific	93	6/6/2006
Thompson, James G.	The Peaks	87	5/21/2006
Thompson, Roderick P.	Central Florida	88	7/4/2006
Thornburg, Edward C.	Philadelphia	80	11/21/2007
Threlkeld, Gayle W.	Middle Tennessee	73	3/14/2006
Tidwell, Thomas P.	Florida	73	10/2/2007
Tischendorf, Stephen B.	Transylvania	58	7/9/2007
Tozer, James R.	Mackinac	69	10/13/2007
Troop, James D.	Southeastern Illinois	75	3/4/2006
Tucker, Leslie C.	Western North Carolina	79	12/17/2006
Van Dyck, David B.	The Cascades	84	12/6/2006
Vander Meulen, John M.	Grace	91	1/31/2006
Vaurio, Arvo E.	Philadelphia	92	7/13/2007
Victoria, Roger Dale	Central Nebraska	47	4/17/2007
Von Galambos, Gideon L. E.	Western New York	79	11/5/2006
Vondracek, J. Paul	North Alabama	85	4/6/2006

NECROLOGY OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Votaw, Paul D.	Blackhawk	90	7/30/2007
Waddell, William H.	Giddings-Lovejoy	68	12/14/2007
Wade, Mary Louise P.	Pittsburgh	74	6/7/2007
Walker, George M.	The Peaks	74	3/17/2006
Walker, Robert K.	Blackhawk	82	8/6/2007
Wallace, Campbell D.	The James	84	8/27/2006
Wallace, Ronald S.	Greater Atlanta	94	2/25/2006
Walter, J. Robert	The Cascades	93	1/19/2007
Ward, A. Arnott	Mission	86	9/16/2006
Watkins, C. Bradley	Shenango	85	9/20/2007
Watkins, Roy Edgar	Providence	74	5/21/2006
Webb, Leslie E.	Florida	92	1/3/2007
Weenink, Allan J.	Lake Michigan	85	2/4/2006
Weir, William F.	Denver	89	7/7/2007
Wellman, Willard H.	Pittsburgh	94	4/30/2007
Wells, John F.	Yellowstone	82	11/25/2006
West, Clyde E.	Giddings-Lovejoy	82	4/2/2006
Westfall, Jerry L.	Miami	64	11/22/2006
Whiddon, H. R. Ellie	Florida	86	7/22/2007
White, Kenneth H.	Susquehanna Valley	98	6/15/2006
Whitlock, Glenn E.	Riverside	79	5/18/2007
Wilkie, Amos N.	Chicago	80	2/14/2007
Williams, Kenneth E.	Philadelphia	74	12/15/2007
Williams, Lewin L.	Palisades	70	9/18/2006
Willis, Shirley A.	New York City	74	10/27/2006
Wilmesherr, Milton Andrew	Charleston-Atlantic	87	11/22/2007
Wilson, George S.	Pittsburgh	87	11/20/2007
Wilson, Thomas B.	Arkansas	87	2/24/2007
Winegard, Wallace G.	Central Florida	73	9/3/2006
Wingard, Michael G.	Abingdon	64	12/25/2007
Witmer, George W.	Miami	78	10/24/2007
Wood, James E.	The Peaks	85	1/23/2006
Wright, Edward V.	The Cascades	89	2/16/2007
Wright, George H.	Pittsburgh	90	3/16/2007
Wright, Harold V.	Western North Carolina	92	4/16/2006
Wright, Joseph C.	Mission	85	10/3/2006
Wu, Carlton C.	Northern New York	82	6/16/2007
Wyangarden, John R.	Lake Michigan	92	12/11/2005
Young, Calvin M.	Charlotte	98	2/12/2007
Zamzow, Elmer	Wyoming	91	3/28/2006
Zaun, Allan A.	St. Augustine	95	7/24/2006
Zehnder, John L.	The Pacific	66	3/5/2006
Zink, Suzan E.	Miami	48	2/23/2006
Zirbel, C. Virgil	San Diego	89	5/22/2007



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